

DERBYSHIRE RECORD OFFICE AND DERBY DIOCESAN RECORD OFFICE

1969

By JOAN SINAR

1969 as envisaged saw many changes in the Derbyshire Record Office, the most important of which was its recognition in April by the Lord Bishop of Derby as the Derby Diocesan Record Office. A searchroom was opened in January and in midsummer a small separate office was provided for the County Archivist. The room formerly used by the whole office is now a conference room and only in occasional use as an overflow reading-room. On Mr. Wild's retirement in February a second records clerk was added to the staff, a second assistant archivist in July, and a second tracer for the county terrier was appointed in December.

Physical moving of equipment and records took up much of the first few weeks of the year. The drive on the identification and sorting of official records begun in 1968 continued, aimed at further building up of runs of particular series, and the destruction of ephemeral correspondence. A start was made on the sorting and listing of a large and highly miscellaneous official collection of maps and plans other than deposited plans of public undertakings and inclosure awards. A voluntary helper is generously helping with the listing of short runs of quarter sessions records. A second volunteer is calendaring medieval deeds. All the school and school board records in the office have now been identified, and the bulk of them listed in preparation for the centenary celebrations of the Education Act of 1870. The several runs of turnpike trust and bridge trust records are being listed. We are keeping abreast of the listing of all but the largest current deposits, and a start has been made on the backlog. An interim guide to the contents of the record office including those special series of modern records of most use to geographers and administrative historians now becomes a reasonable aim in the foreseeable future.

There were 162 new accessions, transfers, gifts and deposits including 21 parish deposits, a number of school board records, and runs of County Treasurer's ledgers and cash books. There were also well over 30 major additions to earlier gifts or deposits. The overwhelming bulk of both new accessions and additions were private in origin.

The 21 Anglican parishes depositing records were: Alfreton, Ashbourne, Ashford with Sheldon, Brimington, Chesterfield, Clay Cross, Eckington,

Fenny Bentley, Kirk Langley, Melbourne, Norbury, Pinxton, Pleasley with New Houghton, Repton, Snelston, South Wingfield, Staveley, Swadlincote, Thorpe, Tissington and Whitwell. Survey lists were made of the records retained by these parishes, as well as of the records of four other parishes, Boyleston, Glossop, Scropton and South Normanton. The papers range from the 16th to the 20th century and cover most aspects of parish life. They include registers of baptisms, marriages and burials, service forms and registers, inventories, terriers, faculties and related papers dealing with fabric and furnishings; papers more personal to the incumbent such as licences to preach and officiate, dilapidations, and the administration of endowments including tithe and glebe; records of church officers and committees including churchwardens and parochial church councils; records of schools, charities, church societies, fund raising activities and district visiting; together with civil parish records and miscellaneous private papers and printed matter which have strayed into church chests. The largest and best balanced accumulations as yet dealt with come from Ashover (an old deposit), Repton and Staveley. Superb runs of fabric records and papers relating to the relationship of parson and congregation in the mid 19th century occur at Ashbourne and Melbourne. Every accumulation has its individual strength. It has been particularly pleasing to find a number of runs of preachers' books and service registers going well back into the 19th century, and several survivors of the late 19th-century parochial statistics returns. A few parishes have good runs of parish magazines, a valuable neglected source which most parishes wish to retain. Pleasley has generously deposited the run and will continue to do so with future numbers.

In addition to the deposits from ecclesiastical parishes Heath Parish Council has deposited overseers' accounts and papers 1784-1894, constables' accounts 1778-1839, Parish Council minutes and accounts 1894-1946, vestry minutes 1880-1894, and Ault Hucknall Council School managers' minutes 1903-1939. Glossop Library deposited maps and plans of public undertakings for that part of the old parish of Glossop not now within the borough. Stray parish records deposited other than those in large family or business collections were two Stanley highway rate books 1890-1891, xerox copies of the headboroughs' accounts for the hamlet of Pilsley in the parish of Staveley 1775, a poor rate assessment and map for Ripley 1821, and an early 19th-century copy of the 1776 tithe map for Tibshelf.

Business records covered a wide field. Two of the largest deposits, those from the former Butterley Company and the National Coal Board, were in fact only additions to earlier related papers. The Butterley Company records include minutes, deeds, accounts, photographs and other papers of the mining and ironworking firm founded at Butterley in 1792. Further papers are expected to follow as the work of disposing of the company's interests continues. The Coal Board papers relate mainly to the Mapperley, Kilburn and Stanley pits of the Mapperley Colliery Company, Eastwood and Moorgreen pits of Barber Walker and Co. Ltd. and to the interests

of the Butterley Company, Shipley Collieries Ltd., and other collieries and companies in their area, mid 19th-mid 20th century. The Blair collection of mining plans for small collieries in the Chesterfield and Dronfield districts, 19th-20th centuries, broke new ground for the Office. The Smith collection of engineering drawings and photographs mainly relating to mining and railways was only the second such group to be deposited and far outweigh their predecessors in range and interest. It illustrates mainly machinery used at Pinxton and Butterley made in Burton and Wrexham. Fred Smith, the original collector, was a model maker of high repute, some of whose work is in the South Kensington Museum. A handful of copy coal leases for Swanwick complete the coal mining deposits.

Leadmining and quarrying records together with estate material continue to arrive from Messrs. Brooke-Taylor, the most interesting item of which is the precedent book of William Hopkinson for the liberty of Wirksworth, 1628. An interesting and unusual section of this deposit is the literary and family correspondence of Messrs. Brooke-Taylor's ancestor, John Taylor, first printer to the University of London and publisher of several early 19th-century poets. Accounts, catalogues and associated papers of Messrs. Pickersgill and Frost of Langley Mill, ironfounders, specialising in grates and stoves, late 19th-late 20th centuries, form an interesting large deposit, which is not yet fully sorted. A large deposit of textile records from a mill on the western side of the county, mid 19th-early 20th century, is also not yet sorted. Industrial deposits were rounded off by a short illustrated study of Messrs. Chambers of Riddings, wrought ironworkers in the 19th century. The A.S.L.E.F. Staveley branch minute book 1906-1936 was a very welcome addition to the Office's minute holdings of Trade Union material.

Two small groups of records strengthened holdings on the Cromford and Nutbrook Canals. A few pages of the ledger book of James Sutton and the Shardlow Boat Company 1831, and xerox copies of Coke-Fosbrooke correspondence on the Trent Navigation, 1698-1700, were also deposited. The only retail trade records received were the Ripley Co-operative Society cash book 1882-1883, and records of the Long Eaton Co-operative Society 1894-1952, together with histories of both societies.

The outstanding family deposit is that by Lt-Col. Chandos Pole of Newnham of the Gell family and estate records inherited by his family from the last male representative of the senior branch of Gell of Hopton. To avoid confusion with the records held by the present Gell family at Hopton this deposit will be known in the Office as Chandos-Pole-Gell. The records include deeds from the middle ages onwards and a wide range of manorial, estate, business and political papers from the 16th century onwards, including material from the Civil Wars of the then Sir John Gell, and a number of maps and plans. There was a small deposit of letters, bills and accounts of the Bladon family 1718-1828. The other family deposits whether from families or their solicitors consisted mainly of deeds.

In addition to the Gell political material at national and local levels there were several small groups of political papers, including an election address by George Cavendish in 1784 in the Brooke-Taylor deposit. One group rescued from destruction by the depositor twenty years ago includes a few early 20th-century handbills, and a lavishly annotated electoral register for the northern division of Derbyshire 1870 with notes on party affiliation, voting records and changes of address, together with Bakewell Cricket Club A.G.M. agendas 1907-1910. A scrapbook of early 20th-century political cartoons from Derby newspapers was accompanied by six letters from a young Sudeten German socialist concerning education and political and economic conditions 1921-1923, and two letters from a Derby Labour party supporter after his emigration to New Zealand on conditions in Derby and in Portland, North Auckland 1934. A second scrapbook contains newspaper cuttings and leaflets of socialist sympathy of a mainly Derbyshire content 1918-1944. These two last groups are very welcome as they are the first 20th-century deposits relating to one of the main political streams, the only other 20th-century political deposit being the campaign papers of the anti-Common Market candidate in the West Derbyshire by-election 1962.

The Office has been fortunate in receiving deposits of maps and plans other than those already mentioned. The tithe rent charge apportionments and plans in a number of parish deposits are especially useful. A further last instalment of Land Values Duties plans completed the District Valuers' transfers at the beginning of the year. Additions to O.S. holdings were received from several sources. A group of maps and plans for the Chesterfield district from Mrs. Pashley included a sketch map of Chesterfield in 1636. A copy plan of 1712 relating to Bagshawe estates in Chapel was a useful supplement to early Bagshawe estate plans for Chapel, Atlow and a lead-mining plan for Wensley recently discovered in the Fitzherbert deposit. Other important individual plans are an early 18th-century plan of Mapleton, part of a deposit from Messrs. Eddowes, Simm and Waldron, a plan of Codnor 1792, a plan of Little Eaton 1850, recently discovered in quarter sessions official holdings, two copy Rutland estate plans, and Lt. R. K. Dawson's printed map of Derby, 1832.

Miscellaneous papers, cartoons and printed sketches for the Chesterfield district, were also added to the Pashley deposit; further papers relating to south-east Derbyshire to the Ogden deposit; and a larger group for the Bakewell district to the Thornhill deposit. Several boxes of photographs, handbooks and articles relating to the D.P. Battery Company were the main strength of the 1969 Thornhill deposit. Other photographs from the collection were distributed on Mr. Thornhill's behalf to appropriate record offices and libraries. A fine volume of 55 miniature water-colours of the early 19th century, an addition to the Derbyshire Archaeological Society's deposit, depicts industrial scenes and buildings now vanished as well as beauty spots. A group of photographs of Ashbourne church and school formed part of a small miscellaneous collection mainly of

pamphlets and handbills relating to the town including a volume of verse, "A Short Day's Work", by Monica Peveril Turnbull 1902. A few sale catalogues and a handful of postcards were welcome deposits from several quarters. Views of places and buildings frequently have a historical interest far outweighing their artistic merit. A large group of miscellaneous papers relating to north Derbyshire collected by William Eagle, a former barmaster, is as yet unexamined in any detail.

The usual talks and exhibitions have been given to local social and educational groups. Much the best publicity was given us by Mr. Frank Nixon and the Derbyshire Archaeological Society. In appealing for the preservation of business and other records Mr. Nixon twice attacked in radio broadcasts moves by Nottingham University Economic History Department to acquire records of Derbyshire companies for private use by the Department, making known the work of this Office and the larger Borough Libraries in collecting and listing business and other records and appealing for local support. As a result of these attacks and other Derbyshire reactions the Head of the Department now expresses a willingness to co-operate. In his initial appeal from which the broadcasts sprang, Mr. Nixon distributed to a large number of local firms invited to a business efficiency conference a joint appeal for the preservation of records in this Office and Derby Borough Library. The same appeal was distributed by the Society to its members. Other distributions are in hand. *Matlock Mercury* generously printed a full-page illustrated article on the Office, and followed this up with news items on deposits of local interest.

Deposits this year have come from a variety of sources, ranging from a schoolboy to the Lord Lieutenant for Northamptonshire. They have been found in deserted buildings, wooden shacks open to the weather, under floorboards, in damp cellars and disused attics. Some have been treasured and carefully preserved in office strongrooms, churches, country houses, modern houses in housing estates and little industrial terrace houses. All are invaluable and add to the range of sources for the past and present life of Derbyshire. Much must still be lying scattered in buildings throughout the county. The Office would welcome any opportunity to examine this material, if necessary in complete confidence.