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Came to Brigg for Six Months Stayed on for "42 Happy Years"

This book, BRIGG 1973, has been written by Edward Dodd, news editor of the *Lincolnshire Times* for the past 16 years and before that in charge of the locally-produced *Lincolnshire Star*. During the late 1920s he was working as a reporter on the *Scunthorpe and Frodingham Star* which, together with the Brigg-based *Lincolnshire Star*, had just been acquired by Caldicotts of Gainsborough from Mr. Charles F. Davy, son of the founder, the late Ald. Joshua Davy.

It was in late 1931 that the firm suggested he should be transferred to Brigg. Recognising that Scunthorpe was an expanding town and that Brigg was likely to remain much as it had always been, a rather dormant market town, he did not relish the prospects of such a move but agreed to go on the understanding that he could return to the Scunthorpe office as soon as a replacement could be found to take over the *Lincolnshire Star*.

Six months later, Mr. W. H. Caldicott, proprietor of the *Star*, a man who was always as good as his word, offered him the opportunity of going back to Scunthorpe. By that time, however, he decided that he liked the small-town atmosphere and the intimate type of community that was not to be found in a large town. So that what began as a reluctant and temporary association developed into what he describes as 42 happy years.

Becoming closely identified with the life of the town, he had a two-year spell as a member of Brigg Urban Council in pre-war years and resumed again in 1948 after having served in the Royal Air Force in the 1939-45 War as, of all things, a carpenter-rigger with the dizzy rank of LAC. He was chairman of the Council in 1951/52, continuing as a councillor until 1958. He was appointed secretary of Brigg Chamber of Trade in March, 1973.

Married, with three sons and two daughters, he lists his hobbies as golf and gardening, regretting that the golf is apt to get in the way of the gardening.

He was thinking of writing a book on Brigg in 1968 but the budget could not be balanced in those days because advertising revenue failed to match up to the rest of the costs involved. So the manuscripts went back on the shelf and there they remained until July 1973. On the next page he tells how they came to get off the shelf and pays tribute to those who helped so materially to launch this publication.

All this — and a lot more is going on in this "quiet little town called Brigg"



Vol. 1 No. 1

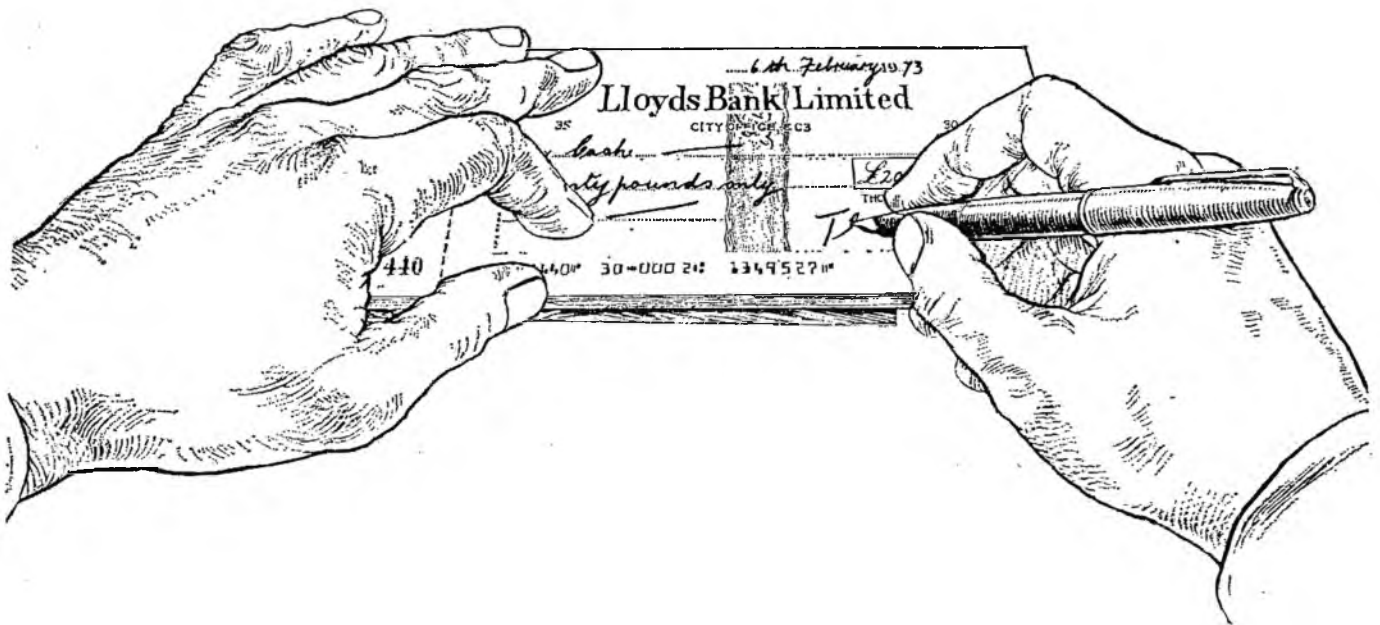
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FOREWORD

by Edward Dodd

BRIGG – that's the brief title on the cover and that's the theme of this book. But what was there so special about Brigg in 1973? Perhaps no more than in many another year or in any other small market town that has plodded its way unspectacularly through the ages, never experiencing the effects of population explosion or massive expansion.

Seldom throughout its history has Brigg done any more than fulfil its appointed role as a shopping and servicing centre for a wide rural area, selling its cattle, farm produce and market wares and generally minding its own business.

So why all this fuss, it might be asked, about a little town that is due to be bypassed and in April 1974 reduced from an Urban District Council to the status of Parish Council? For one thing, it was thought it was time that some attempt should be made to put Brigg on record as it really is. There have been a succession of commercially-sponsored town guides and trade directories produced from time to time but with all respect to the "professionals", they have never been regarded as wholly satisfactory.

Because of the very reason for their production, profit for the publishers – nothing wrong about that – they were necessarily restricted in size and scope. In the comparatively few small pages allocated to those publications it was never possible to give more than a potted history in a form that had been published a dozen or more times before and a list of some local organisations.

Further, few Brigg people ever saw the commercially-produced town guides. It could be argued that the "locals" didn't need a guide anyway and that it was logical to keep a few hundred copies at the Civic Centre to be handed out to strangers if they asked for one or to be supplied to other local authorities who like to "do a swap." So the benefit to Brigg people and Brigg advertisers was always a little obscure.

"BRIGG" means just what it says. It is a book about Brigg for Brigg people and to make sure it does not linger on some dusty shelf until somebody thinks to ask for one, we are delivering a free copy to every house in Brigg. The remainder of a substantial print order, approximately 2,250, will be on sale at a nominal price, less in fact than the cost of production and likely to achieve a sell-out within a few weeks of publication.

Those who live in Brigg, even though receiving one free, will doubtless be posting copies to relatives in all parts of the country, all parts of the world. They will go to people who left Brigg many years ago but who still retain a nostalgic affection for the town where nothing spectacular ever happens.

This is not and never was intended to be a history of Brigg. It has been necessary, of course, to dip into the past, for a town without a past has no present and no future. It covers a wide range of local activities but of course it has not been possible to cover everything in detail. If there are occasional omissions or inaccuracies, it is not for want of effort or checking but it has to be recognised that the facts as supplied by Mr. A. could have come out rather differently had they been presented by Mr. B.

On the whole, the aim has been to present Brigg as it is and to put the record straight up to the end of 1973. Who knows but what it might whet the appetite of some local historian to take it from here? Such a man would need the time to dig and delve among the archives, search the newspaper files, have the ability to collate and present all the information that comes through the sieve – and he would need some assurance that his efforts would be financially rewarded. So many imponderables, in fact, that the complete history of Brigg may never be written.

The only really authentic glimpse we have had in recent years has been Dr. Frank Henthorn's "History of Brigg Grammar School." That must have entailed years of research covering a period for which records were not easy to come by. But in dealing with the progress of the school through three centuries he managed also to bring the town itself into the picture, particularly in relation to the industrial and social development which coincided with the coming of the railways in the first half of the 19th century.

Dr. Henthorn kindly agreed to allow excerpts from his researches to be used in the development of some of the themes in this book. Thus it has been possible to get the stamp of authenticity in those features which bring into focus a most interesting period in the history of Brigg. His generous gesture is greatly appreciated.

There has been help from other sources. When this publication was suggested in the Spring of 1973, the financial implications were considerable. To produce anything like this as a commercial venture would have meant advertising rates at around £80 per page. While that would not have been unreasonable in an age of high costs in every field, it could have been beyond the resources of many of the smaller traders who are the backbone of private enterprise in Brigg.

Brigg Urban District Council came to the rescue with an offer to finance half the printing costs. The reasoning behind the offer was that 1973 was Brigg's last year as an Urban Council and what better way of ringing down the curtain than supporting something that had never been done before, helping to produce a book on Brigg. In conjunction with Brigg Chamber of Trade the idea developed and here it is.

Responsible for financing the other half are nearly 100 of Brigg's traders and business houses. For a small town of just over 5,000 population that is a tremendous show of local loyalty.

There has been support and encouragement from Mr. Joseph James Magrath, OBE, Clerk of Brigg UDC, as might have been expected from a man who has had the local cause at heart for the past 40 years. From every side, in fact, there has been interest and support, which has made a pleasure of what could have been an onerous task.

So it's thanks to everybody who has had a hand in BRIGG 1973 – not forgetting the executives and printing staff of John Corah and Son Ltd., Loughborough, who have produced this quality publication which shows that even in the 1970s, the so-called "couldn't care less" age, there are still craftsmen who take a pride in their job.

Finally I would like to claim the author's privilege of dedicating this book to one who has been very closely associated with it from the very beginning – my wife Joan. She merits a mention, in fact, for all she has done in the cause of local drama for more years than she would care me to mention. But when this publication got under way she volunteered to take on the business side, selling some £1,300 worth of advertising space. That far exceeded the original estimate and enabled the planned 90 pages to be expanded to 120. It meant also that her lounge was littered for months on end with typewriter, proofs, paste pot and papers piled so high that even Sunday lunch, more often than not, was taken picnic fashion, plates balanced on knees and us balanced on the arm of any available chair. All this she endured with an air of uncomplaining calm, doubtless fortified by the biblical philosophy which assures that "*All these things shall pass away*". And, of course, they always do – but it requires a little patience in the meantime. This she had, if not exactly in plenty, at least in sufficiency. For this, my grateful thanks.

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How DID Brigg Get Its Name?

All The Experts Seemed To Have Different Ideas

THERE have been many and varied speculations as to how Brigg got its name. The most usual and perhaps the most convenient is associated with its link with the River Ancholme, "brigg" being the hard, northern pronunciation of the word "bridge" and presenting no difficulty to the etymologist.

Although Brigg had been a not unimportant town ever since the days of the Norman Conquest, authentic records were difficult to come by when local historians began to delve into the past. Many discounted the theory listed above as being "too convenient," paying some attention to the full name of Glandford Brigg and looking with enquiring minds at the "Glandford."

That came in many forms - Glaunford, Glaundford, Glanford, Glamford, Glamforde, Glamforth, Granford, etc, doubtless the victim of corruption over the years and yielding little in the way of explanation to the enquirer.

Domesday Book reference

The author of the Domesday Book for Lincolnshire put it on record that its old name was Glentenwide and that, if correct, would suggest some association with Glentham and Glentworth, the former being written in the Domesday Book as Glandham and Glantham.

According to Professor Skeat, the eminent philologist, Gland was perhaps the earliest of the old spellings, probably a Saxon adjective meaning "slippery," which would make Glanford or any one of its variations "a slippery ford." Considering the vast swamps which existed to the west of the Ancholme, this is a very likely explanation, deriving from the times when much of the Ancholme valley was a morass, narrowing to the one place where a crossing could be effected with safety and

leading to the one piece of high ground, the site of the present market place.

There are some who have interpreted the prefix to mean "merriment", identifying it with the old English word "gleam", Glanford, therefore, they said, meant "the ford where sports were held."

A more credible explanation, however, might be that of the etymologists, who possess a healthy curiosity concerning the origin and history of words, especially place names. The real clue is still in the Glanford or Glamford Brigg, remembering that the Lincolnshire Celtic used a primitive language, their words being plain and to the point. Many of their place names were connected in one way or another with water.

Hence their logical analysis of Glentenwide. "Glen", from the Celtic glen, a narrow valley worn by a river, a depression between hills; "te," worship; "n," in the; "wide," wild.

When strung together they produce "Worship glen in the wild."

Compare those definitions with geographical facts. The settlement stood in a broad, level dale, bounded on the east and west by Cliffs and Wolds. And by way of confirmation, think again of Glentham and Glentworth. The prefix is the same, indicating that the practical dwellers in the glens were more concerned with water than with merriment.

There appears to be no record of when the first bridge was built to link the morasses with the higher ground to the east of the ford but in 1313 it was reported to Edward II that "men and cattle passing over Glaunford Brigg in the time of such floods were seldom out of danger."

Stood test of time

The present bridge west of the Market Place, known locally as the County Bridge, was built in 1828 to replace a less-pretentious structure. Its predecessor had been there since 1665 but although it stood the test of time it must have presented some traffic problems even for the horse-drawn vehicles of those days.

The old bridge was described early in the 19th century as "perhaps without equal in the county for danger."

The bridge builders of 150 years ago could never have envisaged the tremendous loads

their County Bridge would have to carry in the latter part of the 20th century. It is to their credit that the bridge has withstood the constant pounding of oil tankers, heavy lorries and low-loaders - and now the gigantic continental container traffic of 30 tons plus.

Not until comparatively recent years was there any call for structural alteration and even then not because of any failure to stand up to the demands of another age. A car which went out of control in the early 1960s collided with the stone balustrades. Already worn by scouring winds for a century and a half, the ornamental supports went down like ninepins and were replaced by the existing utilitarian rails. Later, a pedestrian way was constructed on the south side of the bridge as a road safety measure.

Towards the end of 1967 Brigg Urban Council prepared a scheme for another bridge to be built a few hundred yards to the north of the County Bridge. Estimated to cost in the region of £100,000, it was due to fit in with proposed loop road designed to open up some 25 acres of back-land for industrial development. It would also have provided a convenient access to the new cattle market.

Most important, this was the key to the central area development scheme which was to have provided new shops and office accommodation, a new public house, bus station and a host of other development which would have made Cary-lane the hub of this busy market town.

Cary Lane - the hub

But all this planning came at a time when the Government was urging local authorities to cut back on capital expenditure and councillors who had their doubts whether the cost of the new bridge and the roadwork would be balanced by the advantages to be gained, succeeded in getting a deferment.

What is likely to happen, however, is that the new authority, with infinitely larger resources, may review the whole position in the light of what such an acreage of land is worth today in terms of industrial and other forms of development.

Cary-lane, long neglected because full-scale development was too much for the small resources of a town of around 5,000 population, may at last be recognised as possessing immense value and the cost of a new bridge in that context would be only part of the investment.

In 1974 the position is just as it was 600 or more years ago - Brigg is still dependent on its bridges.

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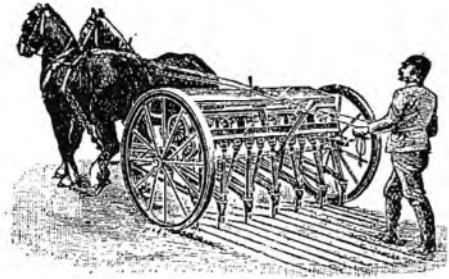
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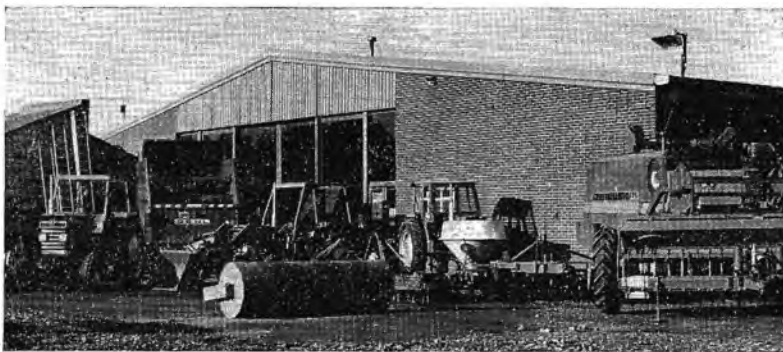
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Brigg at one time was a place famous for rabbit skins, liquorice and "Ankam eels" but not until the railway came in 1848 did industry make any real impact. Considering that the urban area is under 1,000 acres in extent - less than some of the farms in the surrounding rural area - Brigg industry has been diversified and reasonably prosperous. Below is a review of local activities through the centuries.

BRIGG HAD BRICKYARDS, SHIPYARDS, SOAP WORKS AND A TANNERY

Many Failed To Survive - But Local Industry Goes On

THERE is a common belief that Brigg was never really on the map until the year 1205, when a Royal Charter was granted to establish a market. Yet although there are no records to prove it, there is evidence of some kind of trading enterprise in the Brigg area some 3,000 years or more ago. Workmen excavating on the site of what were to be the new Brigg gasworks in 1886 put their spades way back into history when they unearthed a 40 ft. boat which offered interesting speculation for the antiquarians.

Romantic speculation ?

The antiquarians of the day suggested that the boat had probably been used for trading with the ships of Hiram of Tyre and that it had played some part in the world-wide treasure hunt which preceded the building of King Solomon's Temple. Little more than romantic speculation, perhaps, plus a yawning gap in the history of a district which showed no evidence of a town called Brigg during the Roman occupation. Nothing, in fact, until one Hugh Nevill, Lord of Raby, gave King John 20 marks and a palfrey of five marks value for leave to marry Desiderata, daughter of Sir Stephen de Camara, Lord of Glemford Bridge, for liberty to hold a market there and a fair once a year for three days and toll of all merchandise bought or sold, and fairs on the feast of St. James, July 25, for six days."

That right was confirmed to Ernisius Nevill, son of Hugh, 15 years later, and records also show that Gilbert de Nevill, lord of the manor of Kettleby, held a market at Brigg on Thursdays in 1275. Nearly eight centuries later those market rights still exist, owned by Brigg Urban District Council. Thursday is still the traditional market day, although in recent years a fat stock market has been established on Tuesdays and a start has been made on the building up of a Saturday market.

Brigg could have disappeared

Had the River Ancholme been allowed to pursue its desultory course through the centuries it is doubtful whether the market concession would have had any great value. It is to drainage work dating back to the latter part of the 13th century, inspired by King Edward that Brigg owes its very existence. Without the continuance of that work by succeeding bodies of Ancholme Commissioners, Brigg could easily and literally have disappeared from the face of the earth.

In its earliest days Brigg enjoyed the reputation of being a thriving fishing hamlet but the great John Evelyn, diarist, author and one of the founders of the Royal Society - and a close friend of Sir John Nelthorpe - noted when he passed through Brigg in 1654 that it was a place "famous for its plantations of liquorice."

Three iron foundries

But there is no doubt that it is the 19th century which will always rank as the most enterprising, one which laid the foundations of an even better trading edifice than actually resulted. There were three iron foundries and engineering works firmly established in the town, one on the site at present occupied by Peacock and Binnington; another on the site later to be used as a builder's yard by R. M. Phillips and after that by Ernest Ward, roofing contractor.



As traditional as the barber's pole, this golden sheaf on an attractive wrought-iron bracket hangs over a Wrawby Street baker's shop

The turbine pump, hailed as a great engineering feat, and the centrifugal pump, were invented and manufactured by Roslyn Hett at Brigg, in addition to the manufacture of sizeable power plants.

There used to be two shipyards at Brigg, both long since gone. One of the yards was on the site which has been used for many years as a poultry and produce auction in Manley-gardens. Mr. Fred Atkinson, a former chairman of Brigg Urban Council used to tell how he rode down the slipway on the last ship to be launched from that yard.

The boat-building, of course, attracted the ancillary trades of sail-making and rope-making but as the main industry disappeared, so did the others.

(continued on page 8)

SPRINGS AND CORAHS BRIGG'S LARGEST EMPLOYERS

There had been another interesting sidelight of the rabbit skin business – an export trade with China. In their natural state the skins were said to be worth 8d. to 1s. 4d. each and apparently the Chinese had a use for them even after the fur had been plucked. Records are hazy as to how such a trade developed and to what use the Chinese put the skins but it is known that they were cured and exported, tea being sent back in exchange.

The Local Brew

Among those early 19th century enterprises, one of the few to stay the course well into the 20th century, was the brewery of A. M. and E. Sergeant. That was founded about 1837, when it was found that the water from a spring at Castlethorpe was eminently suitable for the brewing of beer. It was a feather in the local cap many years later when Sergeant's "Dolphin" ale won first prize at the Brewers' Exhibition, London.

The riverside brewery stayed in business for 130 years, for although Sergeants sold out to Hewitt Bros, Grimsby, in the 1930s, the firm preserved its identity and its own brew until 1967. Eventually, however, there was amalgamation with the big combines such as Hammonds, Charrington and Bass until today it is hard to say who owns what.

The fact was that the beer brewed at Brigg, even though its flavour stood high above anything coming from the mass production breweries, was but a drop in the ocean compared with the vast output of the parent firm. As these matters are governed by

founder was Mr. Henry Spring who decided he could best indulge his taste for world travel by marketing a conserve much used in Lincolnshire households, lemon curd.

There was plenty of raw material on the doorstep. Being in the heart of rural Lincolnshire there was an ample supply of butter and eggs, the only other ingredients required being lemons and sugar. Henry Spring made a modest start in cottage-type premises in a little court off Wrawby-street. His high-quality product met with a wide demand and today is known all over the world – still being made to the original recipe of nearly 100 years ago.

Tribute from The Queen

Encouraged by this success he went in for a wide range of other products – Christmas puddings, mincemeat, horseradish sauce, essences, perfumes and smelling salts. The business prospered and provided much local employment. It also provided him with two world tours.

As far back as the reign of Queen Victoria, the Comptroller of Her Majesty's Household wrote a personal letter to Mr. Henry Spring from Osborne, saying how much Spring's horseradish sauce had been enjoyed with the royal baron of beef.

Spring's were pioneers in the canning business, sending canned Christmas puddings and millions of cans of honey to the troops overseas during the 1914-18 war. They were

Morrells Stepped In To Avert Local Crisis

The clay deposits of the Ancholme valley were used by the brick industry – at one time there were three brickyards in Brigg. One, still known as the Old Brickyard, was used for the manufacture of breeze blocks in a highly-automated plant owned by W. Graham and Sons. Until they made a comparatively recent switch to the supply of graded clinker ash for lightweight aggregates, they made perhaps a greater contribution to the building trade than all the three brickyards had done.

Brigg also used to have a soap works, a tannery, three roller flour mills, a daily passenger steamboat service to Hull and a goods service three times a week run by the old Ancholme Steam Packet Company.

In the early part of the 19th century there were more people employed at Brigg dressing rabbit skins than in any other provincial town in the country. In the sandy warrens around Brigg there was a special breed of silver-grey rabbits and women were employed in the Coney Court factories to pluck the fur for "beaver" hats and for the stuffing of luxury mattresses, also for the lining of robes, tuffets and muffs. The passing of the Enclosure Acts which put an end to free access to much of the common land also put an end to a busy local industry.



Springs' contribution to Brigg's Coronation celebrations in 1953 — an imposing arch erected on the County Bridge. Springs were always great supporters of all local causes.

accountants whose ledgers have no column for local sentiment, the brewery that had its first pint on the way when Queen Victoria went to the throne, was deemed to have had its day

LAWS re-financed

Today the premises are being used for the manufacture of soft drinks by Lindsey Aerated Water Supply, a firm which operated on the other side of the river since 1935, now re-financed and reorganised and launching a new range of carbonated drinks. The brewery site retains a link with its original purpose by acting as a distribution centre for bottled beer.

One old-established firm which was still going strong until last year but which was taken over in 1973 was Spring and Company

Ltd, a family concern that started in 1875. The pioneers in canning a prepared fruit base so that the housewife in any part of the world and at any time of the year could make "home-made marmalade." Registered under the name of "Ma Made" it was a winner from the start, cutting costs because of what was saved in transport charges for glass jars and water. Its freshness appealed to a universal palate because no preservatives were necessary.

Shock announcement

It was a shock, therefore, when the news broke that this firm with such a reputation for progress and quality, having expanded consistently through six reigns, should find itself in financial difficulties and in the hands

COUNCIL CLERK AND CHAIRMAN NEGOTIATED POST-WAR INDUSTRY FOR BRIGG

£600,000 Expansion Revitalisa- tion

of the official receivers. There were prospects of redundancies and unemployment but early in 1973 it was announced that John Morrell and Company, of Liverpool, part of a vast American combine, had acquired the assets and goodwill of the firm, re-naming it Spring Food Products.

Morrells planned a detailed programme aimed at "expansion and revitalisation" and by September announced a five-year scheme to spend over £600,000 on new plant and machinery through to 1978. "We are aiming to ensure the continuity of production at Brigg," said Mr. Brian Stead, chairman and managing director. He added that they were very conscious of the high reputation which Spring's products enjoyed throughout the trade and it was their intention to further project that. Also, he said, they would be extending the range although staying in the market where Springs were known as the specialists.

Reputation for quality

Whatever lay behind the collapse of the Spring regime rebounded on their personal lives and fortunes and it must have been a sad day when they were faced with others coming in to do their job. But one thing which stands out clearly on the credit side is that for almost a century they built up a reputation for quality which their successors were determined to maintain.

Also on the credit side is the fact that for all those years they provided regular employment for a lot of people and that the local economy would have been much the poorer had it not been for Springs of Brigg.

Providing well-paid employment for a mass of women labour are Corah's, at the St. Margaret Factory in Bridge-street, Brigg. Progress there has been a continuing saga, starting in 1946 with one ex-RAF hut. Two more were added in the following year, eventually getting permanent buildings to which new bays were tacked on as the labour force was expanded to cater for the demand for St. Margaret products in the hosiery and knitwear line.

Convincing couple

This was one of Brigg Urban Council's success stories in the realms of light industry, due mainly to the efforts made by Mr. Ben Benstead, at that time chairman of the council, and the Clerk, Mr. J. J. Magrath. Corah's of Leicester had planned to build a satellite factory in the immediate post-war years but they were not wholly convinced that Brigg was the right place. Mr. Benstead and Mr. Magrath did the convincing and eventually had the satisfaction of seeing the growth of a factory employing about 400 people.

Twenty-three years later they were guests of honour at the opening of a 20,000 ft extension at the St. Margaret factory, an extension that was described as "Magnificent, gay, bright - an exciting experiment destined for success" by the Hon. Michael D. Sieff, assistant managing director of Marks and Spencer, when he performed the opening ceremony.

That extension was the first stage in the modernisation of the Brigg factory and part of an overall plan for the general development and expansion of the Corah organisation.

For many years linking was the only operation carried out at Brigg but eventually the whole technique of production altered, developing the range of goods, with a general upgrading of the quality of the merchandise. The new plant included automatic packaging which, at the time of installation, was only the second of its kind to be produced.

Spring's and Corah's are the largest employers of labour within the urban area. Peacock and Binnington, who have been at the Old Foundry, Bridge-street, for close on 80 years, are not so labour-intensive but they supply the machinery needs of the farmers over a wide area of North Lincolnshire, also, of course, providing the servicing that goes with it.

Men at the top

The firm of Peacock and Binnington was founded by Mr. Henry E. C. Peacock, in 1894, becoming a limited company in 1937 with his son, Mr. H. Allen Peacock as managing director. During 1973 it was announced that Mr. Allen Peacock, who served with the Royal Flying Corps during 1914-18 war, had relinquished his position to become chairman of the company, the new managing director being his son, Michael, grandson of the founder, with a long-standing employee, Mr. G. R. Bradshaw, as assistant managing director.

That would appear to be the sum total of Brigg's industry within the urban boundaries apart from a few smaller concerns on a recently-developed estate on the north side of the cattle market. But no review of local industry could exclude Brigg Sugar Factory and what is still known as the Farmers' Company even though they are sited just within the area of Brigg Rural District Council.

First campaign 44 days

The Sugar Factory has made phenomenal progress since it opened in November, 1928, when the first campaign lasted exactly 44 days, dealing with an average of 811 tons of beet a day, a meticulous record stating: "Slicing was completed 27th December at 10.20 a.m."

The yield per cropped acre in that first year was 5.8 tons at average sugar of 17.4 per cent and the growers received 46s. per ton on a basic 15½ per cent sugar, which meant an actual price of 52s. per ton of delivered clean beet.

A total of 766 farmers had contracted to grow 6,045 acres and the first campaign produced 4,980 tons of sugar.

The 1973 figures provide some very interesting comparisons. There are less growers than there were in 1928 because so many small farms have been absorbed by their larger neighbours but the acreage has increased from around 6,000 to 24,000.

Better techniques in cultivation and weed control, seed with more positive rates of germination and a host of other factors which were bound to emerge in 45 years, raised the yield from 5.8 tons per acre to an estimated 17 tons. Because of the vastly increased root

weights, sugar content was bound to decline and much of the 1973 crop was under 16 per cent compared with the 17.4 per cent of 1928.

On the other hand, 1973 produced some 400,000 tons of beet and well over 50,000 tons of sugar. As for slicing capacity, that had to develop as yields increased year by year and the 1928 figure of 811 tons per day bears little relation to today's throughput, 3,100 tons per day.

The price structure also has changed dramatically. The pioneers knew exactly what they were going to be paid for their beet but 1973 saw beet growers experiencing their first year of conditions in the Common Market. The basic price was £7.01 per ton in addition to which there was a pulp allowance of 85p for every ton of clean beet delivered, added to which there was 6p per ton for every £ by which the price of pulp exceeded £30 a ton.

Needs a computer

Then there was a range of freight allowances which varied with the distances involved, so, everything considered, it was not surprising that computers were needed to calculate what the grower should be paid for his beet.

Only one feature of the sugar beet industry seems to have remained unchanged - the dirt tares. Thousands of tons of good North Lincolnshire soil are still transported to the factory every year in spite of the advent of that mechanical aid, the cleaner-loader. Top tares have actually risen. Tremendous progress has been made in the development of mechanical harvesters but it is a pious hope that automation can ever deal as precisely with a beet top as a man with a knife.

To the average Briggensian the factory standing on the west bank of the River Ancholme is still The Farmers' Company in spite of mergers and takeovers which steered a once-local concern into the giant Albright and Wilson complex. The Farmers' Company was incorporated in 1874, taking over from Pigott and Holmes, all the original shareholders and directors being members of the local farming community. They were mainly interested in fertilisers at that time but later engaged in seed-crushing, feedstuffs manufacture, lime and fertiliser spreading, seed merchants, and later, through a subsidiary company, FCL Crop Protection Ltd, agricultural spraying.

Cake for cattle

A considerable labour force was required to handle the incoming shipments of materials used for the manufacture of linseed cake for the fattening of cattle and the vast tonnages of FCL pigmeal. For 77 years there was a member of the Pigott family concerned in the direction of the company's affairs and in the board-room were men like Clifford Nicholson and the Godfreys, shrewd farmers who were also very capable businessmen. Control at the top was purely local.

Today, as a fraction of Albright and Wilson enterprises, the man in charge is Mr. D. W. Credland, regional manager who works from Brigg, lives at Barton-on-Humber and is responsible for an area stretching from the Humber to the Mersey, Skegness to the Severn.

There is little physical activity compared with pre-war days. There is mixing and dressing of seeds and there is mobile machinery based at Brigg but travelling to meet customer requirements. There is warehousing storage and distribution of fertiliser - the rest is administration. But although FCL Crop Protection Ltd. has disappeared as a title, agricultural spraying still continues by land machines, light aircraft and helicopters as part of the many services supplied under the aegis of Albright and Wilson.

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Urban Councillors:

“Madame Chairman”

Town Councillors:

“Madame Mayor”

THE Woman Who Made History in Brigg during 1973 was Miss Dorothy Mary Selby, a retired headmistress, of The Nook, Hedgerow-lane. She became the first woman chairman of Brigg Urban District Council, cutting across a tradition that had existed since 1895. Always the chairman had been a man, even in the days of the council's forerunner, the Local Government Board which came into being in 1864 and stayed in office until it was supplanted 31 years later by the new urban authority.

Because of local government reorganisation due to take effect on April 1, 1974, Miss Selby will also be Brigg Urban District Council's last chairman. The local authority that has ruled Brigg's destinies for the last 78 years is due to become subservient to the new Glanford District Council which takes in the urban areas of Brigg and Barton-on-Humber and the rural district of Glanford Brigg.

It was quite by chance that Miss Selby got into local government at all, starting, rather surprisingly, by drawing a ticket for an Anglia Television quiz show, Try For Ten, due to be staged at Brigg Corn Exchange in January, 1969.

Miss Selby at that time was secretary of Brigg Women's Institute and they had received an allocation of only 18 tickets for the television show. As there were 72

members there had to be a draw and Miss Selby's was one of the names that came out of the hat. She went along as just another member of the audience but producer David Hamilton picked her out to answer one of the preliminary questions – and she found herself landed with a part in the recorded programme.

It was one of those programmes where the contestant had to answer 10 questions in a row but if they fell down on one they could start again and try to complete the ten within a specified time. Miss Selby got to No. 7 and then failed. She tried again and a second time failed after seven. Third time was lucky and she got the £25 jackpot.

What that quiz did reveal was that Miss Selby, a comparative newcomer to Brigg,

(continued on page 12)

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Chapel Yard

Woman with three hats

(continued from page 11)

was a knowledgeable and entertaining personality and it was because of the impact that she made on a television audience that her colleagues in the Women's Institute recognised that she was capable of making a wider contribution to local affairs. They persuaded her to accept nomination as a candidate for the Brigg UDC May elections.

There was a formidable list of men candidates, as might have been expected but although she just failed to hit the jackpot on that occasion, she polled a very commendable 784 votes to come second to Mr. Tom Morgan, retired Clerk of Brigg Rural Council who had consistently topped the poll at Brigg for years.

Roman holiday

Miss Selby had made no attempt to "pack 'em in" by running a fleet of cars to take electors to the polling stations. In fact, she was not even in evidence on election day. Nearly six months earlier, before she knew anything about either the television quiz or the elections, she had booked a trip to Rome where she was due to take an "archeological holiday." Not even the prospect of civic honours was allowed to get in the way of that.

Born in Sleaford in 1907, Miss Selby went to school in Grimsby and Cleethorpes and trained as a teacher at Stockwell, London. She taught for 18 years in Grimsby schools and got her first headship at North Thoresby County Primary in 1947, going to the Bushfield-road Infants' School in 1953 and retiring in 1967.

She was secretary of the Women's Institute for three years but gave that up when she became involved in council work, although she still takes her spell of hospital service as a member of the WVRs.

She was as surprised as anyone when she found she had been elected to the council, still more surprised two years ago when she was made vice-chairman and subsequently chairman for the council's final year.

The highlights of her year, she told "Brigg 1973" included her visit to Buckingham Palace for the annual garden party to which civic heads are invited - "I didn't actually speak to the Queen but I did hear her speaking to groups of people who had been selected to be presented to her and I was tremendously impressed by the way she chatted to them and put them at their ease."

Then there was a "cruise-in-company" organised by the Trent Boating Club in conjunction with Glanford Boat Club. For Miss Selby that was something of a blind date, for she had no idea what it might entail.

World's worst sailor

"I thought we might be going out into the River Trent or the Humber, perhaps the North Sea and I wasn't very keen about it because I'm the world's worst sailor - even the sight of water makes me feel sick."

"So I went ready for anything - I even took a Sea Legs - and all we did was to cruise along the Ancholme and round the island. It was a lovely day and you can imagine what the hospitality was like."

As chairman of the council Miss Selby went to the annual conference of the Urban District Councils of England and Wales. She was not impressed. The conference was held at Brighton and her impression was that most of the delegates treated it as an extra holiday at the ratepayers' expense.

"There were three days of boring meetings at which the papers were not presented all that well and I'm afraid I got very little out of it except that it was useful to exchange views with people from other authorities. But generally I thought it was a wicked waste of money and that distressed me."

Taking the year as a whole, however, Miss Selby said she had thoroughly

Oldest Amateur Sports Club in Brigg

LAYING claim to being the oldest amateur sports club in Brigg is the Ancholme Rowing Club, founded 1868 and still going strong. The club premises are located in Manley-gardens and today the boats leave from the same spot they always did.

In Victorian times the correct mode of attire was straw boaters and knickerbockers and the main club activity was leisurely rowing to picnics on the banks of the river. Only a small proportion of the members exerted themselves to row competitively in races and regattas.

Today the position has changed. Although "social rowing" is still indulged in, the emphasis is on competitive rowing. As soon as one regatta season is over the members go into strict training for the next.

Annual regatta

With 55 members and 19 boats the Ancholme Rowing Club is a thriving and vigorous organisation. There is an annual regatta on the River Ancholme open to all other rowing clubs in the area and club championships are held annually.

In 1973 the Ancholme Rowing Club was represented at 15 other regattas, starting with the York Spring Regatta in May and ending with the Sheffield Regatta in October.

With a large junior membership and a senior membership which includes a Cambridge Blue, the club's future looks good. Boathouse accommodation has not kept pace with the years and the 19 boats really have to be stacked to get them all under cover but there are plans for new buildings that will cater for a membership of up to 250.

enjoyed the experience. None of the councillors had ever treated her with anything but respect and had accepted her rulings just as they would have done had there been a man in the chair.

There has been a constant round of dinners, dances and other social functions which fall to the lot of chairmen of any local authority. In all this she has had the companionship of her sister, Mrs. Hilda Beatrice Jacklin, of North Coates.

"Not that it's been all pleasure," said Miss Selby. "There have been a great many meetings to attend and a lot of business to do but I've got a lot of pleasure out of that and altogether it's been a most interesting year, one that I wouldn't have missed for anything."

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Lady Winefride with her six distinguished sons

THE LONG HAUL THAT TOOK GERVASE ELWES TO THE TOP

Doing some of the
hauling —

A dynamic Lady Winefride

NO book about Brigg would be complete without some account of the Elwes family who made their home at the Manor House, Bigby Street, in the early years of this century.

They left their mark on the town in many ways, not the least being the music festival which Gervase and Lady Winefride founded at such infinite pains in 1900 and which is featured elsewhere in these pages.

Today there is still a link with this remarkable couple through their grandson, Capt. Jeremy Elwes, who lives four miles away from Brigg at the stately Elsham Hall. Typical of the Elwes tradition of profound dedication to any mission undertaken, irrespective of whether that mission has "popular" appeal, Capt. Elwes ploughs a unique furrow in a rural retreat which is the headquarters of a thriving farming enterprise, has a nature reserve and former stables which have been converted into galleries housing art and antiques.

Fair share of eccentrics

The full story of the Elwes through the ages would require many volumes to do justice to all the characters stemming from a family tree which put its roots down in the 15th century. There are records of one "Helwys" being engaged in some form of litigation in 1185 but research has shown that the Elwes of Brigg Manor House and Elsham Hall are of that branch of the family directly descended from Geoffrey Elwes of Askham, Nottinghamshire (1490–1555).

It is a family which has had its fair share of eccentrics whose idiosyncrasies ranged from miserliness to madness but always there has been a wealth of talent which has evinced itself in so many ways. The long line of Elwes has had its Members of Parliament, baronets and knights, high-ranking officers in the Navy and Army. There have been High Sheriffs – Capt. Elwes himself was in this illustrious list in recent years – and there have been outstanding churchmen of more than one denomination.

(continued on page 17)

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Waterloo, Boer War and Alamein

There was a Sir Gervase Elwes who was Lieutenant of the Tower and who was executed in 1615 after becoming naively embroiled in a squalid intrigue known as the "Overbury Mystery". A few centuries later there was a Robert Elwes of the Grenadier Guards who rode to his death at Lang's Neck in the Boer War, shouting as he charged with sword in hand, "Floreat Etona."

John Raleigh Elwes died bravely in the field of Waterloo and in World War 2 a Jeremy Elwes on his 21st birthday helped to hood-wink the Afrika Corps by planting doctored maps in an Axis minefield on the Alamein front. Also serving with distinction in that war were six of his uncles, and no one could have been more proud than Lady Winefride of her contribution to the war effort – five Colonels and a Naval Chaplain.

The one and only Gervase

But the one who was indelibly bound up with Brigg and whose fame really was worldwide was Gervase Elwes, father of the six famous sons, himself the son of Valentine Dudley Cary Elwes of Billing Hall and Brigg Manor. Educated at the Oratory School, Egbaston, under the famous Cardinal Newman, and at Woburn School under Lord Petre, he went on to Christ Church, Oxford, where he remained from 1885 to 1888.

Entering the diplomatic service he went to Munich in the following year, where he studied German, French and the violin. Then he became honorary attaché to the British Embassy in Vienna, where he spent a year extending his knowledge of music.

For the next three years he was stationed in Brussels, where he studied singing with Demest. That, however, was to be his last diplomatic post, for his father's health was failing and in 1895 he had to return to England to help manage the Brigg estates.

Six years earlier Gervase Elwes had married Lady Winefride Feilding, fourth daughter of the 8th Earl of Denbigh. The wedding was at the Oratory Church and the ceremony was performed by the Bishop of Northampton. After honeymooning at Ugbrooke Park, Devon, and West Malvern, they arrived in Brigg in the summer of 1889.

"A sort of Royal Progress"

There was a tumultuous reception. A triumphal arch had been constructed at the station gates by estate workmen and as Lady Winefride described it later – "The Lincolnshire 'do' was a sort of royal progress and I was perfectly thrilled with it."

A letter written by Mrs. Cary Elwes, fortunately preserved, gives a contemporary and excited staccato account of the homecoming of Gervase and his bride.

"Such a lovely reception," she wrote in her letter to Dudley. "Station crowded with people, carpets laid down on the platform, dais, plants and all the elite of Brigg to greet us, speech made and presentation copy of it on illustrated book given by Mr. Symonds (proprietor of the stores).

"Thanks returned by G. in a very pretty speech . . . then off to Manor House through a street of high Venetian masts and under a turreted arch like an old castle entrance, everywhere thronged with eager, shouting crowds.

"All shops closed, every house hung with flags, at every window groups waving. Down to Manor House, out in the garden, two cedars planted by Gervase and Win.

"On, on through more crowded streets to Angel Inn yard, gaily decorated like 15th century. Mrs. Skeff (Mrs. Skevington was the landlady at the Angel) beautifully dressed, presiding in a sort of bower, with such a beautiful basket of cream carnations, presented to Win.

"Up to Assembly Rooms, at door of which elites stood, all the room dressed with flags, banners, little tables for tea, so pretty, and groups of Brigg people round them, and chairs for us to sit and talk to them on.

"On to Corn Exchange where lesser grandees, cottagers, were having high tea. In all places speeches, hurrahs and general cordiality, in fact wonderful affection.



This portrait of Gervase Elwes, published for the first time, was drawn by his son, Rudolph when he was 18 years of age, and at that time showing great promise as an artist. This picture was reproduced from a half-plate negative discovered at Elsham Hall by Mrs. Clare Elwes.

"Our course was always in the brake with four lovely horses, beautiful bays, with two postilions, and now again we mounted, Win, G. and I on box, father and Mr. Cave (the agent) inside, and at full gallop passed down Wrawby Street. Out to Bigby, full gallop, Win in fits of delight and excitement at everything."

Taking up the story, Lady Winefride went on to recount how Mrs. Cary Elwes described similar scenes at each of the three villages on the estate and how eventually they came galloping back into Brigg for dinner. "I collected a pile of bouquets, one of them composed of a rose out of each garden in Bigby village, where it came from."

In the book she wrote in later life, Lady Winefride told of their life together when Gervase was in the diplomatic service – Munich, Vienna, Brussels – a gay and glittering chapter which ended in 1895 when it was felt that Gervase would be well-advised to stay in England and help manage the estates because of his father's ill-health.

Back to the Manor House

For the next three years they lived with Gervase's parents at the Brigg Manor House. In addition to his estate management, he took a great interest in forestry, superintending the planting, thinning and general care of trees on the estate. He would name new spinneys after members of the family, hence Gervase Covert, Dudley Covert, Geoffrey Covert and even Winnie Spinney.

As a magistrate he took his duties seriously. He was fair-minded and sympathetic towards the man in the dock and often relations of men who had got into trouble called at the Manor House to ask if Mr. Gervase would be kind enough to be sure to be on the bench on the day when they came up for trial.

(continued on page 19)

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Unusual treatment of a picture of the Angel Hotel, Brigg, by Reginald Ruscoe, secretary of the South Humberside Photographic Society.

“Shattering Broadside” from Lady Winefride

(continued from page 17)

He had done a little singing and voice practice in Vienna, where he had met Brahms but generally he was inclined to be apathetic until Lady Winefride, who had left him in Brussels in the autumn of 1893, sent him what she described as “the most shattering broadside imaginable.”

“Though I say it myself,” she wrote later, “It was rather a masterpiece and finely sustained over several sheets of notepaper”.

Gervase found it “savouring of the surgeon’s knife” and told his wife, “I am not too old to begin a new sort of life . . . now I have ambition, thanks to that letter of yours, that bitter, wholesome and yet loving letter.”

He began to practice singing more seriously than ever before, taking lessons from M. Demest. But his new duties at Brigg put the music on one side for a time and not until the spring of 1897 was his enthusiasm once more stimulated.

Wasted on village concerts

His sister-in-law, Cissie Denbigh, asked him to go to Newnham and sing for her at a village concert. He went and met Alfred Scott Gatty, the composer of Plantation Songs and other works. Scott Gatty was much impressed and told him, “You have got much too good a voice to waste on village concerts. You ought to go up to London and have lessons.”

That led to his introduction to Henry Russell, recommended by Melba as the best man known for voice production. Russell gave a favourable and authoritative opinion that Gervase was well suited to sing professionally, an idea which his father was quite convinced “could not be entertained in any circumstances.”

Father’s advice was characteristic of the times, that to take up a career as a professional singer would be “going against the duties God had sent him into the world to perform” – as heir to country estates he had management and shooting to think about. Also,

he told his son, “Remember that Russell gains an enormous income with his twenty minutes at one guinea . . . don’t be taken in by all he says.”

For some time a dutiful Gervase tried to content himself with the role of “just another good amateur” but in 1901 he made up his mind to turn professional and went to Paris for lessons with Jules Bouhy. For six months he and Lady Winefride, with two of their children, lived in a flat near the Arc de Triomphe. During his stay in Paris, on a Christmas Eve, he earned his first 100 franc note at a professional engagement through Bouhy’s interest, and told Lady Winefride excitedly “I want to frame it and keep it for ever.” Her comment, in her book: “I was quite afraid that he might carry his unpractical and inopportune intention into effect.”

“Brain as well as voice”

They left Paris in April, 1903, Gervase having been engaged to sing at the final concert of the Westmorland Festival. He had the misfortune to catch a cold two days before the performance but by dint of gargling, sucking lozenges and having his throat painted with silver nitrate, sang well enough to earn the thanks of Arthur Somervell and the comment from the Yorkshire Post music critic that it was nice to hear a person who sang with his brain as well as his voice.

The launching of Gervase as an entity in the world of music was not easy. Henry Wood was “kind and appreciative” but Arthur Boosey, of Boosey & Co, was discouraging. “Oh, my dear fellow,” said he, on learning Gervase’s age, “by the time you get known you’ll be too old and your voice will be gone.”

He received an invitation to sing at the Chappel Ballad Concerts but declined “because I will not sing second-class ballads.” It was a wise decision. He later met Sir Charles Stanford and Sir Hubert Parry, who were greatly impressed. Then there was Prof. Kruse, a German violinist concerned with the revival of the Saturday “Pops” at St. James’s Hall. “Oh! Mr. Elwes, why have I never heard of you before?” – and promptly engaged him for several concerts.

Even then, however, Gervase Elwes had not arrived at the stage when it could be said, “From that point he never looked back.” He met up again with Victor Beigel, an accomplished musician who suggested that he should change his technique. He was so depressed after a course of lessons that he almost gave up singing but in the end a brilliant Beigel produced the foundations of what was to develop into a faultless technique.

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(continued from page 19)

It was the influence of Prof. Kruse that eventually made Gervase Elwes a world name. Elgar's "Dream of Gerontius" had been performed in 1903 in the newly-built Westminster Cathedral and the part of Gerontius had been sung by Wüllner, a celebrated German tenor.

In the following spring Prof. Kruse arranged a Beethoven Festival, added the "Dream of Gerontius" to the programme and invited Gervase to sing the part of Gerontius. He sang with absolute conviction. Elgar told him he hoped to hear him sing the part again and Dr. McNaught, of Novello's music publishing company, told him, "You have made your reputation for ever."

The Royal Choral Society began presenting this work at the beginning of Lent every year, with Gervase in the title part. There were performances in other parts of the country and in the 16 years that followed he sang Gerontius no less than 118 times.

He sang before the King and Queen at Windsor Castle in company with Clara Butt and Kreisler. He was caught up with a volume of engagements which took him to Germany, Holland, Belgium and three concert tours of America and, as Lady Winefride stated in her book, if he had been prepared to "commercialise" they might have become quite rich. For the year ending April 1906 he had made just under 500 guineas and at the height of his fame she doubted if he ever made more than £2,000.

Recital at Belgian Palace

There was a concert tour of Germany and in 1908, an engagement to sing three concerts in Brussels, resulting in an invitation from the Comtesse de Flandres, mother of Prince Albert (afterwards King of the Belgians) for him to give a recital at her Palace. The invitation was repeated in the following year.

Gervase went to America for the first time in 1909, singing in New York and Boston, and made another tour before the outbreak of war in 1914. His earnings contracted severely during the war years because of the devoted way in which he continually gave his services for charity and the entertainment of the men in hospitals.

During the late spring of 1920 he and Lady Winefride conceived "the fatal idea of paying a third visit to America," it being represented to him that a six-month tour would reap a rich harvest in a country enjoying the full tide of their greatest prosperity. They sailed on the *Celtic*, his favourite ship, on November 24.

They spent Christmas in Washington, where Gervase gave up his Christmas afternoon going from ward to ward of a large hospital singing to the poor, sick people. Back in New York he gave a recital at the Aeolian Hall and on the evening of January 11 gave a joint recital with Arthur Whiting, an American pianist of great repute, at Princetown University.

Gervase, Lady Winefride wrote later, was "full of the pleasure of singing to American audiences, of their obvious discernment and their unreserved responsiveness."

On the following morning, January 12, this great career came to an abrupt end. He was struck by the train in which he and his wife had travelled from New York to Boston and died within a few hours.

Authentic eye-witness account

There were many and various accounts of how Gervase Elwes met his death but there could be no more authentic account than that given by Lady Winefride in the book, "*Gervase Elwes*" which she wrote in conjunction with her son, Richard.

"We left the train at Boston Back Bay station. As we walked along the platform Gervase suddenly noticed that he was carrying among other things a coat which belonged to somebody else and which had been handed to him by mistake as our luggage was taken from the carriage.

"He turned and ran back to the train, which had begun to move, and shouting 'Catch this,' threw the coat to a conductor who was standing on the platform of one of the passing carriages.

"I watched the man catch the coat and then, looking back at Gervase, to my horror I saw him falling backwards between the carriage and the low station footway.

"I rushed to the spot and saw him move as I knelt down to try and hold him back from the wheels. Then something hit my head and I lost consciousness.

"When I came to, Gervase was lying on the platform insensible. I heard later that when I had been stunned, the young son of Mrs. James Storrow, who was to have been our hostess at Boston, had knelt down in my place and had held Gervase away from the wheels in spite of being struck several times on the head by the passing train.

Gervase was carried quickly to the hospital and everything possible was done, but his injuries were too terrible and he died in a few hours.

"As the priest anointed him and gave him the last Sacrament, his lips moved as in answer to the prayers but he never showed any other sign of life or pain and without any struggle or movement his soul passed easily into the presence of his Saviour."

Loving and generous sympathy

Lady Winefride's clearest recollections of the days which followed were of "the blessed, tender kindness of the American people. To the last I was supported by the loving and generous sympathy of the sweetest people that ever gathered about a stranger afflicted in a far country."

Father van Ingelgem, whom she had known in Brussels many years earlier, happened to be in America at the time and he travelled hundreds of miles to preach an inspired and consoling sermon at Gervase's requiem in the Paulist Church, New York.

The time came for Lady Winefride to leave New York and to take Gervase home. Back in England her children gathered round her.

Let Lady Winefride finish the story in her own simple, poignant way: "From the little village church which had so often echoed with his songs of praise, his six sons took his bier across the lawn and he was laid beside his fathers in a grave lined with moss and snowdrops from under the Billing trees. Standing round it they sang the 'In Paradisum' and at the last Beigel threw in a great wreath of laurel.

"Over his body we set up a cross of the lovely, mellow Northamptonshire stone and let into it a leaden plaque showing his coat of arms hung with the Cross of Malta and Ronald Knox's epitaph:

"Pray for Gervase Elwes, of Roxby and Billing, who was born at Billing, the 15th of November, 1866, and accidentally killed at Boston, U.S.A., the 12th of January, 1921, leaving to his wife and eight children the example of his faith, honour and kindness, and to the world the memory of his voice."

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Wesley came to this noisy, turbulent town

But he found
us "As melting
wax before the
Lord"

JOHN Wesley, who had many a rough passage on his trips east of the River Trent, was frequently greeted by what he described as "Satan's children, an unbroken herd."

He made his first visit to Brigg in 1772 when he was 69 years of age. No Methodist had ever preached there before and he went in some doubt as to what sort of a welcome awaited him. Brigg was down in his book as "a noisy and turbulent town."

Wesley must have been pleasantly surprised for in his diary on July 20, 1772, he wrote: "It was supposed there would be much tumult but there was none at all, for the fear of God fell upon the whole congregation."

He returned to Brigg in July 1774 "by the request of the chief persons of the town." He preached to what he described as "a large and attentive congregation."

Two years later, however, the mood of the people of Brigg seemed to have changed. After his third visit he put in his diary: "I preached at Brigg in the morning and all behaved well except a few gentlemen so-called, who seemed to understand no more of the matter than if I had been talking in Greek."



Market Place looking East

On the whole, however, his initial doubts about this "noisy and turbulent town" must have subsided somewhat for on his last visit in 1781 he found the inhabitants much improved.

This is what his diary recorded: "They were all as still as night. The very boys and

girls stood as quiet as their parents. Indeed it seemed that the hearts of all were as melting wax before the Lord.

"In the evening the people flocked together on every side and I was constrained to preach in the Market Place."



The brewers must take a fair share of the credit for keeping the Shire horse breed going at a time when it was fast disappearing. This four-horse turnout, exhibited at the 1973 Lincolnshire Show, by the Hull Brewery Company, is typical of what the brewers have been doing to preserve a tradition.

Brigg brewery that could have been worth a million



And the days of coach

"I can distinctly remember seeing the stage coach with its spanking four-horse team and its grand and accomplished whip tooling with his full load of passengers along the Lincoln and Barton Roman Highway, 'making the welkin ring' with their music and laughter".

Canon John Booth Good,
Wrawby, born 1833.

This was never intended to be a showpiece – it was an ordinary, everyday workday scene at the Brigg brewery of Sutton Bean & Co. This was how their magnificent horses turned out every day to transport the local brew to 20 or more of the public houses owned by Sutton Bean in the early years of the century – and as far afield as Gainsborough and Lincoln.

William Ashby Bean came from Hull, where he had been trained in accountancy, to join the staff of the brewery, eventually becoming manager and then a partner. The assets of the company, considerable in those days, would have been worth a fortune if it had continued, although doubtless it would have suffered the same fate as many another – a takeover by one or other of the large combines.

But the business which the young Mr. Bean had done so much to build up was never destined to get to that stage. He experienced personal tragedy in 1918 when two of his five sons, Stuart and Kenneth, both of whom had been training for managerial responsibility, were killed on active service in France in the same month, April 1918. There was a further blow in the November of that year, when he lost his wife.

Five years later he was faced with another crisis. His partner, F. R. Sutton, decided to take his capital out of the business and to meet that demand meant realising some of the firm's assets. There was an alternative, of course – he could have found someone else to have invested a sum of money equivalent to what was being taken out.

Some of the older residents recall some talk of an investment offer which would have injected £75,000 into the brewery finances and, they say, it was there for the taking if Mr. Bean had kept an appointment at the Lord Nelson Hotel.

But for some reason best known to himself, Mr. Bean, at that time around 60 years of age, did not avail himself of the offer. Instead, he decided to realise the assets and the whole of the public houses were offered to the tenants. Where those options were not taken up, they were offered to other breweries.

The only Brigg licensee to take advantage of such an opportunity was Mr. Billy Bell at the Nelthorpe Arms. For many years afterwards he enjoyed the status of having the only "free" house in the town but the other tenants, not wishing to commit themselves to any considerable financial outlay in such depressed times, declined the offer. Thus the Britannia, Brocklesby Ox and the Queen Street off licence were purchased by the Hull Brewery and the White Horse and Lord Nelson went to Wards of Sheffield.

(continued on page 25)

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Bridge Street. The 3-storey house was at one time the home of Dr. F. J. O. King, after whom King's Avenue was named.



Sutton Bean *(continued from page 23)*

The last brew was made at Sutton Bean's on December 31, 1924 - the end of yet another local era.

One who remembers the demise of what had been a thriving local industry producing a quality beer is Mr. George East, manager of the Queen Street off-licence, whose first job on leaving school was as a clerk in the Sutton Bean offices. Even today, after almost 50 years he can remember the name of every house owned by that brewery and the name of every licensee at that time.

In addition to those mentioned above there were: Sutton Arms and Station Inn, Scawby; King William IV, Scawby Brook; White Lion and Wheatsheaf, Barton-on-Humber; Station Hotel, Barnetby; Hope and Anchor and Nelthorpe Arms, South Ferriby; Butchers' Arms, West Halton; Brown Cow, Ashby; Lord Roberts and the Britannia, Scunthorpe; Horn Inn, Messingham; Marquis of Granby, Waddingham; Cross Keys and Neptune Inn, Gainsborough; Cross Keys, Grasby; Golden Eagle, Lincoln.

Another who remembers the halcyon horse age is Mr. George Jobson, who took over the licence of the Queen's Arms, next to Sutton Bean's, in 1923. "In winter they were in stables at the back of the brewery and in the summer they were out in fields in Westrum Lane," he said. "It was a grand sight when they went off to the fields after their day's work, as fresh and lively as when they were turned out in a morning. Some of them must have weighed nearly a ton apiece."



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The day Peter Walker let Brigg off the hook

They didn't
want to
stay in
Lincolnshire
after all



No. 11 Bigby Street

One of the best architectural features of Brigg – The Exchange Club.

From April 1 this year, Brigg will be merged, along with Barton-on-Humber and the Glanford Brigg Rural Council, into a new Glanford District Council. Instead of the three former authorities having nearly 90 representatives they will have only 34, of whom three will be from Brigg, five from Barton-on-Humber and the rest from the former rural authority.

At one time it looked as though Brigg might be left out on a limb, and when the proposed territorial changes were announced, Brigg became the spearhead of a "Save Lincolnshire" campaign. The leaders of the campaign were Capt. Jeremy Elwes, of Elsham Hall, and Coun. George Hewson, with Brigg Civic Centre as the unofficial headquarters.

On first sight there was unanimity between the three authorities who were threatened with a transfer to the proposed new county of Humberside but gradually there was erosion.

Barton-on-Humber, with Humber Bridge foundations actually within its boundaries, looked ahead to the expansion that must surely come with the completion of the link with Yorkshire. They opted for Humberside. Brigg Rural Council, strongly pro-Lincolnshire in the first instance, did a remarkable turnabout and they too opted for Humberside.

George's battle cry

Brigg carried on the fight in solitary splendour, with ex-Royal Navy George Hewson urging on his supporters with the battle-cry, "At least let's go down with all guns blazing."

Mr. Peter Walker, who was then at the Department of the Environment, must have admired Brigg's stand – or it may have been that he wanted to get the whole thing settled with the least possible fuss. He told Brigg they could stay in Lincolnshire.

What transpired later made it seem that this was not quite the answer they expected. Brigg wanted to go down with guns

blazing but what Peter Walker did was to spike their guns. He told them they could stay in Lincolnshire if that was what they wanted.

It was an unexpected decision that caused some consternation. Instead of being "forced" into a convenient, compact marriage with Barton and Brigg Rural, the prospects were of joining with West Lindsey. The dominant partner would have been Gainsborough, with the villages of the Gainsborough rural area constituting the smaller fry with whom Brigg had no community of interest.

Special meeting convened

On the very day that Brigg received the news that they could stay in Lincolnshire, a special meeting of Brigg Urban Council was convened to see how they could extricate themselves from a position they had never really expected to be in.

They wanted to send a deputation to Peter Walker to argue their case as to why they should be in Humberside. But either Peter Walker didn't care where they were so long as they made up their minds one way or the other – or he was astute enough to have seen that this was likely to be the reaction. He told Brigg, in effect, "Don't bother coming all the way to London. You can be in Humberside if that's what you really want."

Commonsense had prevailed. There were lots of disadvantages about going in with Gainsborough. For one thing, it would have meant Brigg councillors travelling 20 miles each way to meetings at Gainsborough Guildhall. Gainsborough was a market town, with a cattle market. So was Brigg. How would Brigg fare, with a minority of votes, if Gainsborough had decided that two markets in one area were uneconomic – and decided to close Brigg?

(continued on page 29)

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Brigg came very near to becoming a ghost town

(continued from page 27)



Crosslands Hostel, a Lindsey County Council home for the elderly, due to be completely modernised during 1974. Until the 1930's, when it was the Brigg Workhouse, the Board of Guardians' room was used for meetings of Glanford Brigg Rural Council, whose sole office accommodation up to that time consisted of two old cottages in Albert Street. The council then acquired Arley House, former home of the Bletcher family and converted it into offices. Extensions were still being made in 1974 to cater for the needs of the new Glanford District Council.

There was also the question of council offices. Brigg Rural Council, with vast resources, had built up a fine suite of offices, complete with a computer. It had a big staff which made a sizeable contribution to local spending power. There was no doubt about what would have happened if Brigg had not become the third side of the Humberside triangle. The headquarters of the new district council would have been at Barton-on-Humber, whatever the cost of new buildings, and the offices at Brigg would have been abandoned or at least put to less remunerative use.

A big sigh of relief

The enthusiasm of the pro-Lincolnshire protagonists very nearly made Brigg a ghost town and genuine as their loyalty to their old county may have been, there must have been many who breathed a sigh of relief when an accommodating Peter Walker let them off the hook.

For the past few months there have been meetings of a Steering Committee in the council chamber of Brigg Rural Council. Mr. Robert E. Crosby, Clerk of the rural authority was appointed Chief Executive of the new Glanford District Council; the three Brigg representatives live within a few minutes' walk of the council offices and have no 40 mile round journeys to face to get to meetings; Mr. Alan McNaughton, RDC treasurer, takes over in a similar capacity with the new authority, and in every direction there are signs of continuity.

And, ironically, the man who led the "Save Lincolnshire" campaign, Coun. Hewson, was appointed the first chairman of the Glanford District Council and also won himself a seat among the independent ranks of the new Humberside County Council. Truly a man who wears many hats!

Strictly local administration

Mr. Crosby, the new Chief Executive, was prompt in announcing that the town of Brigg would remain the main administrative centre. It would have its own strictly local administration in a new Town Council, concerned at the same level as the Parish Councils in the rural area. At the same time, it would contribute to the membership of the District Council which would look after the needs of the whole new district.

How did Mr. Crosby rate the prospects of a new district council that was faced with the task of reconciling the conflicting interests of two ancient urban authorities and a



"It's a new machine - we've got to make it work."

large rural authority which had often been labelled, "Not a council at all, just a collection of parish councils."?

Once the Steering Committee had settled down to work and the main appointments had been made, Mr. Crosby went on record as saying: "What does impress me is that the new council, with the assistance of the old council, is taking on its task with enthusiasm and with a spirit to match both the challenge and the opportunity which local government re-organisation presents."

Commonsense and goodwill

He said there was nothing petty or parochial about the new set-up and already it had generated a sort of corporate character of commonsense and goodwill.

Mr. Crosby acknowledged that there were critics - some with good reason - to find fault with the new re-organisation. "Nevertheless," he said, "the new machine is what we have and it must be made to work."

(continued on page 31)

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Brigg people have been dreaming of a swimming pool for nearly half a century and in 1973 things really began to move. A local committee raised over £6,000 and hoped to finance the rest of a £25,000 project by Government grant. When grants were axed, Brigg Rural Council came to the rescue with a scheme that included not only a pool but also sauna baths, a concert hall capable of seating 1,000 people – also capable of being used for indoor sports – and, eventually, a theatre workshop. The industrial crisis of early 1974 looked like putting the brake on and some councillors wanted to scrap Phase 2. But 1974 is not a “spending” year and the signs are that with the support of the new Glanford District Council, the scheme will go ahead as planned in 1975.

“Best possible deal for the ratepayer” — Mr. Crosby

(continued from page 29)

“It does offer a challenging opportunity for a higher degree of co-operation than has ever been achieved or even sought before, through all the spheres of local government – Town or Parish Council, District Council, County Council and the Department of the Environment.”

Passing the buck

One real fault with the old system, said Mr. Crosby, was the possibility of the long-suffering ratepayer dealing with a succession of authorities, each of whom could explain politely that whatever his problem might be, it was the responsibility of one or more of the others.

“It is hoped that in future all authorities concerned with local government, all members and all staff, will act as a team with the overriding object of getting the ratepayer the best that can be had.

“This may sound idealistic – but without ideal, achievement is apt to fall short of the potential. Certainly it is a hopeful sign that the co-operation needed to set up the new authority has been forthcoming at every level.

“The new District Council bids fair to acquire a quality of corporate good sense and goodwill that should make it a worthy descendant of its constituent parents.”

Mr. Crosby said it was always tempting to think that the latest change was the greatest but it was perhaps worth considering that the old town had taken such re-shuffles as the Norman Conquest in its stride.

“We can expect it to absorb and profitably improve the latest legislation also. A hundred years hence the town will have another century’s worth of history safely behind it. Let us hope the annalists of that day can deal kindly with the material we leave them.”

The other two representatives who will serve along with Coun. Hewson on the Glanford District Council are Coun. Bryan M. Robins, a former chairman of Brigg Urban Council, and Dr. R. E. Holme, who entered local government after his retirement.

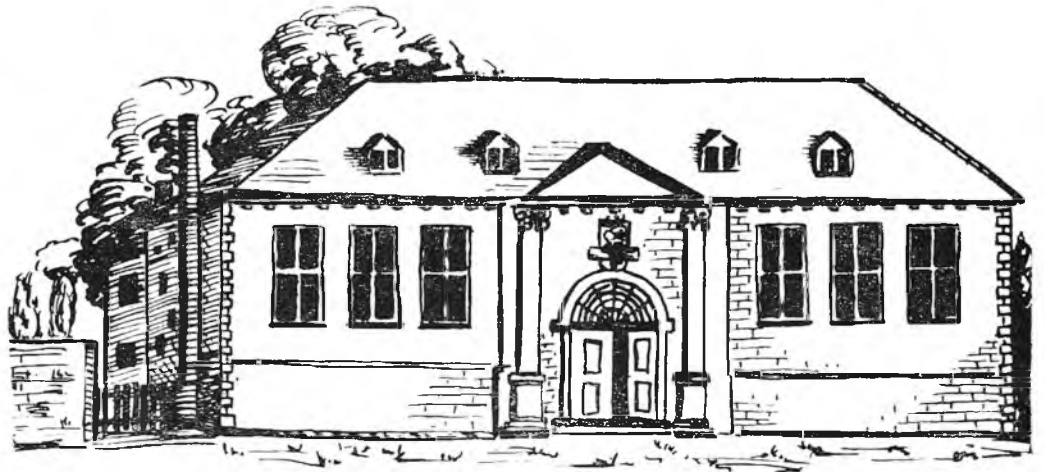
Coun. Robins, staff photographer on the Lincolnshire Times, has provided many of the photographs used in this publication.



The original 17th century south door of Brigg Grammar School, restored in 1969 as part of the school's tercentenary celebrations. — Sketch by Ken Lamming.

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A sketch of the original Brigg Grammar School. It was founded under the will of Sir John Nelthorpe 1669 but was not completed until about 1680.

DID you know that Brigg Grammar School cost only £600 when the original building was erected in the mid-17th century? And did you know that there had to be a couple of lawsuits before the terms of the founder's will could be established? Or that one headmaster was dismissed and the school closed for nearly a year because, said its critics, it had become "only a little removed from the position of a ladies' seminary"?

Those interesting facts emerged when Mr. Frank Henthorn, a member of the grammar school staff, wrote his "History of Brigg Grammar School" in the 1960s. That was a tremendous task which he undertook not only because of his inherent interest in the school in which he spent about 40 years of his career — but because "he wondered why no one had done it before."

He was to find the reason when he came to seek out material for his book. Very few records of the early days of the school existed — or if they did they had been carefully hidden away and forgotten. But after years of patient research he managed to produce a fascinating history of the school itself up to the year 1919 and at the same time include a host of interesting sidelights on the history of Brigg between the 17th and 20th centuries.

Scholarly work

"The History of Brigg Grammar School" proved to be a scholarly and authoritative work which qualified him for his Ph.D., so that "Mr." Henthorn became "Dr." Henthorn.

There was a good reason why his book went only to 1919 — he felt it right to concern himself with the first quarter-millennium because there was no shortage of material for the years that followed. The amplitude of records of the 20th century, in fact, was such that his book would have been overweighted at one end had they been included.

Dr. Henthorn did announce, in fact, that

he would be dealing with the period 1919-69 in a separate publication as part of the school's tercentenary celebrations. It duly appeared in a form that provided "an anecdotal, personal flavour" while at the same time including a section which kept the historical record in its true perspective.

Historical and collector value

It may be that his first book is out of print by this time but for the benefit of those who would like to acquire one, it can be said that once the initial sales were made, the balance was taken over by the school governors and subsequent distribution was made from the school. For a publication which has historical as well as collector value — as a limited edition is bound to have — it is well worth an enquiry to see if the odd copy is still available.

Sir John Nelthorpe, the founder of Brigg Grammar School, was probably born in a house in Brigg Market Place, premises which later became the White Lion Hotel and which today houses the Midland Bank. By his will of September 1669, Sir John directed trustees to build "one fair School-house with a dwellinghouse of brick to be for ever for the Master and Usher of the said school for the time being to dwell in upon some part of my closes called Townsend Close in the parish of

Wrawby aforesaid which are near adjoining to the market town of Glamford Brigg . . ."

He also directed that the children of certain villages or towns were to be taught "the Lattin, Greeke and Hewbrew languagdes, to write alsoe and Arethmaticke."

An unusual limitation imposed by the will concerned the Master, who was not to be allowed to remain at his post after reaching the age of 45.

Advocate of youth

This age limit had been touched upon in a brief history of the school written in 1933 by the then headmaster, Mr. J. T. Daughton, who attributed it as a sign that Sir John was "evidently a great advocate of youth." Dr. Henthorn's more logical explanation, however, was that in the 17th century the average expectation of life was only 35 years. In practice, the axe never fell at 45, one headmaster, James Walter, being 74 when he retired.

Although the school is traditionally associated with the year 1669, it was not until five years after the death of Sir John Nelthorpe that a practical start was made by the builder, William Catlyn, whose father had built Hull Guildhall. Catlyn contracted to complete the building by November, 1675 and was due to receive a gratuity of £20 over and above the agreed £600 if his work was to the satisfaction of the trustees.

What went wrong with the contract is a matter for speculation for in documents relating to the appointment of an Usher in 1678 there was a reference to the "said schoolhouse and dwellinghouse now almost finished."

The first Master, Nathaniel Taylor, was nominated before 1680.

Dr. Henthorn, although dismayed by the scarcity of records when he embarked on his task, managed to bridge the gaps with an efficiency that preserved the continuity.

(continued on page 34)

The year they 'investigated' Brigg Grammar School

And the headmaster who was 'A Prehistoric Monster'

(continued from page 33)

This version, not pretending to achieve such standards of continuity, skips on to 1834, when the Trustees appointed the Rev. Charles Cotterill, a young man of 23, to be headmaster. He took over at a time when his predecessor had incurred bills for repairs costing £190 6s. 6½d., no small sum in those days, of which he was expected to bear some share since he was to benefit from them.

Cotterill, records Dr. Henthorn, must have been appalled to find £45 deducted from his first quarter's salary of £50. Also, he took over at a time when the status of grammar schools was being investigated and though he was in no way to blame for the state of things at Brigg Grammar School, he had an uncomfortable time ahead of him.

Radical changes ahead

In later years his income fluctuated because his salary was tied to the fortunes and misfortunes of agriculture. It could have been that which caused him lose his zeal and by 1868 there was a move to get him out of the school. Further, an atmosphere had been created by the 1860s, affecting the whole country, in which few of the old-established grammar schools could survive without radical changes.

Inspections showed that 800 such schools were found wanting and an adverse report on Brigg Grammar School led to it being singled out for criticism in Blackwood's Magazine. The inhabitants of Brigg and Scawby asked for an investigation, one complaining that his son was worse at arithmetic than when he first went to the school two and a half years previously. Cotterill survived a subsequent inspection and stayed on another seven years, retiring in October, 1876.

Cotterill's going is recorded by Dr. Henthorn as "like the extermination of a prehistoric monster," a man who for some time had been an anachronism, a man who had started with high hopes and enthusiasm but who had turned into a severe pedagogue whose final instrument of torture was said to be "a yard of horse's trace."

There followed drastic reorganisation. The governors decided to spend £977 on extensions to the school itself and £2,344 on a school house. In January 1879 the school was re-opened by a new headmaster, Richmond Flowers. He was a vigorous young man, keen on cricket - in later years he was presented by Brigg Cricket Club with a bat for the season's best batting average.

Flowers also liked to ride to hounds and even today there are one or two of the "old boys" who recall their headmaster appearing on a Saturday morning, attired for the hunt and leaving his assistants to carry on after morning prayers.

Boat began to sink

All went well for about 15 years. Scholastic results were considered highly satisfactory. Then, as had happened with Cotterill, the boat began to sink. By 1886 there were only 27 boys in the school, three of them boarders. The position improved for a few years but by 1899 there had been another slump and numbers were down to 31.

There were several reasons for the decline. A former Usher, Barrett, then in his 80th year and in receipt of a pension from the school, was running his own "private adventure school" in Brigg, drawing away boys who might otherwise have gone to the grammar school. Also, there was an agricultural depression which prompted people to send their sons to an elementary school, while there was competition from the neighbouring grammar schools at Caistor and Gainsborough, where the boarding fees were only £20 a year.

To his credit, Flowers had kept abreast of education development and had responded to the demands for technical education, but still the decline went on. In 1900 it was decided to admit girls to make up the declining numbers. In 1903 the governors reduced the age of admission, taking children from six years of age. All to no avail and in the following February Flowers was asked to resign. It was

said that he had allowed the boarding side to go to pot and there was a feeling that the school prospered only when the boarding house was thriving.

Christmas closing

The school struggled on under Flowers's assistant, J. A. Bunch and a Miss Slatter but still the problem remained and the governors decided to close the school at Christmas, 1905.

Chairman of the governors, Mr. R. N. Sutton Nelthorpe, set to work to reorganise Brigg Grammar School, writing letters and hammering away until the summer of 1906, when it re-opened under H. L. Higgins. He revived the boarding house but stayed for only three years, to be followed in 1910 by H. E. Bryant. He and his wife Hannah threw themselves heart and soul into their new job, having a particularly difficult time running the boarding house during the 1914-18 war, when shortages of every kind were experienced. When the Armistice came he decided it was time he retired but the governors persuaded him to stay on and he postponed his retirement until 1927.

It is true to say that Brigg Grammar School never looked back after his appointment. Higgins had done a sound job and Bryant did even better. He was followed by a succession of vigorous, enthusiastic headmasters - J. T. Daughton, N. C. Matthews and, for the past 15 years or so, H. B. Williams.

20th century vigour

Working in conjunction with the Old Briggians' Association, Mr. Williams played a big part in the raising of £10,000-plus to mark the school's tercentenary, using the money to cover in a swimming pool which had been constructed in 1957 as a memorial to old boys who had lost their lives in two world wars.

It was Richmond Flowers who first conceived the idea of the school having its own swimming pool, way back in 1879. It was not until 1914, however, that Mr. Bryant took the first steps to organise a fund and in the following year the boys took the plunge into a pool which they themselves had helped to excavate. Today, with the help of the old boys' association, the school has a pool that comes up to modern standards. Also, with the money raised for the tercentenary celebrations, it was possible to restore the original doorway on the south side.

(continued on page 35)

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20th century progress owed much to Lindsey

Parting of the ways as Brigg goes into Humberside

(continued from page 34)

Looking back at the school's progress during the 20th century, there is no doubt that it owed much to the fact that it had been under the control of Lindsey Education Authority virtually since 1907. It became "voluntarily controlled" in 1952, this stemming from the 1944 (Butler) Act, a procedure which was not welcomed with any enthusiasm by the governors, particularly the chairman, Col. Oliver Sutton Nelthorpe. Eventually, however, he came to realise that independence would mean the charging of high fees for boarding and tuition, with inevitable results.

Whatever the fears that tighter control would come with financial dependence on the local education authority, there can be no doubt that Brigg Grammar School always received a fair deal from Lindsey and at the school's 1973 Speech Day, headmaster Herbert Williams readily acknowledged it. In retro-

spect, said Mr. Williams, the effects of the 1944 Act had been "a little galling" but gradually there had been realisation that "we were and are generously treated by an authority happy to share our pride in our tradition."

What prompted the headmaster to make those remarks was that this was almost the parting of the ways, the creation of the new Humberside County Council, due to commence operations in April, 1974, meaning that control would come in future from a different and unknown direction.

Mr. Williams and his colleagues had been strongly opposed to the new Humberside and in the previous year had been "demonstrating" in Whitehall against the proposals to carve up Lincolnshire.

By the Autumn of 1973, however, the Government's plans were almost complete and Humberside was a fait accompli despite all that had been stated to the contrary in a previous White Paper. Taking a practical and philosophical view, Mr. Williams said: "Our duty is now plain. We must so play our part in the new enterprise that it will be helped to work and succeed."

Confusion and frustration

"We should try and ensure that our part of Humberside's heritage from Lindsey is healthy. We should not be so nostalgic for the past that we cannot recognise new opportunities for the future."

At the very least, he thought, in the period that lay ahead there must be a period of confusion and frustration. The new administration would have a different style, different policies, different priorities. It would be new in the fullest sense in that it had no past, only a present and a future.

"We shall need to build up as quickly as we can new lines of communication. We shall

have to guard against old loyalties making us unduly critical of what may be inevitable lapses in the early and difficult days."

Posing the question, "In what state of health will our new masters find us?" Mr. Williams said he thought they would be academically acceptable. In an "averagely able year" they had achieved a 70 per cent rate of A-level passes, with three boys gaining Lindsey Senior Awards. The O-levels had been particularly noteworthy, averaging 6.9 passes each, a statistic never before achieved. In sport and a vast range of out of school activities they had a creditable record and altogether it was felt that the school would have a contribution to make when it transferred to Humberside.

Lincolnshire the poorer

From Mr. H. A. Wickstead, Deputy Director of Education, who attended Speech Day to present the prizes, the tactful "officer" comment: "Lincolnshire is the poorer and Humberside the richer because Brigg stands where it does."

Viewed from the sidelines, the future of Brigg Grammar School would not appear to be imperilled by changes of boundaries or administration. The fears expressed in 1952 - and doubtless in 1907 - turned to praise in 1973, the Lindsey Education Authority meriting such terms as "personal, humane, friendly, efficient without being bureaucratic."

Perhaps some administrator in the new Humberside, doing his job as he sees it in the latter part of the 20th century, will earn himself similar tributes when the next change comes along, as inevitably it will. "The old order changeth, yielding place to new," said Tennyson. Over the 300-odd years of its history, Brigg Grammar School has had perhaps more than its share of change but it seems to have survived remarkably well.

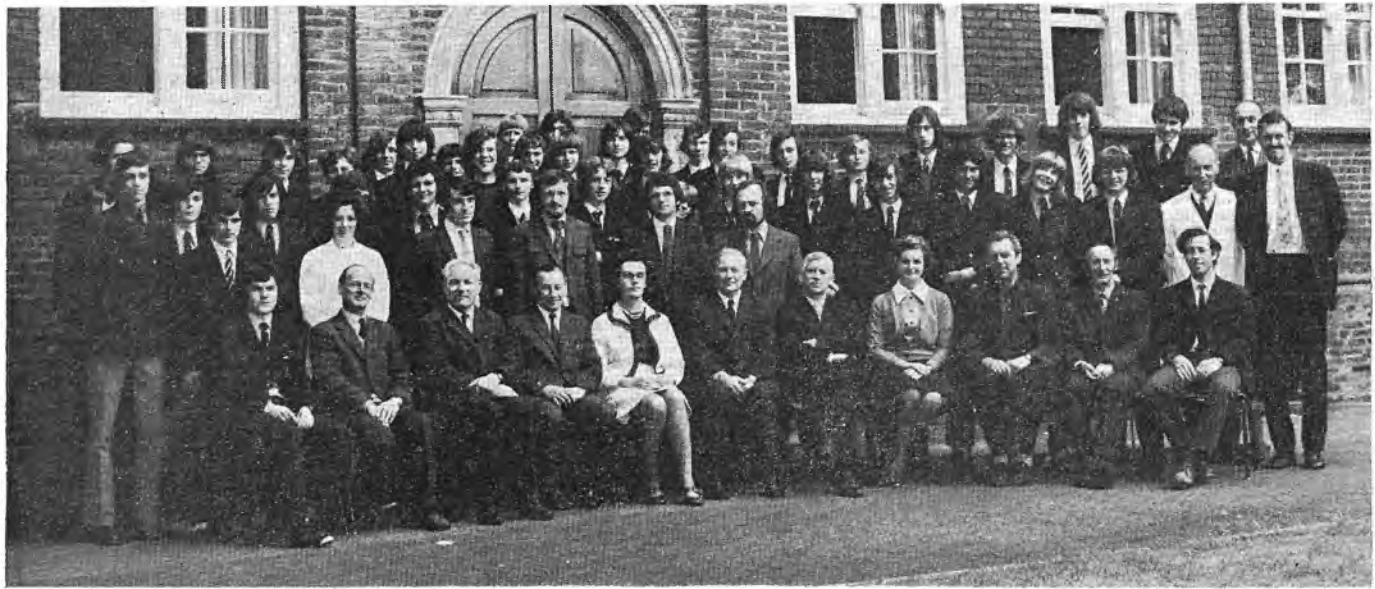
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The rumours that Brigg's Manor House Convent School was to be closed persisted towards the end of the 1960's. It had been threatened before, when the Rosminians withdrew in order to consolidate declining numbers. The Sisters of the Poor Clare Order came to the rescue but again in the early 1970's the closure rumours started again. They were denied by the Sisters, who pointed out that extensions were going on and that a new fire escape was being provided at substantial cost. But the axe came down in July 1971 with the blunt order from headquarters of the Order, Newry, Ireland, "Close down!" The Manor House, former home of the Elwes family, was handed to the Rosminian Nuns, rent free, when Mr. Gervase Elwes and his wife, Lady Winefride, left Brigg in 1913 to return to their family home, Billing Hall, Northampton. The nuns later acquired the freehold for a nominal £1,000. Today the old school is being converted into flats and the spacious grounds are being used for residential development — appropriately named St. Clare's Walk.

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An unusual view of the angel on the Angel Hotel, with the renovated Town Hall and the National Westminster Bank setting off this Market Place scene.



Due for demolition

This old Georgian house, former home of Dr W. S. Frith, has been scheduled as a building of architectural importance. But just to show how little these things matter when they get in the way of local authorities, it is due for demolition as soon as Brigg Urban District Council is ready to redevelop the site. It will be replaced by "offices on stilts", regarded by conservationists as an exchange of rather doubtful environmental value. Strangely enough, the local Civic Trust, concerned with coats of paint and planting trees for '73 have never been very vocal about the threatened loss of what could still be an attractive feature of the Market Place but which, in the opinion of many who regret what they regard as local authority vandalism, appears to have been deliberately run down.





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This impression of Brigg Market Place is typical of Colin Carr, a Lincolnshire artist whose talent was recognised many years ago when he was a member of the Abbey Art Group, who hold annual exhibitions at Caistor. In those days he was a commercial artist for the Ross Group, later joining Lincolnshire Life, a magazine which enjoys a great reputation in this county. In addition to enhancing the covers and pages of Lincolnshire Life with his drawings and paintings, Colin Carr also does some writing. An artist with a distinct leaning towards the nostalgic, he has an inimitable brand of humour which he never fails to introduce into his work. Also, he manages to include so much detail that you can look at his pictures time and again and always find something you hadn't noticed before. The above picture is reproduced by kind permission of Colin Carr.

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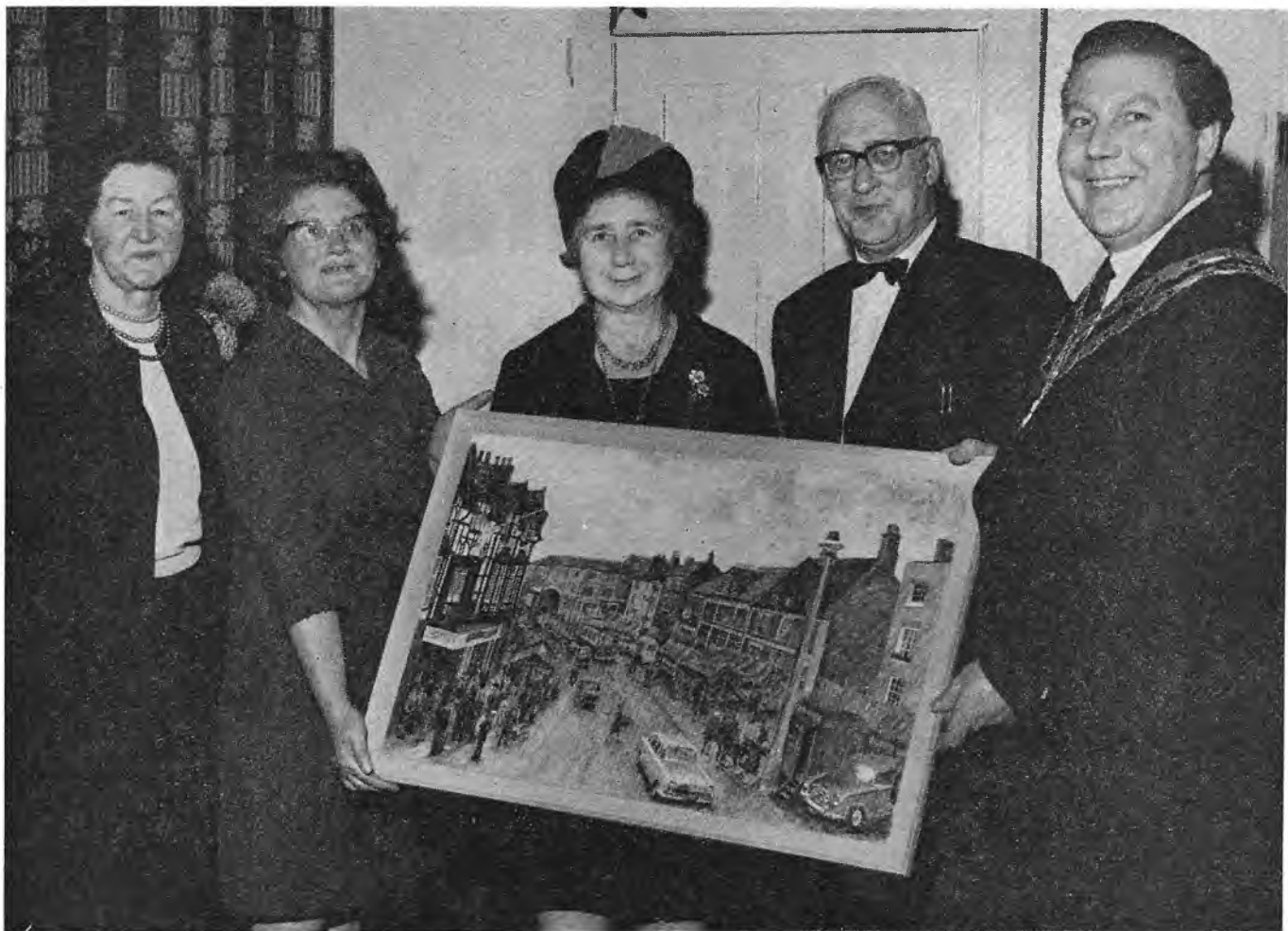
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Picture of a picture

Mrs. Lilian Codd, extreme left of picture, is a local artist who has established a reputation as a painter with an absorbing interest in Brigg past and present. She is currently producing a series of local bygones but this is one of the Brigg market-day scene of the '70's, remarkable not only for its pictorial accuracy but for its incredible wealth of detail. This picture was purchased by Brigg Women's Institute and presented to Brigg Urban District Council, on whose behalf it was accepted by the chairman, Coun. B. M. Robins. It was formally handed over by Mrs. Marguerite Smart, the then President of the Institute. Standing behind the picture are Mrs. Mary Robins, who acted as chairman's lady during her bachelor son's term of office, and Mr. J. J. Magrath, Clerk of the Council.

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“Early one morning”



IN and out of the news for the past 40 years, at urban, county and parliamentary levels, has been the controversial subject of a bypass for Brigg. It was Mrs. Barbara Castle, Minister of Transport in the last Labour Government, who gave the first real ray of hope with the announcement that she was to appoint a team of engineers to make a preliminary survey – although making no firm promise as to when the project was likely to get beyond the drawing-board stage.

Then, during 1973, following an eight-day public inquiry towards the end of the previous year, Mr. Keith Speed, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for the Department of the Environment, announced that a route to the north of the town had been approved. But there was still no date for a practical start and the signs were that the bypass would be tied up with the Humber Bridge, expected to be ready for “around 1978.”

Both the bypass and the Humber Bridge were hotly debated by Brigg Urban Council in the early 1930s, when trade generally was so depressed that local businessmen viewed the projects with some apprehension, prophesying such complete isolation that they would be faced with ruin.

Vigorous opposition

One who was vigorously vocal in opposition to bypass and bridge was Mr. Walter B. Robinson, local printer and shopkeeper. In that sense he had a personal axe to grind and he had an ideal platform to air his views – he was chairman of Brigg Urban District Council and he was president of Brigg Chamber of Trade.

It was such a topical subject in the early '30s that when Brigg Amateur Operatic produced “A Country Girl,” one of the principals, Arthur Lawrence, was supplied with a re-

You might think that a town as deserted as this has no need of a bypass. And this, believe it or not, was the scene in 1973, showing modern development on the right of picture. The explanation - photographer Bryan Robins was out and about early one Sunday morning. For the rest of the week there is an incessant roar of lorry and tanker traffic that puts local lives in peril.

written version of the famous Valley of Bhong song. It was composed by Mr. Fred Booth, at that time manager of the Farmers' Company warehouse.

This is how it went:

When the bypass round Brigg is la mode
We shall not be down in the dumps,
For we'll greyhound race in the Market Place
And Tim will lay odds at the jumps.

The County Bridge as a grass-grown ridge
What a Fairbank it will seem,
And only Pieroni will never be stoney
For we all like his lovely ice-cream.

Peace, peace, we shall have peace,
Noisy charas we never shall twig.
And there'll be no capers with fish and chip papers
In the beautiful valley of Brigg.

After all these years, some of the references may be a little obscure today although they were highly topical and appreciated at the time.

The Tim who was to lay the odds was the late Tim Staples, Brigg fishmonger and book-maker who once wagered a new Ford car to 1s. – and had to pay out. The Fairbank was his old friend, David Fairbank, a tailor who still lives in Brigg. Pieroni was a popular figure, an Italian who had settled in the town and who, according to Mr. Booth, would be the only one to stay in business if the bypass came.

The singing cobbler

And the man who sang the verses, Arthur Lawrence, who made his name as “the singing cobbler” in the days of 2LO, died in 1973.

Today, with oil tankers and heavy lorries pounding through Brigg day and night, making shopping and marketing a difficult and dangerous procedure, there is a total reversal of local authority opinion. A Brigg that was bypassed, they say, would become a haven where people could park their cars and walk about in comfort and safety. There is no longer any talk of losing trade to Hull or anywhere else. In fact, if the experience of other towns is any guide, the prospects are that trade will increase once the town is free of the through traffic.

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The town's war memorial, sited at the junction of Wrawby Street and Bigby Road. It was donated by Mr. Henry J. Stamp, local grocer, and commemorates those Brigg men and women who lost their lives in two world wars.



Now what was going on here? Not even the oldest resident could remember the occasion but it must have been something quite important to bring out such a crowd, the brass band and the militia who fired a volley over the rooftops. Was it in honour of Queen Victoria's jubilee; did it mark the end of the Boer War, or the accession to the throne of King Edward VII?

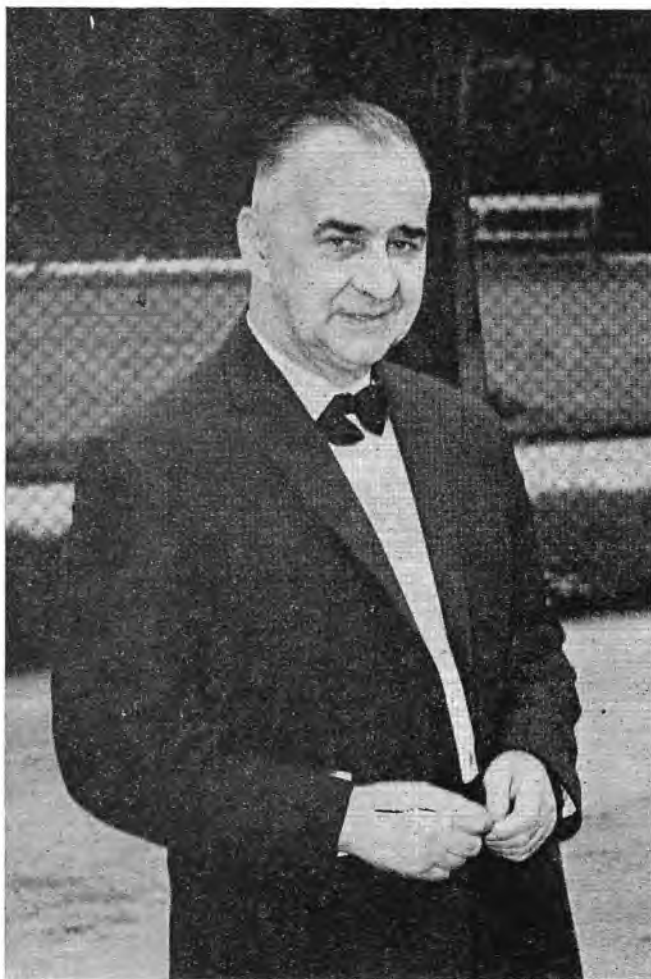
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Geff Benson the music man

Geff Benson, the man who raised the musical fortunes of Brigg Town Silver Band from an all time low to a peak which put it among the best in Lincolnshire, would have been interested in this flashback picture of the happy team he took to Manchester's Belle Vue contest in 1964, only three months after the band had been re-formed.

But Geff Benson, who was playing the cornet at the age of seven and as enthusiastic as ever about brass band music at the age of 70, died towards the end of 1973.

At his funeral service in the village church at North Kelsey, the vicar, the Rev. C. M. H. Frere, had this to say: "He was a man who had the gift to make music – and what I believe to be even more important, the gift to teach others to make music".



Re-formed only four months earlier, this was the Brigg Town Silver Band that went to the Belle Vue contest in 1964. They didn't win a prize but the important thing was that they went at all.

Brigg Town Band has been blowing for nearly 100 years

Will it knock up its century — not out?

BRIGG Town Silver Band, revived in 1964 after a lapse of about 10 years, was not always based in Brigg itself. As was the case with the church, Wrawby seemed to give the lead and although it is generally believed that the Brigg Subscription Band was formed in 1879, there seems no doubt that it was known as the Wrawby Brass Band long after that date.

The earliest record of a Brigg band is in White's Directory of 1842, which states: "There is in the town an excellent brass band established by the Earl of Yarborough, a connexion with his Troop of Yeomanry Cavalry."

The next to be heard of a brass band was in 1879, when a Mr. T. Tapling gathered together a dozen or so enthusiasts from Wrawby and Brigg, and loaned them the money to purchase instruments. It was no happy-go-lucky organisation, for a copy of the original rules, still in the possession of the present-day band, shows that discipline was the keynote.

Strict discipline

A member could be expelled for misconduct, being in arrears of contributions — 1s. monthly — for non-attendance or "if he shows such a stubbornness to learn that the conductor may consider him not musically gifted . . ." A bandsman could be fined for "using profane language" or for blowing between tunes without the permission of the conductor.

Mr. Tapling was the first president and Mr. George Twigg was the first conductor. A new conductor, Mr. George Quarmby, arrived in 1907, but he found that little progress could be made because of the antiquated instruments which, upon being valued, were found to attract no better offer than 5d per lb.

The president of the band at that time was Mr. Gervase Elwes, of the Manor House, and he and his friends decided to provide a new set of instruments. On February 13, 1913, a complete set of Excelsior Sonorous contesting instruments, supplied by Hawkes and Son, London, and costing £300, arrived at Brigg Corn Exchange, where they were handed over by Lady Winefride Elwes.

It was an epic occasion, for the band had also been equipped with new uniforms to replace the second-hand Hussar tunics which had been described as having infringed military regulations.

The next bandmaster to arrive on the scene was Mr. Laurie Mumby, a fine cornet player

who came from Lincoln to work on the construction of the new sugar factory which opened in 1928. By 1931 he had raised the band to such standards that they won three important contests, including the area final of the *Daily Herald* contest at Leicester, enabling them to take part for the first time in the London finals.

Jobs for the boys

Having reached the peak, however, they started on a downhill path that almost led to collapse. One of the main causes was that so many players were tempted away by the newly-formed Appleby-Frodingham Works Band, which provided not only jobs for the boys but everything was free. No weekly subscriptions, no financial commitments for practice room, instruments or repairs; they could clock off from their work to go to practices and still get paid — and they were also paid when they went to contests, travelling in a coach supplied by the firm.

No subscription band within 20 miles could hope to compete and it was not surprising that Brigg lost most of their key players. Then came the disruption of the 1939-45 war and the Brigg band limped along until the mid-1950s, when Mr. Mumby retired after 25 years' service.

After years in the wilderness, several attempts to revive it having failed, Brigg Urban Council took a hand and convened a meeting in the Town Hall in January, 1964. There were eight or nine members of the old band willing to have another go. Mr. Gelf Benson, of North Kelsey, who had conducted the Appleby-Frodingham Band following the death of Mr. Bill Kendall — and who had also conducted Barton Town Band — was elected musical director.

The new era

Mr. Jack Robinson, whose father and grandfather had played with the Brigg band, was elected chairman and Mr. Vin East, former secretary who had kept an eye on instruments and assets during the period that operations had been suspended, was elected treasurer, with Mr. E. Dodd as secretary.

A rehearsal was called for the following week and the first piece to go on the music stands was a march with the appropriate title of "New Era." Compared with the former glories of a once-successful contesting band it must have been an excruciating noise but to those who were witnessing the re-birth of a brass band it was sweet music.

Within three months the membership had doubled and it was decided to enter the band for the lowest of the six sections at the Belle Vue Spring Festival Contest. Away they went to Manchester with their supporters, two large

coach loads. Brigg finished eighth down the list of 18 but considering that the section included many old-established bands it was felt that some progress must have been made. Among the trombonists was Matt Hutchinson, a local joiner and undertaker who was then 84 years of age and who had joined the band 66 years earlier.

In the following year, 1965, voluntarily going into a higher section, they won second prize and in the year after that, in a still higher section, they won first prize, a massive shield on which was inscribed the names of some of the most famous bands in the country. There was also a cash prize of £25. The "new era" was showing results.

World music contest

The outstanding event of the first four years of re-formation, however, was the trip to the World Music Contest at Kerkrade, in the province of Limburg, Holland. They went on an overnight coach journey to Dover, crossed to Calais and travelled all the next day, arriving in late evening to be greeted by the local band, Harmonie St. Gertrudie, who had waited for three hours for the Brigg party to arrive.

The Brigg bandsmen and their wives were the guests of Mr. Augustus Brand, millionaire brewer, of Wyrle. They still talk of the magnificent hospitality he dispensed and of the many kindnesses shown to them by the people of Wyrle and district, who took the visitors into their homes and gave them such VIP treatment.

For Mr. Benson the trip was a reward for all the hard work he had put in with a band that had made such progress. He had always wanted to take a band to Holland and this was the realisation of a dream he had had for years. So many bands had let him down. Not only did they make the trip but they proved they hadn't gone just for the ride. The Brigg band put up a meritorious performance of Gordon Jacobs's "Second Suite for Brass" and the march "West Riding," gaining 257 marks out of 350 from three of the most critical judges in the world, entitling them to a second-class award.

Return to Holland

They made the trip again in 1970, but this time without Mr. Benson. By this time he had retired, he and his wife having been the guests of honour at a Corn Exchange concert and presented by a grateful band with a silver tray, cut glass and one or two bottles to go with them. The conductor this time was Mr. Jon Hall, former conductor of the Grimsby Band, a talented musician and dedicated teacher. It was much the same sort of trip, the same overwhelming hospitality from Mr. Brand and the people of Wyrle — and a great ovation for the Brigg band from the audience in the vast Roda Hall at Kerkrade.

For this contest the band had to earn their marks from four judges of "world class," — Mr. Frank Wright, Great Britain; Mr. Ian Hanus, Prague; Mr. Hub Kickens, Holland; and Mr. Henk van Lijnschoten, Holland. The marks — 278½ out of a possible 350, just 1½ marks away from a first-class award. A token award was presented to the band's chairman, Mr. Malcolm Warburton, by Mr. Burgomaster Smeets, and later one of the top WMC officials presented the band with a pennant and their musical director with a medallion.

... bands have always had problems — Brigg was no exception

Between these two trips to Holland there had been much contesting, Brigg being runners-up for the county title on at least three occasions and, under Mr. Hall's direction, winning the open section at the Cleethorpes contest and second prize, £100, at the Middlesbrough Eisteddfod, 1969.

Throughout all that time the band had been supported generously by Brigg Urban Council, who provided initial practice accommodation at the Corn Exchange until they could stand on their own feet financially. In October 1967 the council sponsored a locally-organised brass band contest which attracted 20 bands from as far afield as Rugby and Huddersfield, while local firms provided the trophies.

First prize on a great day

That was a great day, Brigg winning the main trophy for a performance of "Scheherezade," also playing in the evening with the Gainsborough Britannia Band to a packed audience.

Ironically, it was the closing down of the Appleby-Frodingham Works Band which strengthened the ranks of the Brigg band as much as it had weakened it in the 1930s. Not only was there a transfer of some very able players but a kindly steelworks management agreed to lease the whole of the instruments and music stands to Brigg at a nominal hire fee of £5 a year. Considering that Brigg's instruments had been in use since Gervase Elwes had provided them in 1913, the Brigg players had accomplished wonders but they were to do even better with a set of instruments which, while not new, had been well-maintained.

For some time Brigg had been knocking on the door of the Second Section, national grading, which, for the benefit of those not familiar with the brass band movement, compares with the standards of Division 2 of

the Football League. There was even some eye-casting towards Section 1, which would have put them in the company of the best bands in the country.

But, alas, this was not to be. Just as had happened in 1931, the peak was reached and then the downward trend began. This happens so often with brass bands — their fortunes go in cycles and now the wheel was about to turn again, history repeating itself.

It had been contesting that had raised standards but it was contesting that contributed towards a decline in the band's popularity. The public wanted a band they could see and hear, a band that would play occasionally in the Market Place "like they used to do in the old days," or in the local Recreation Ground on a Sunday evening. They wanted to see the band on parade on Civic Sunday and Armistice Day instead of having to import the Barnetby band.

The Brigg band had turned out on these occasions for a number of years but eventually they adopted the attitude, "We're a concert band, not a marching band." To be fair, that marching was no easy matter. It is usually the more elderly members who play the weighty Double Bs and E Flats and there comes a time when playing on the march is a physical strain. As for those Saturday night concerts in the Market Place, the ceaseless traffic just blotted out the sound so what was the point?

Internal problems

Then the band had internal problems. The dynamic Jon Hall left to take a teaching post in Leicestershire and to become musical director of the Snibston Band, taking with him two key cornet players and a baritone. Other key players left the district or were less interested and so there was a distinct sag which resulted in rehearsals attended by only 10 or 12 players compared with the halcyon

days of the late '60s when there could be anything up to 30 players round the stands.

Geff Benson came back again for a spell but by this time he was feeling more and more the effects of a heart condition that had been with him for many years and he could not face yet another job of re-building. There had been a succession of conductors — John Pope, bandmaster of the 1st. Bn. the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers; Keith Edwards, of Sudbrooke, due later to restore the fortunes of the Market Rasen Band; and John Ogden, ex-Army percussionist who had joined the staff of Westmoor Secondary School.

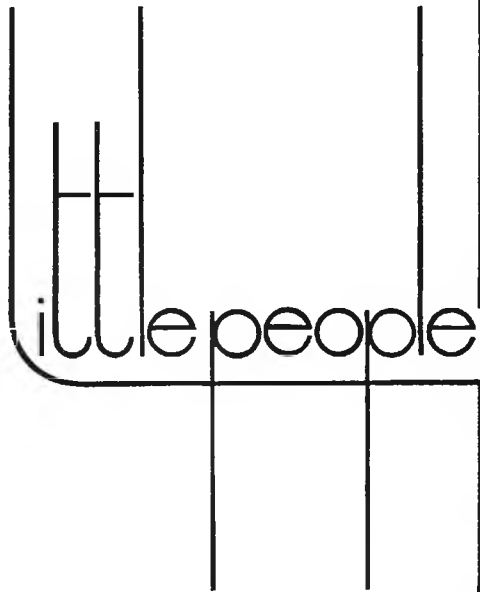
Woman conductor

Prospects for 1973 were indeed bleak but along came Avis Tossell, Elsham, daughter of the late Laurie Mumby, a musician in her own right — soprano singer, pianist, former musical director of Brigg Amateur Operatic Society and Scunthorpe Gilbert and Sullivan Operatic Society, still occupying a similar post with the Scunthorpe Amateur Operatic Society.

She did not have the benefit of the material which had been at the disposal of Jon Hall. So many gaps around the stands that contests were out, even the one organised by the Association of Lincolnshire Brass Bands at which Brigg had been so prominent for many years.

The important thing was that she was able to keep the band together, a task in which she had the loyal support of chairman Ron Robinson and acting secretary Archie Benson. They would all welcome some assistance in the recruitment and training of young players, the hope of the future. If all goes well, Brigg band will once again be able to take its rightful place among the top bands in the county and to be a going concern in five years' time, 1979, when it will celebrate its 100th birthday.

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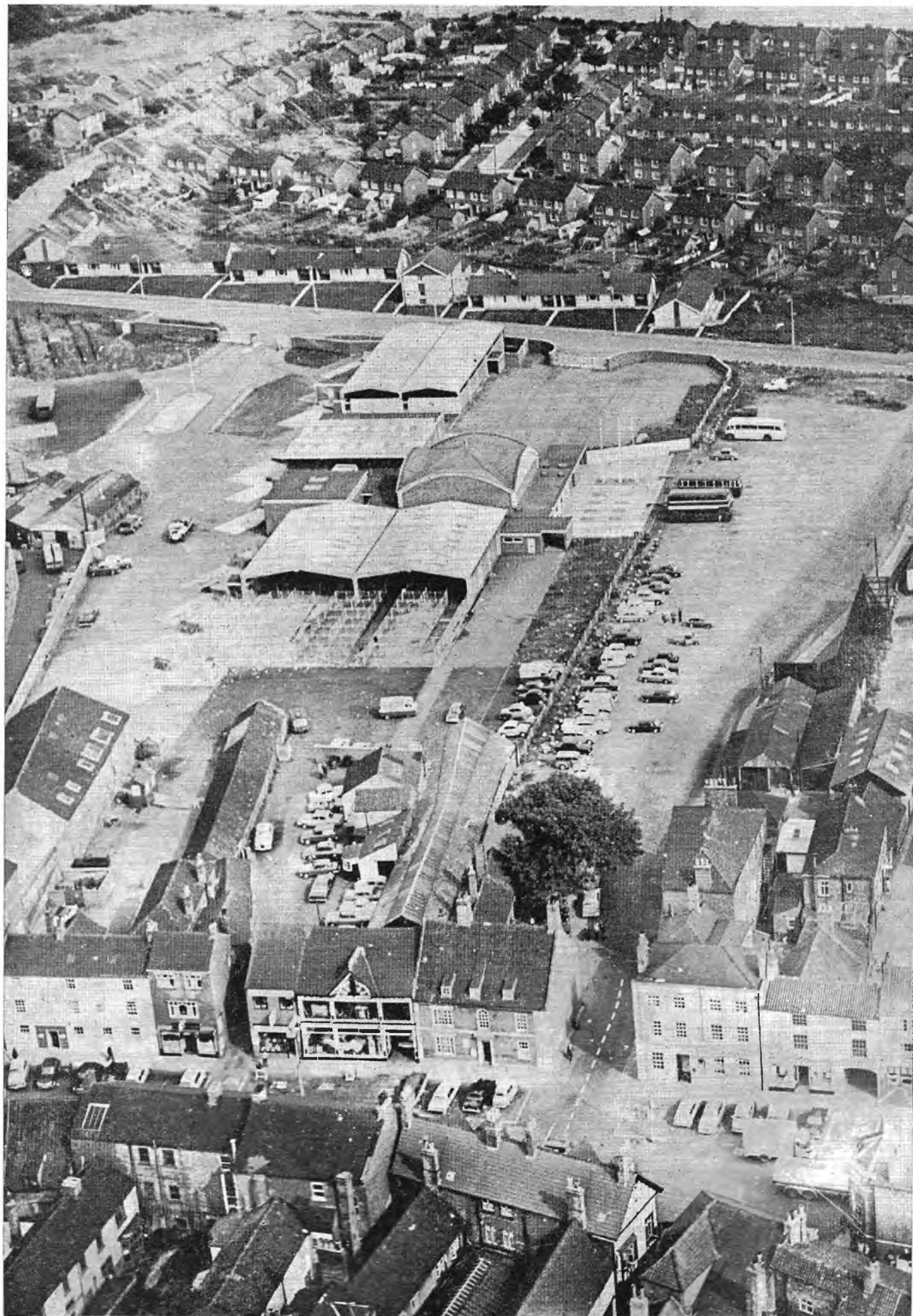


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Aerial view of the centre of Brigg, showing the Market Place in the foreground, the full extent of the Cattle Market and almost the whole of the Newlands Estate.

The Ancholme Artists



MORE interest has been shown in painting in the last 10 years than perhaps at any other time in history and at Brigg that interest resulted in the formation of a group of enthusiasts known as The Ancholme Artists. Providing the inspiration was Marjorie Burton, of Howsham, formerly of Albert-street, Brigg, a housewife who persevered with her art while bringing up a family, looking after battery hens and a husband who gave up a clerical job to do weaving.

Of the original 12 who comprised what was the Brigg Art Club, only 5 founder-members remain but there have been reinforcements bringing the current total to 27.

Only love of painting

Meetings are held each Wednesday evening, with members working on subjects of their own choice, expressing their own individualities but with a hovering Marjorie Burton there to give guidance when necessary. To become a member of The Ancholme Artists there is no standard of attainment required, no more than a love of painting, but as one is complementary to the other, the result has been a series of pictures of exhibition standard and public exhibitions have been held since 1965.

For the last three years these have been held in the grounds of Crosslands Hostel, a hazardous undertaking because of the unreliability of the English weather, but nevertheless they have been very successful and have attracted a lot of local interest.

Looking for a home

The group also supports exhibitions in neighbouring towns and regularly exhibits in Scunthorpe, Louth, Market Rasen and Woodhall Spa. During 1973 the Ancholme Artists staged an exhibition at Normanby Park in conjunction with the Grange Farm Art Club, Scunthorpe, with whom close associations are enjoyed.

Meetings were originally held at the Woolpack Hotel and later at the Congregational Schoolroom. Since 1970 they have used the old chapel at Crosslands but that was scheduled for demolition as part of a hostel modernisation scheme and so the hunt for accommodation began all over again.

Marjorie Burton has always been interested in painting but family commitments got in the way for some years until she made up her mind that she must start again. Today she dislikes being referred to as "a housewife who does painting" as though it were something she turns to when she has finished washing the dishes. She regards herself, and with every justification considering the undoubted quality of her work, as an artist in her own right.

She has staged her own exhibitions all over the country and has them planned ahead for the next two or three years. Her output is prodigious and unlike the artists of the past, whose merit was seldom recognised until they were dead, her works find a ready sale so that she makes a comfortable living from something she enjoys doing.

Marjorie Burton was commissioned to paint a picture for one of the pages of this book. Had she had her choice, she would most probably have painted something entirely different but she was asked to go into Bigby-street, somewhere near the old Manor House Convent School, and get into one picture the focal points of Brigg – the parish church, the pub across the way, a glimpse of the Town Hall clock and the Market Place beyond.

It's all there

In that sense it was "photographic" rather than inspirational, rather like a writer being told what to write. But she accepted the commission and the result is an attractive colour picture. Because of the bend in the road it was not possible to include the clock on what had been Brigg's civic centre for about 75 years but everything else is there, almost the whole story of Brigg summed up in a picture which was never expected to glamorise but which nevertheless has a rare quality about it. Thank you, Marjorie Burton.

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Ex - ROYAL NAVY RATING AT THE HELM IN BRIGG

THE Man Who Made History in 1973 - Coun. George Laurence Hewson, appointed as the first-ever chairman of the new Glanford District Council and elected Brigg's one and only representative on the new Humberside County Council, two authorities created by local government reorganisation and due to commence operations on April 1, 1974. In this picture he is seen wearing the chain of office of Brigg Urban Council, to which he was first elected in 1946, having been chairman four times, the last in 1971/72.

Came, saw, And stayed On

A native of Louth, one of a family of 13, George Hewson joined the Royal Navy as a youth and was in Ireland in 1921 at the time of "the trouble." Back in Civvy Street in the mid-twenties, he decided to go into business as a painting contractor and arrived in Brigg about 1928 to do the painting work on the new council houses then being built in Hawthorn-avenue. He liked Brigg and decided to stay on.

A few years later, he recalled recently, he got the contract for re-painting the exterior of the Hawthorn houses - the price was £1 7s. 6d. per house.

He had only one month to go on the Naval Reserve when war broke out in 1939 and he was one of the first three men in Brigg to get calling-up papers. He served throughout the war, mainly on aircraft carriers, although there was one spell on forts in the Thames Estuary - an under-water job.

It was in 1946 that he made his debut into public life. There was an urban council election that year, the first to be held since 1939 and there was a record 25 candidates for 15 seats. George Hewson secured one of those seats and has served without a break ever since. Stemming from that election has been a branching out into all kinds of public service, so that although he retired from his grocer's business about five years ago, he is busier today than ever he has been.

He did one three-year spell some years ago as the Lindsey County Council representative for Brigg and Broughton and is the present member for Brigg on that authority. For nearly 25 years he has been chairman of Brigg Operatic Society; he has been chairman of Brigg Old People's



Welfare Committee ever since it was founded in post-war years; he is a member of the Scunthorpe Hospital Management Committee which also controls Brigg's Glanford Hospital; he was the first president of Brigg Town Silver Band when it was re-formed in 1964 - it was on his suggestion that former members of the lapsed band got together again; as a member of the Hospital League of Friends he has never missed a weekly visit to Glanford Hospital for 26 years; he takes his turn on the local meals on wheels van and as a member of the county Social Services Committee has been instrumental in securing the promise of a day centre for Brigg, somewhere the old folk can call their own.

Modern standards

As chairman of Brigg UDC Housing Committee it was his ambition to see every council house in the town brought up to 1973 standards and the completion of an extensive improvement scheme for the Newlands Estate took him somewhere towards the target. Departmental reluctance to spend nearly £5,000 per dwelling in the Hawthorn-avenue area led to the hold-up of a scheme which should have started in

mid-1973 but towards the end of the year there was official permission for an amended scheme and a start was made early in February.

Loyal helpmate

What helped him tremendously in all his public work was the loyal support of his wife, Nancy, who managed to run a house, bring up two sons and a daughter and also look after the shop on the many occasions when he was at meetings of one kind or another. Nancy, who died a couple of years ago, was a member of Brigg Amateur Operatic Society for many years and over the years took many principal contralto parts.

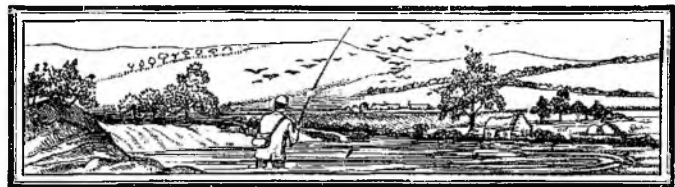
Today, in his 72nd year, George Hewson lives in a neat bungalow in Eastfield-road, Brigg, looking after himself, doing his own cooking, baking, washing and cleaning, his Navy training standing him in good stead in keeping everything "ship-shape and Bristol fashion." The greenhouse in his well-tended garden is a real horticultural treasure trove.

How he manages to dovetail all his activities is a mystery, sometimes even to him, but the way he runs his life and fills every waking hour shows that retirement is anything but "getting your feet up."

*'Bulldoze the Town Hall — and the
Corn Exchange', said Linda*



BUT THE GIRLS FROM LIVERPOOL AND CORSICA REMEMBER BRIGG'S 'FRIENDLY SMILING INHABITANTS'



This is Brigg as seen through the eyes of different people, covering a varied age range and producing some refreshing and at times controversial views. Bearing in mind that except for one contribution all this was written five years ago, it is interesting to observe how some of the schoolgirls came extraordinarily near the mark when reviewed in the light of events of 1973.

Linda Ann Moffat, at that time a senior pupil of Brigg Girls High School, could not have known in 1968 that in four years' time the combined resources of the Brigg Swimming Baths Committee, Brigg Urban Council and Brigg Rural Council would produce a scheme for a £1,000,000 sports and arts complex. Yet this in fact is what she was suggesting in 1968.

Candid views

Linda, daughter of Mr. John Moffat, at that time the manager of the Brigg branch of Barclays Bank — today she teaches PE at a Louth school — aired her candid views in an essay competition promoted by Brigg Chamber of Trade.

For one thing she was concerned about the traffic problem, which she was sure would get worse as the years went on. How right she was! With all the bulldozing practicality of youth she put forward her own solution for easing the traffic congestion in the centre of the town — "demolish the Town Hall."

The suggestion was not entirely original. It had been made many years earlier by Coun. John Tom Kettle. Linda could not have known that, for it happened 25 years before she was born. Sweeping away the historic Town Hall, due to be restored and renovated in 1973, may not have been the answer but at least she was candid enough to say what she thought.

Still in demolishing mood, she took a swipe at the Corn Exchange for good measure — she thought it was time that was replaced by a new building.

In 1968 the Humber Bridge and the Brigg bypass were still pie in the sky. Not in Linda's book, however. She declared: "Brigg must

eventually be bypassed. The tradespeople would not be affected. In fact, they would probably have better trade as people would rather come into Brigg knowing that the shops and streets would not be crowded and also knowing that there would be a place where they could park their cars."

Prophetic words! In August 1973 Mr. Keith Speed, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department of the Environment, announced the route of the Brigg bypass that would form part of the M180 South Humber-side Motorway. And in the meantime Brigg UDC had recognised the need for a car park — they built one at the rear of Wrawby-street costing over £20,000, capable of accommodating 400 cars.

Another demolisher

There were forthright views also from Jacinta McCourt, a pupil of Our Lady's Convent School. She suggested some radical changes but hoped that Brigg would always remain a thriving market town.

Before getting that far, however, she had said in her essay: "At first impression Brigg appears to be a small, unpretentious market town, badly laid-out and full of antiquated shops. I think it would be a good idea to demolish the centre of the town and redevelop it with a modern shopping centre."

Another who was ahead of the times in at least one respect! Brigg UDC did not go all the way with her in suggesting the demolition of the centre of the town but in 1970/71 there was a firm proposition for a £500,000 shopping precinct in Cary-lane as part of a central area development scheme.

There was strong opposition from local traders who feared that a precinct would mean a drift from the existing main shopping centre, Wrawby-street, and that a forced "keeping up with the Joneses" would result in increased overheads in the form of rent and rates way above what they were already paying. For some reason that was never made public — it could have been that their prices were too high for local pockets — the developers withdrew and the scheme went on the shelf for the time being.

The following was written by a former member of the staff of Brigg Girls High School, English teacher Sheila Jones, of Liverpool.

"One toys with the idea of taking up fishing" — Sheila Jones

She came from the city and went back to the city but she enjoyed her two years in a market town environment and what she wrote is an illuminating example of "as others see us." This is what she had to say:

People have more time

"Coming as an outsider to Brigg I couldn't help but notice it was difficult to get to by train. You have your connections written down on a piece of paper and you have plenty of time to get acquainted with them.

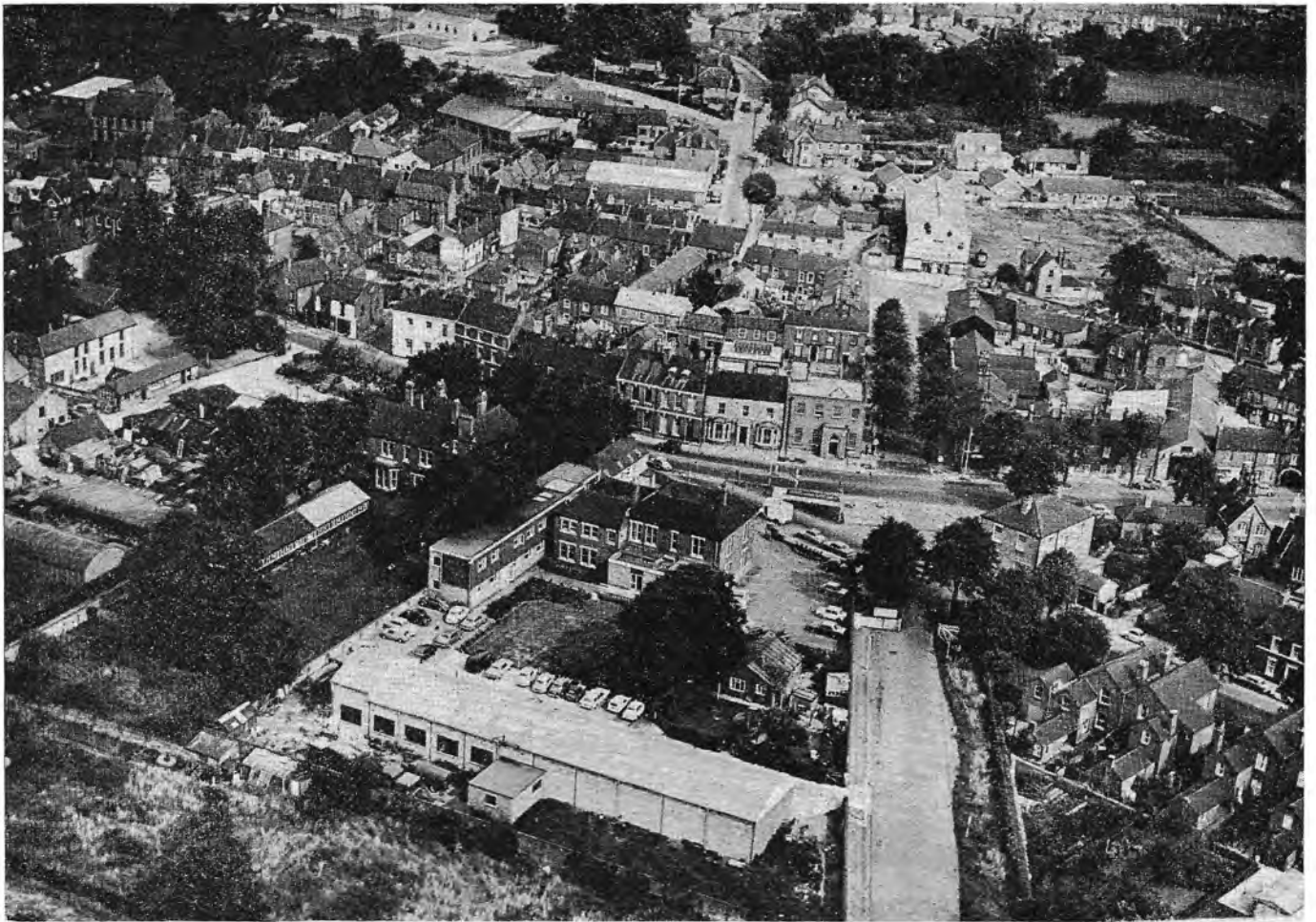
"As you walk out of the station and encounter a sweep of green and a horse grazing, the urge to hurry to an appointment seems secondary. There seems to be more hours to a day in Brigg than in most other places I have lived in. This is an attraction — people seem to have more time.

"I have been used to people shifting from one foot to another, even tapping on the window if one keeps them waiting outside a telephone kiosk. The first time I hastily terminated a telephone conversation in Brigg and apologised to a man waiting, he said on the contrary and drew a few more puffs on his pipe. He was still gazing at the stars as I turned the corner. Perhaps he wasn't going to use the phone anyway.

"I have never been so distinctly aware of the rhythm of the year as in Brigg. Spring and early autumn are delightful. Brigg seems to expand. In summer there is no need for leisure time to be organised for you and the derelict cinema may be interpreted as a bold stand against manufactured entertainment.

"In winter, Brigg seems to shrink and there is a sense of isolation. It is leafless and at times drab. The river gurgles black and it seems an interminable distance to go anywhere. That empty cinema now becomes an eyesore and one realises there are creative people working in the film industry and one has no opportunity locally of seeing what they do. One toys with the idea of taking up fishing or visiting churches.

"If there is one unwelcome guest in Brigg, it is the through traffic, which always seems to reach its peak at the most inconvenient hours. One gets the feeling that it is making a convenience of Brigg and that there must be other places in Britain where drivers can practice gear-changing and braking other than on Wrawby-road.



All That Clutter In The Middle — "Get The Bulldozers In" — Linda and Jacinta

"I can't speak about Brigg people generally. They merely consist of the ones I know and the ones I don't know. I was invited into many homes and I must say that the hospitality was of the best. I never had the feeling that a visit was too short or too long. You can hurry off if you have something to attend to or stay on longer without getting any hint that you are outstaying your welcome.

"You are nearly always offered something that you can sample only once — a home-made wine or jam, bottled fruit or pickles. It is no use asking for the recipe. There is some secret, wholesome quality which isn't to be found in the ingredients.

The welcome mat

"I found that established societies and groups in the town were most eager to welcome newcomers. They seem to get news of your existence and make it clear that they would be most delighted if you would consider joining.

"You really have to make up your mind to go to Brigg. You don't just arrive there by chance. If you allow it to get to know you gradually, as you relax into its ways, it's really worth the effort."

It is interesting, also, to recall what Dr. James Robertson was saying about the time Linda Moffat, Sheila Jones and the others were telling Brigg what they thought about it. In his annual report to Brigg Urban Council, Dr. Robertson, in his capacity as medical officer of health, mentioned the existence of sub-standard houses, the need for replacement of "the present slum-like council offices", the need for a by-pass without which, he said, industrial development could be a liability instead of an asset.

He went on: "It might appear from the criticisms and suggestions in my report that Brigg is not a desirable place in which to live but this is far from the truth. It is indeed an attractive and busy little market town, small enough to be spared serious air pollution and with the natural advantages of being situated on a navigable river which provides recreational opportunities for those who fish, boat or swim.

"The town is unusually well-provided with schools, there being private schools as well as the council's secondary modern and grammar schools. There can be few towns of its size so rich in educational opportunity.

"An annual report such as this, however, is not intended as a brochure for intending immigrants but a review of the area's problems and how they are being or should be tackled. In consequence, more time must be devoted to the blots in the copybook than to the writing itself.

"Change is inevitable and Brigg cannot remain unaffected by the rapid development of the south bank of the Humber. Increase in population and size will result in new problems and it is our task to foresee and prevent or remedy these."

"Let us hope that the town's present problems in these areas will be quickly and effectively remedied so that full advantage can be taken of our opportunities to make Brigg a better town to live in."

Eyesores cleared

In 1973 there were few slum properties in Brigg — what remain are receiving attention. Demolition has cleared the majority of the eyesores, including the prefabs in Ancholme Gardens and Woodbine Grove, the former being given over to new housing development and the latter being converted into a children's playground. And, of course, the "slum-like Town Hall", built in the early years of last century, was replaced by a new Civic Centre in Cary-lane.

Improvements grants have done much to upgrade and modernise property which could be regarded as "moderate" and Brigg UDC plan to have all pre-war council houses brought up to Parker Morris standards during 1974.

Finally, a tribute to Brigg from an unexpected source — Corsica. Marie-Xassere Rossi arrived in Brigg in 1972 as a 20-year-old student to take a post as an assistant teacher at Brigg Secondary School, teaching French

and taking the opportunity of improving her English. Now she is back home, going to university to complete her studies.

This is what she had to say: "When I said I was going to England people told me: 'English people are cold, it is difficult to get in touch with one of them.'

"This was not rejoicing for me because I had never been there before. I was going to England for the first time.

"Brigg! This was the place I was going to know for a year. What do I remember best of it?

Always welcoming

"Its inhabitants, their friendliness, always smiling, waving to you even if they don't know you and also very helpful and welcoming.

"When I look back I could fill pages with names of people I met there. Wherever I have been, either the bank, the Post Office or the shops, it was welcome to me. I must not forget the school, Brigg Secondary and its pupils. I have a lot to remember but I will not mention a thing about it because I could write a book.

"Is that all I kept in mind? No! There is the placid atmosphere from the town itself, something I felt and can't therefore describe, something you can only experience.

"Everything seemed ordered and such a quietness emanating from all — the houses, the trees, adding to this.

"I said 'placid' atmosphere and people may laugh at this and ask 'What about the traffic, then?' I noticed this, too, but there are compensations and I shall not blame it.

"The market also contributes to the charm of the town. It gives the town a character, a personal note and I wish it could stay like that.

"Shall I come back? I think so — and maybe the swimming pool will be finished by then!"

It may indeed! Massive excavation work is being carried out at the present time on the site by the west bank of the River Ancholme and the foundation work is making good progress. It is hoped that the pool itself, the first phase of the complex, will be completed towards the end of 1974.

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The Colourful Characters who kept Brigg's Pubs

THERE WAS ONE WHO WORE HIS BOWLER IN BED

THE story of Brigg's pubs is one that would need a volume on its own to do justice to the part they must have played in the social life of the town. While there had been little development in Brigg during the 18th century, there was no lack of inns and taverns, doubtless due to the fact that the town was astride what served in those days for the A 15.

Brigg was on the Barton-on-Humber to London route in the stage coach days, Barton, of course, having been used as a springboard for the Humber crossing for hundreds of years. The records show that Edward I used the ferry on several occasions on his way to and from the Scottish wars - in 1300 he took over from Barton to Hesse the whole of his retinue, including equipment, the process lasting two full days.

Convenient calling place

Brigg's pubs, therefore, depended to a great extent on Barton's importance as a port and its facilities for getting across the Humber, for although the distance between the two places was only 10 miles, it was a convenient calling place in the days of the horse.

In 1723, if one could get past Gains-thorpe woods, a notorious trouble spot and haunt of highwaymen near Hibaldstow, the journey from Brigg to London took four days. In 1786, by which date the roads had been improved under the turnpike system, the journey was reduced to 30 hours. The fare was 34s. 9d. inside, 18s. 6d. outside.

The Angel Inn was undoubtedly the foremost posting house of the town and records kept by the host in the early years of this century, Mr. J. H. Skevington, showed that it played an important part in the life of Lincolnshire as far back as the days of Oliver Cromwell - and probably beyond. One record shows that farmers and occupiers of property were served with notices in 1665 to pay their rent "at the Court at the Angel."

Also preserved during Mr. Skevington's time were the old coaching books and records showing the connection of the hostelry with the Protectorate and Cromwell.

It was Joseph Skevington's wife, daughter of a former owner of the Angel, who converted what was a former coachyard into one of the most attractive courtyards in the country. The yard was provided with a glass roof and climbing plants were introduced, together with hanging baskets and pot plants in every available position. It was this transformation which raised the standards at the Angel and firmly established it as a comfortable hotel that bore little resemblance to the single-storey building of yesteryear that had also served as the offices of the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway Company.

Exactly 140 years ago, however, there was a serious threat that the Angel would be driven out of business. Next door was the White Lion, premises today occupied by the Midland Bank. In those days, however, some years before the railways presented any real threat in this part of the country, they were bought by a Mr. Christian Johnson, who rebuilt them and set out to capture the Angel trade.

Ambitious Mr. Johnson

The Lion became an important centre and it was there that the Commissioners met to settle details relating to the local Enclosure Acts. Mr. Johnson set a standard by which he hoped to attract the custom of the nobility, clergy, commercial and agricultural families.

He provided extensive stabling for 29 horses and a service of coaches that ran to "all parts of the kingdom." Posting at 1s. 3d. a mile could be had by chariot, post-chaise, gig, hearse or mourning coach. Mr. Johnson went bankrupt in 1837 and the Angel remained as securely as ever on her pedestal.

The Skevingtons arrived towards the end of the 19th century and built up the Angel into an hotel boasting "a pleasant, ornamental and picturesque lounge and smoking compartment which at once proves itself to be a decided attraction to visitors." So enthused one of the writers of that age.

But there was trouble brewing for Joseph Hellaby Skevington. There was in Brigg a young and ambitious police sergeant known locally as "Long Joe" and he suspected that card games were being played at the Angel after hours and for high stakes. He connived with one of the servant girls and arranged for her to unlock the front door when the card sessions were in progress.

Long Joe, later to become Supt. Joseph Hutchinson, found just what he wanted, a licensee who was chairman of Brigg Urban Council and a magistrate, taking part in a baccarat game, the table littered with sovereigns. Exit Mr. Skevington.

His successor was Billy Bridgewater, perhaps one of the most colourful characters ever to grace this ancient hostelry. He was never seen without a bowler hat - he even wore it in bed at times - a statement which might warrant being taken with a pinch of salt had

it not been made by his son Tom, who visited Brigg in recent months. Always impeccably attired, always sporting a big blue-spotted bow, he could have been a character stepping straight out of Dickens.

Billy Bridgewater arrived from Liverpool to preside at the Angel as licensee, with an option to purchase after three years. He bought it, lock, stock and barrel, literally, for £4,900.

He stayed until 1928 and then sold out - the biggest mistake he ever made and one he realised as soon as the deal had been completed. The late Tim Staples, local bookmaker and fish-merchant, who was a close friend of "Bridgey," used to tell how he was in the hotel the day the deal was done.

Mr. Bridgewater, who had a habit of repeating everything, went into the men's bar, according to Mr. Staples, saying, "I've done wrong, I've done wrong." Asked what he had done, Mr. Bridgewater exclaimed, "I never ought to have sold it, I never ought to have sold it!"

Although it was unlikely that any contract had been signed at that stage, those were the days when a man's word was his bond and no doubt a figure had been agreed and hands had been shaken. Tim Staples got to know what had been done and advised him to go back to see how much it would cost to "rue bargain."

Recollections are vague as to what it would have cost - the figure seems to have been something like £500 to £750, which Mr. Bridgewater refused to pay - going against the advice of the shrewd Tim Staples who told him "It's not a penny too much." Thus the property passed out of private ownership to a succession of breweries - the Barnsley Brewery, then Hewitt Bros Ltd., Grimsby, and today, worth possibly the best part of £100,000, it is part of the giant Bass Charrington complex.

Family links

In 1974 the Angel Hotel plays as big a part in the social life of Brigg as ever it did. It is the only hotel in the town with the space and all-round facilities to cater for the annual dinners and dances of the various local organisations, wedding receptions, farming and business conferences, annual meetings and a host of other functions at which good food and drink are the essential ingredients.

It is the only hotel in town to serve lunches and dinners seven days a week, also having an attractive Tudor Room which accommodates smaller parties for meetings or meals, or for receptions held prior to the more important social gatherings.

In charge are Tom and Maureen Almey, who have been there for nearly eight years and whose roots are well and firmly in the licensing trade. Grandfather Almey was at the Imperial, Cleethorpes, 40 years ago. Tom's father, another Tom Almey, was at the King Henry VIII, Scunthorpe, but retired early in 1974 to take a well-earned two-month holiday before going on to relief management; and brother Steve is at the Walsall Court Motel, near Birmingham; Uncle Dick Summers is manager of the Royal Hotel, Scunthorpe, with Aunt Josie as assistant manageress; Aunt Lorna (Mrs. Alan Dunkley) is at the Cross Guss, Codsall; Uncle Jim is at the Castle Vale, Birmingham; and Uncle Ted at the Ifield Court, Crawley.

Tom and Maureen Almey, with their two sons, Tim (6) and Nicky (5) enjoy their life at the Angel. Maureen takes time off to play principal parts in Brigg Amateur Operatic Society productions, which she does very well and also provides for herself a relaxing break from hotel management and family cares. Tom is an intrepid searcher after adventure in the River Humber, listing his hobbies as "sailing and surviving."

Another of Brigg's oldest pubs is the Brocklesby Ox, early 18th century and named after the famous Lincolnshire ox reputed to have weighed nearly three tons. The original print of the ox, dated 1823, gave the weight

“When you have lost your inns, drown your empty selves, for you will have lost the last of England” — Hilaire Belloc

as 464 stn; height 5 ft. 6 in; length from nose to tail 11 ft. 1 in. and 3 ft. 3 in. across the back.

The inn was built by the Yarborough family and had stabling for 20 horses. Even up to the end of last century two ostlers were employed.

Retiring in May 1973, after being at the Brocklesby Ox for 58 years, 31 as licensee, was Mrs. Nellie Clark, whose uncle, Mr. Harry Gilliatt, took over the pub in 1915. Mrs. Clark developed a large paddock at the rear of the Brocklesby Ox as a caravan site and that is her home and her hobby in retirement.

Licensee and sculptor

Another Brigg pub with historic associations is the Dying Gladiator, believed to be the only inn so named in the country. Over the front door is an exact replica of a statue which stands in the Vatican City, Rome, sculpted by William Clark when he converted his house into a pub during the early 19th century.

William Clark was in the building trade and had a great gift for sculpture, his works including “Boy holding a basket on his head”, a sundial and a Grecian vase. In his youth, he travelled to Paris and Rome, also living in Germany for a time while doing sculpture for Court officials.

The Dying Gladiator passed to his son, Edward Knott Clark, and his wife, Catherine, who had 16 children. It was Catherine who was the prop and corner stone, a remarkable woman with a gift for organisation. The running of the pub was left entirely to her while her husband devoted his time to his profession of architect and surveyor – he was surveyor to Brigg Urban Council for 21 years. Catherine carried on the business after her husband died, handing over to her youngest son, Cyril, in 1921.

Cyril retired in the early 1950s to run the village shop at Wootton and in came Mr. Reg Luxford, to be followed by Trevor Leaning and, in 1968, Mr. Albert Storey and his wife Margaret.

For Mr. Storey, a builder by trade, this was literally a case of coming down to earth. He had been a master navigator in the Royal Air Force for many years and did not relish the prospect of going back to building. He took a look at the Gladiator when he learned it was coming on the market and decided that “this nice little family pub” was for him.

The statue over the door of this former farmhouse is still one of the tourist attractions and hundreds of visitors, including many Americans, have photographed this unique figure.

Pigott's Directory of 1841 listed the Lamb Inn in addition to the Angel and the White Lion, adding the following 16 taverns: the Ancholme, Black Bull, Brocklesby Ox, Coach and Horses, Cross Keys, Gladiator, Hammer in Hand, Hope and Anchor, Lord Nelson, Red Lion, Wheat Sheaf, White Hart, White Horse, William IV, Yarborough Hunt, Woolpack.

Earlier there had been the Bacchus and Tun, the Old Ship and the Bricklayers' Arms. And by 1849 was to be added the Nelthorpe Arms. There was also a Plough Inn in Bridge-street, the Rose and Crown in Wrawby-street, famous for its home-brewed beer, and the Butchers' Arms, Wrawby-street, today a betting shop, the licence being transferred to the new Ancholme Inn, Grammar School-road.

Today's list is meagre by comparison. Changing habits, greater mobility enabling people to go out of town and shifting populations due to new housing development, put some of the pubs out of business. The Yar-

borough Hunt licence was held by Sidney Bell for 40 years before he retired in November 1965. The inn struggled on under new management but it was never the same and closed down at virtually no notice in February, 1968.

The Red Lion had prospered under Harold Streatfield, who took a great interest in Brigg Town FC. Business declined after he left and this was another “local” which closed down overnight. Also closing during this century have been the Hammer in Hand, the Hope Inn, Lamb Inn, Rose and Crown and the old Ancholme Inn, Market Place.

Easy chair for “Jobby”

The Queen's Arms, Wrawby-street, was a cottage pub run by Mr. George Jobson and his family for about 38 years. “Jobby” retired in 1960 but carried on as secretary of the Brigg, Caistor and Barton-on-Humber Licensed Victuallers' Association until last year, when the members presented him with a massive easy chair so that he could put his feet up after many years of loyal service.

Up to May of this year, Nellie Clark at the Brocklesby Ox had been the longest-serving licensee, handing over to her daughter, Nellie Reynolds. The all-time record, or course, was held by the Bell brothers, William and Sid. They both came from Louth to be “Boots” at the Angel and both saved enough to take their own pubs. William eventually bought the Nelthorpe Arms, made it a free house and held the licence for 50 years. With Sid's 40 years across the road at the Yarborough Hunt, they totted up 90 years' licence-holding between them.

Today the record is not so difficult to achieve – it is held by Les Vincent at the White Horse, a mere 12 years.

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TRADERS GOT TOGETHER IN THE LEAN TWENTIES

*Still together — Chamber of Trade
Jubilee in 1975*

This was not the most propitious time in history for the launching of any organisation that involved parting with hard cash, for trade in the lean twenties was worse than it had been for many years.

Agricultural prices were as depressed as ever. There was massive unemployment, industrial unrest and the General Strike was looming up. The closing down of the Redbourn steelworks and with men on short time at the rest of the Scunthorpe steelworks, made a severe impact on the Brigg economy.

news by inaugurating a barter system with the farmers — radiograms for sheep.

Not every trader, of course, was in a position to compete on those terms for stock had to be paid for in cash, not in kind. But Mr. Robinson was ideally situated. He had a newsagent's business, a printing works and a radio shop — and he had a farm at Broughton. Hence, for him, radiograms for sheep was a practical proposition and while the idea was not the solution to everybody's problem, this example does serve to illustrate something of what went on in the "good old days."

It was to the credit of the traders of that time, therefore, that they should have the courage to go out in search of new business. They organised Brigg's first-ever Trades Exhibition and staged it in the Corn Exchange in 1934.

It had taken about three years to convince the members of the Chamber that such a venture was going to be worthwhile and the man who did most of the convincing was one of the youngest members, Mr. Harold Patchett, a Wrawby-street shopkeeper. As a reward for his enthusiasm they made him exhibition secretary, with Mr. F. T. Green, a member of Scunthorpe Chamber of Trade, assisting in an advisory capacity.

(continued on page 64)

IT was in the mid-19th century that the first plate glass windows made their appearance in Brigg Market Place, at Finney's the draper and Robinson's the watchmaker — "equal to most in large towns," they boasted in their advertisements. It was not until around 1925, however, that traders thought about organising their own plate glass insurance — and that was the start of Brigg Chamber of Trade.

Pie in the sky

The prospect of a sugar factory seemed years away — in fact, it came in 1928 but in 1925 it was just as much pie-in-the-sky as television and the Humber Bridge.

Men were allowed to be on the dole for only so long and then they had to pass a humiliating means test before they qualified for a pittance that did no more than keep body and soul together.

Money was so scarce even in the early 1930s that Mr. Walter B. Robinson, then president of Brigg Chamber of Trade, made national



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LINCOLNSHIRE TIMES

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First of many successful Exhibitions

(continued from page 63)

The event was headlined in the local Press, "Traders' Farewell To Days Of Depression." That was a bold prophecy, perhaps over-optimistic, but it was a change from the pessimism which had pervaded for so long.

The exhibition was opened by Ald. James Blindell, Grimsby, head of a chain of shoe shops, and over 2,000 people paid for admission on the first day.

There was another exhibition in 1950 and the man doing the bulk of the work was Mr. J. J. Magrath, chairman of the organising committee, with Mr. Herbert Johnson as secretary. Performing the opening ceremony this time was Sir Walter Womersley, known in those days as the "shopkeepers' MP."

Imposing facade

The next exhibition was in 1956 and again the two main men were Mr. Johnson and Mr. Magrath, the latter also being president of the Chamber for that year. It was opened by Lord Quibell who, as David Quibell, had been MP for the Brigg Division 1929-31 and again from 1935 until he was elevated to the peerage at the end of the war.

Both exhibitions were unqualified successes and it looked as though Brigg Chamber of Trade was still a very thriving institution after its first 30 years.

But this was not the case. The Chamber of Trade in the early 1960s was little more than an imposing facade propped up by an enthusiastic few. The cynics remarked that the traders had never had it so good and that they now had no need of an organisation which had been so useful to them in the bad days.

Whatever the reason, it was a great disappointment to the 1963 president, Mr. Magrath. The first event he organised was a social evening at the Angel Hotel for Chamber members, wives, and councillors and wives. He had invited a representative of the Civic Trust to speak on the proposed re-design of Brigg's shopping centre on the lines of the Norwich experiment.

No meetings, no apologies

He said later: "If I say there were 20 people there I am being charitable. There was enough food left over to have fed the 5,000."

Nothing more was heard of Brigg Chamber of Trade until January, 1965, when a meeting was convened for the first time for nearly two years. Mr. Magrath made no apologies. No-one had ever asked why there had been no meetings, he said, apart from two members. He had accepted office on the understanding that he would have the full support of the members and that had not been forthcoming. If the traders didn't care, why should he?

It was not the happiest of meetings. The secretary, Mrs. Enid Brocklesby, had received neither salary nor personal expenses. No action had been taken to pay the annual subscription to the National Chamber of Trade, with the result that notice of expulsion had been served. Mr. Magrath had sent out 50 notices of that meeting but only 11 turned up, including three members of one family and two representatives of one firm.

Another meeting was convened in the following month and this time there was an attendance of 40, certainly the biggest show of enthusiasm for some years. A holding committee was appointed and instructed to arrange an annual general meeting at which officers and committee could be elected.



A well blended mixture of old and new in Wrawby Street. The half-timbered building, now a betting shop, was formerly a pub, the Butchers Arms. On the extreme left, a former bank, now occupied by Woolworths. In the centre, new shop and office development.

There was another disappointing attendance but there were letters from many traders and business houses declaring their interest and promising support if the organisation succeeded in getting off the ground.

That meeting accomplished a lot. It was decided to appoint a paid secretary at a salary of £40 a year and to increase subscriptions from 15s. to one guinea a year. Two local bank managers accepted office, Mr. Ken Overend, Midland Bank, as vice-president and Mr. F. Mason, Barclays, as treasurer.

From that point the Chamber has never looked back. Before the year was out there were meetings at which new ideas were hammered out, including a membership drive which was to prove surprisingly productive. On all hands there was evidence of support and goodwill.

The highlight of that year, 1965, was the introduction of a scheme to provide business premises with illuminated Christmas trees, the origin of a custom that has prevailed right up to the present time and which has brought appreciative letters from many parts of the country. Certainly the idea was commercially-inspired but if it brought a little grist to the mill it also added charm, gaiety and a welcoming glow to the town at what can be the most depressing time of the year.

Spreading the interest

That was the year when Mr. Ken Pearce had taken over as President, perhaps the most crucial year in the history of the Chamber. He was succeeded by Mr. Overend, another who put a tremendous amount of work into the task of building on what had already been accomplished. Behind all this was Mr. Douglas Field, who put a lot more than £40 worth into the job during his period as secretary, being succeeded by Mr. M. D. Royce when he left for another post in Yorkshire.

From a handful of not very active members in 1964 - no subscriptions were paid in 1965 - there are today about 150 members.

The interest has been spread in a variety of ways - essay and art competitions for school-children, flower-arranging classes for adults, lectures and outings of interest - members were recently offered the opportunity of going down a coal mine - and an annual dinner and ball that is always a sell-out. That again had declined until somebody thought to ask - Why? There had always been a formidable list

of after-dinner speakers and apparently they were under the impression that they hadn't earned their keep unless they each spoke for an hour.

Today, speeches are virtually out. There is a brief welcome from the President, brief acknowledgments from the principal guests and then - on with the dance. At the 1973 dinner the civic guests were making a historic last appearance. They were Coun. Miss Dorothy Selby, chairman of Brigg Urban District Council, and Coun. J. L. Binns, chairman of Brigg Rural District Council. Both authorities were due to go out of existence on March 31, 1974.

Hardworking secretary

There was a Trades Exhibition in 1969 which firmly established the Chamber's reputation, thanks to a very efficient exhibition secretary, Mr. Ken Pearce, and widespread support from members. Then Mr. Roland West, of Lloyds Bank, came into the picture, another hardworking secretary who saved more in postage in a year than he drew in salary by delivering almost all the correspondence by hand.

This was typical of Mr. West's "do-it-yourself" approach to life. When he retired from the secretaryship in March of this year he was presented with a gift of his own choice - an electric power tool which will enable him to add to the impressive list of do-it-yourself jobs, including the installation of central heating, which he has already accomplished at his Hibaldstow home.

In 1973 Mr. John R. Gregory, chartered accountant, succeeded Mr. M. G. Henry, manager of the Brigg branch of the Midland Bank, as President. The president-elect is Mr. Ewart P. Gillard, a local trader who helped to change the face of Wrawby-street by demolishing three old properties and replacing them with two modern shops and a suite of offices. Mr. E. Dodd succeeded Mr. West as secretary.

With the announcement in August 1973 that the route of the long-awaited Brigg bypass had been fixed, it is the Chamber's eventual aim to press for even more car parking, particularly in the west of the town, to seek some relaxation of the punitive parking restrictions in the streets and to maintain Brigg's reputation as the premier shopping centre in this part of North Lincolnshire.



This delightful view of Elsham lakes, showing a glimpse of the Hall in the background, was the work of photographer David Lee, of Barton and reproduced by courtesy of English Life Publications, Derby.

HOW does a picture of Elsham Hall lakes finds its way into a book about Brigg? There are several reasons. It is a beautiful picture in its own right and it is literally on the doorstep of Brigg, a popular venue for many people of Brigg and district. The main link, of course, is with the Elwes family, who at one time owned the whole of Brigg, together with Bigby and Worlaby – bought by one Jeremy Elwes in the early part of the 17th century.

Beautiful family home

It was Geoffrey Elwes, one of the six sons of Mr. Gervase and Lady Winefride Elwes, of the Manor House, Brigg, who acquired Elsham Hall in 1931 and spent a small fortune on restoration work and landscaping the gardens by the time war broke out in 1939. Col. Elwes moved out to rejoin his regiment and the Army moved in, using the Hall as billets – with the inevitable damage and neglect which characterises Army occupation.

It was Capt. Jeremy Elwes who took over the mammoth task of demolishing one-third of the old Hall and putting it into shape in the late 1940s at a cost of some £30,000. Today, although he is apt to shy away from the term “Stately Home” it is just that – and more. Elsham Hall is a beautiful family home that has a fine library but is not sufficiently adaptable to open to the public and at the same time maintain some degree of privacy. But it has a country park and an unspoilt, natural water garden which they share with the public through the medium of nature trails, an entirely new system of rural quizzes with certificate as prizes, an arts and design centre, art gallery and a walled-in compound where children from the towns can make physical contact with a range of unusual or homely domestic animals and birds.

Around the lakes are various species of wild fowl, flamingoes, macaws, peacocks and many other colourful birds. The policy is to keep as many birds free-flying as is practicable and for the special benefit of the peacocks there is a mirror on an island in the lake so that they can see that their plumage is properly preened.

Lakeside concerts

On Summer Sunday afternoons there is an opportunity for individuals to put over their own selections of classical music as a concert across the lake, using the latest Hi-Fi equipment. And for those who wish to see more of the park and its surroundings there are three-mile trails on which the townsfolk and county-lovers have the services of an expert naturalist-warden.

Capt. Elwes, born September 1921, was educated at Ampleforth College, York and the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. He was commissioned in

How does a picture of Elsham Lakes get into a book about Brigg?

the King's Royal Rifle Corps in 1939 and as an intelligence officer in the 8th Army after El Alamein was seconded to a branch of the Special Air Service.

For a time he was liaison officer to the Greek Sacred Brigade and to the Yugoslavia Guards and was in training to go into Yugoslavia as an agent when the military policy changed and he was switched to Italy. He did get into Yugoslavia and Albania with a Commando Regiment towards the end of the war and was later posted to Greece at the end of the civil war.

After two and a half years with the Anglo-Greek Information Service he was in the process of being transferred to Peking as Third Secretary for the Diplomatic Service in China when, just as had happened to his grandfather some 50 or more years earlier, his career was interrupted by a call to come home and manage the family estates at Elsham and Roxby.

Founded Arts Association

He spent a year as a farm pupil before training at the Moulton Farm Institute, Northants. The 1,000-acre farming enterprise, however, is only one of his many interests. Just over 10 years ago he conceived the idea of a Lincolnshire Association for the arts and heritage of the county and personally canvassed every local authority in the county for financial assistance to get this project off the ground.

The Association was duly formed on November 3, 1964 and Capt. Elwes was elected the founder-chairman. For five years he held the reins of what is now a well-established organisation which is best described as a partnership between the local authorities, the Arts Council, industry and Lincolnshire people. It is an independent regional arts association which in 1974, with an annual income of £100,000 a year, celebrates its tenth anniversary, having more members than any other such organisation in the United Kingdom.

As High Sheriff of Lincolnshire in 1969/70, Capt. Elwes must have been the most colourful character ever to

have held the office – his Elizabethan Ball at Gainsborough's Old Hall to help save that building being remembered by all who attended it and regretted by many who realised only when it was too late what they had missed.

Many activities

Following the family tradition for public service, Capt. Elwes associated himself with a vast list of activities which took him from the Elsham village hall to the House of Lords, where he gave evidence to a Select Committee concerned with leisure. He became a member of Brigg Rural Council and Lindsey County Council; chairman of the Lincolnshire branch of the Council for the Protection of Rural England and chairman of the Lincolnshire Best Kept Village Committee; a vice-president of the Lincolnshire Agricultural Society and a steward in the fur and feather section; a member for three years of the BBC Northern Advisory Council and vice-chairman for three years of Radio Humberside; vice-president of the Lincolnshire Vintage Vehicle Society; a member of the County Landowners' Association; a member for many years of the executive committee of the Rural Community Council; a governor for nine years of the Lindsey College of Agriculture.

Had to retrench

So many interests, in fact, that the time came when he had to consider cutting down some of his many commitments. Three years ago, when he handed over the chairmanship of the Lincolnshire Association to Sir John Dudding, he hinted that he would also be giving up some other sectors of his public service, including his membership of Lindsey County Council.

He was taking heed, no doubt, of the Elwes' own loose translation of the family motto, *Deo Non Fortuna* – “My God, No Cash!” He concentrated on business ventures such as “Linvend”, now a nationally-recognised vending

But "Where there was Smoke there was Fire"

company and the foundation of a trading and airline business with South America, particularly Mexico, a venture which was designed to increase exports and so make some contribution to the balance of payments problem.

Capt. Elwes was labelled with the Press tag "Rebel Sheriff" when, as a farmer, he refused to pay a £17.50 contribution to the Agricultural Training Board. Accusing the board of unnecessarily duplicating work and expense already being undertaken by NAAS and the 28 agricultural colleges and institutes, he put forward the "Elwes Plan" which the board declined with thanks – but still insisted on payment.

Capt. Elwes is currently busy with the consolidation of the Shrievalty Association – a national association of Sheriffs and High Sheriffs which he initiated. It aims at preserving the ancient office in places where it is threatened and indeed strengthening it by the allocation of additional and worthwhile responsibilities so that with a growing membership of over 200 it is becoming an influence for law and order and a stable society in the troubled '70s.

Apart from his genuine interest in planning for the increased leisure he has always said would come sooner than expected, it could be said that Capt.

Elwes's brain-child, now attracting national interest, was really a spin-off from the threat of local government reorganisation. When he spoke at Brigg Rural Council's annual civic dinner in the late 60s he suggested that "before we are sunk without trace we should build a jolly good memorial." And the memorial he had in mind, of course, was this combined sports and arts complex.

It was a suggestion that received polite applause at the dinner but with hard-line scepticism in the council chamber. His cool estimate of half a million pounds they found hard to comprehend and when they learned that this was only for the early stages they were inclined to dismiss it all as a pipe-dream.

Coach trip conversion

But Capt. Elwes was serious and persuaded his colleagues to take a coach trip to Bingham, Notts. and Cannon Hill, Birmingham, where similar complexes were already operating very successfully. They went, saw – and *he* conquered. It was a trip that paid handsome dividends for the majority of councillors returned with the conviction that what he had suggested was indeed a practical possibility, even if it had to be in a somewhat modified but more balanced form.

A start was made of phase one in 1973 and by early '74 the excavation work had been completed and the steel girders began to rise, showing the shape of things to come – a main swimming pool, a learner pool, sauna baths and squash courts. Phase two, expected to start in 1975, provides for a main hall

capable of accommodating six badminton courts and a variety of other indoor sports.

It will also be dual purpose to the extent that special, easy to handle seating, stage and curtains, can be installed to convert it into a concert hall that will hold an audience of 1,000, sufficient to make a more viable proposition of such events as symphony concerts or even the Red Army Ensemble!

Not just for Brigg

And when you ask Capt. Elwes where he is going to find audiences of 1,000 for symphony concerts his answer is: "Remember that this is not just for Brigg. There is a large urban and rural population to draw on and there will be all the Humberside population to draw on when the Humber Bridge is built.

"There is no other hall in North Lincolnshire that will come up to this standard of accommodation. Also, no concert hall on this scale on its own could attempt to be a viable proposition – that's why this one has to be dual purpose, with the emphasis on sport."

Attached to the main hall, built on in the form of a vestibule, will be a small hall suitable for art exhibitions, film shows and similar functions, thus affording a marked degree of flexibility. And the present thinking behind phase three envisages yet another building, one that will be a combination of pensioners' rest room, workshop, riverside boating facilities and studios

(continued on page 69)

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10-Year programme with the emphasis on theatre

(continued from page 67)

housing every kind of creative activity – sculpture, pottery, music, flower arranging, etc., and with restaurant facilities for the whole complex, to be let out on a commercial basis.

The final instalment of what could well be a 10-year plan could be a youth-teaching theatre, a link between the school theatre and the new county theatre to be sited at the Brayford, Lincoln. It would be available for small touring drama companies, local drama groups, the emphasis, as the title suggests, always on the theatre – wardrobe, stage management and production. That would leave the nearby town-owned Corn Exchange ample scope for the presentation of pop, dances, opera and ballet.

The final phase could also make provision for field sports and perhaps, in time, a pedestrian footbridge over the River Ancholme leading to other sporting interests, including tennis.

All this, with the considerable help of the chief officers of the Gleanford Borough Council, is attracting the interest of such organisations as the Arts Council, the Sports Council and the Lincolnshire Association, between all of which there is a co-operative link. It will make the ancient town of Brigg the centre of a unique complex of the arts and sport at a time when the town itself will be conveniently off the motorway and an even more pleasant place to live in than it is at the present time.

As Capt. Elwes says: "A tremendous amount of thought by the architect has gone into the design and it really will be a place where the whole family, including granny, can go for the day. Its unique feature is that it blends the requirements of the young people who go there for various sports or any of the arts, to the pensioners and the handicapped, for whom special attention has been paid to the question of levels and ramps – even to seeing that the doors open the way they need them to open."



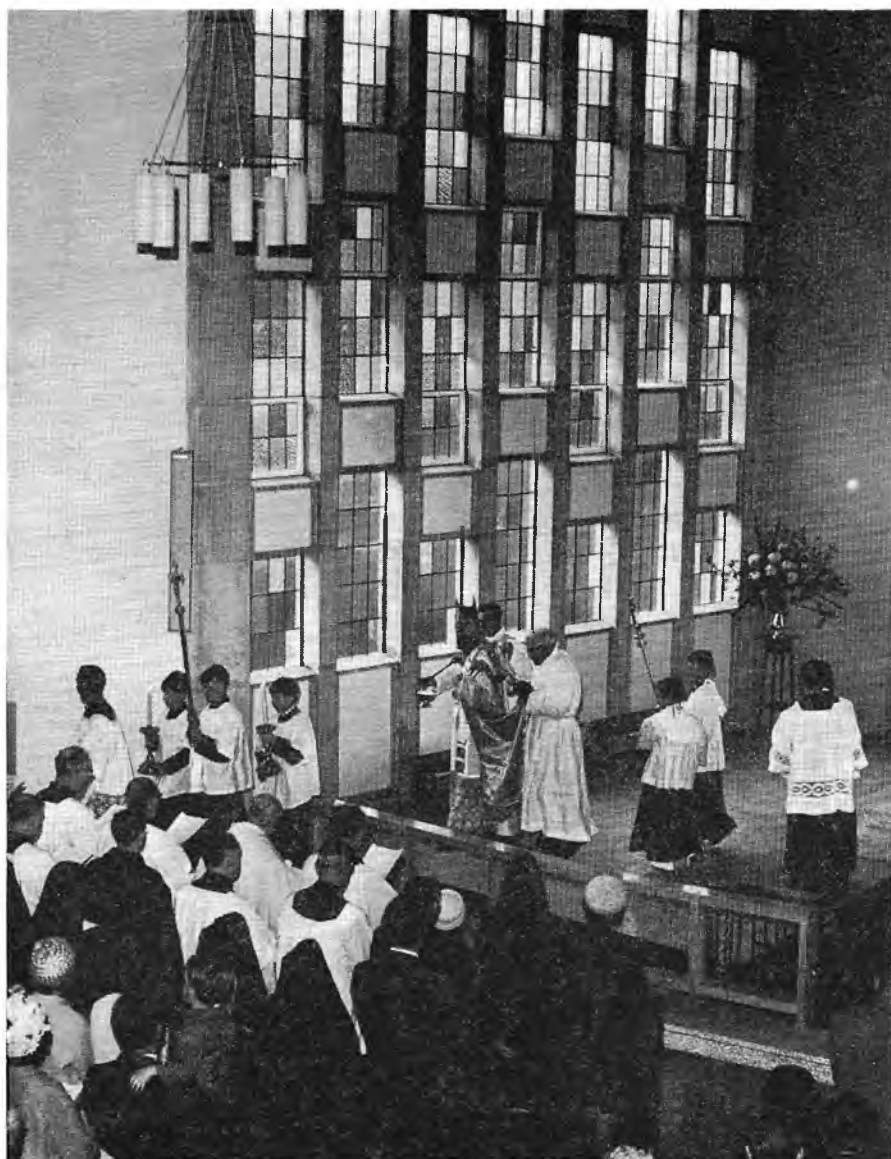
Two contrasting types of Brigg housing. In the exclusive residential area of St. Helens Park are detached Georgian houses costing up to £15,000. At the other end of the town, terraced houses for council tenants, unimaginative and considered by many to be a retrograde building policy.



What pleased him, he said, was that the two councils concerned with phase one were agreed that phase two should go ahead even in the face of the unfavourable economic climate at the start of 1974. It so happened, he said, that 1974 was not a spending year because of the work being done on phase one but they should see a start of phase two in 1975.

"This is not the biggest scheme of its kind," said Capt. Elwes, "but it is an important one in that it has variety and balance and, unlike some projects we see in neighbouring towns, it has co-ordination and offers a wide menu of interest to the new generations.

"When you think that by the year 2000 we shall have another 20 per cent leisure time – that is the estimate that came out of a House of Lords report – the need for this really comes into perspective. Nationally there are a great many people who are watching with interest what is going on at Brigg – those who know that uninitiated leisure time can lead to boredom, loneliness, even crime and that the cost to the country and to the ratepayer can be far more in the long term than the provision of facilities such as are being provided at Brigg and which will last well into the next century."



Unique view on an historic occasion

This is a unique glimpse of a corner of St. Mary's Church, Brigg, a picture taken when it was dedicated in 1966 by the Rev. Edward Ellis, Bishop of Nottingham. Attending the bishop was Father Patrick O'Hanlon, parish priest of Brigg for 13 years and who raised £15,000 for the church building fund. Glass and concrete may sound an incongruous mixture but in this case there is strength and dignity, stained glass in the modern idiom.

Christmas lights we may never see again

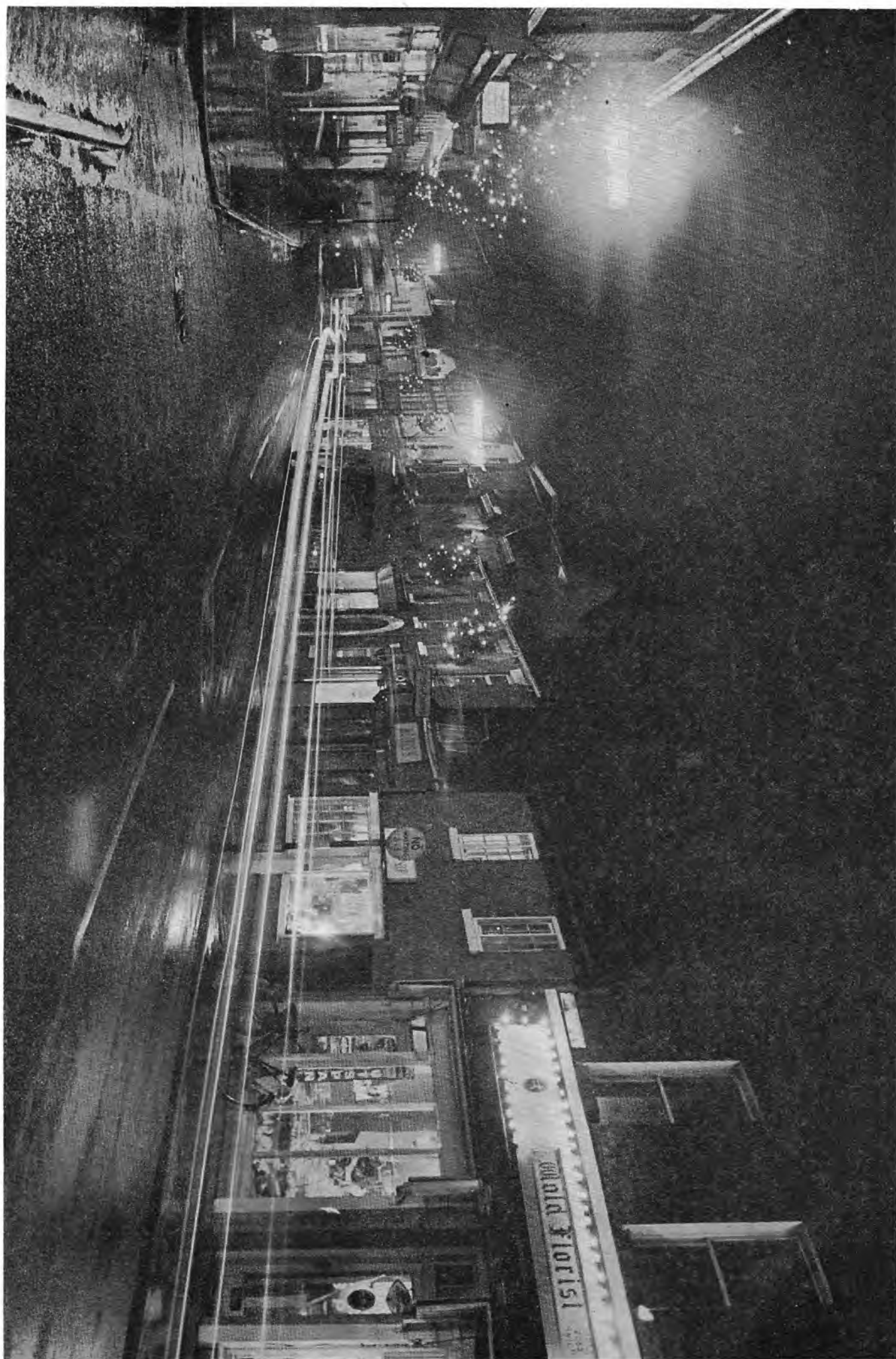
IT was a happy Christmas for Brigg when Ken Overend and Walter Parker produced the first batch of illuminated Christmas trees. The idea was not entirely original – Ken Overend, president of Brigg Chamber of Trade, had seen a festive season lighting scheme in some other town and thought they might do worse than follow this example. Walter Parker, a keen member of the Chamber of Trade, agreed. With enthusiastic support from local traders and other owners of business premises, the big switch-on was made possible.

Ten years on to pre-Christmas, 1973 and everything was ready as usual. Backed by Brigg Urban Council with a promise of financial assistance for extra illuminations and with the usual support from the traders, the organisation was complete – and then came the energy crisis.

Bowness and Gray, local electrical contractors, with trees earmarked and men ready to move in to start wiring-up in case the crisis passed, stood by until it was clear that it was not going to pass. The general picture was one of gloom, deepened by a 50 per cent cut in street lighting. Except in the shops! The assistants rose to the challenge and shoppers reported an even more cheery reception than usual. People refused to be intimidated by the crisis and went on a spending spree. It could have been that an accompanying petrol shortage restricted travelling but the fact remains that in the majority of cases the tills totted up record takings.

Faced with a permanent cut in oil supplies and with a need to conserve all forms of energy even when the industrial chaos of early 1974 has been sorted out, it may be necessary to maintain the economies which heralded Christmas 1973.

Hence this picture on the facing page, taken by *Lincolnshire Times* photographer Bryan Robins a few years ago. It is a remarkable picture in many ways and one which may well acquire a certain historic value. It could be that we shall never see the Christmas lights again and if this book is handed down to successive generations, then somebody in the 21st century will be saying: "That's what Brigg looked like in the good old days, way back in '64."



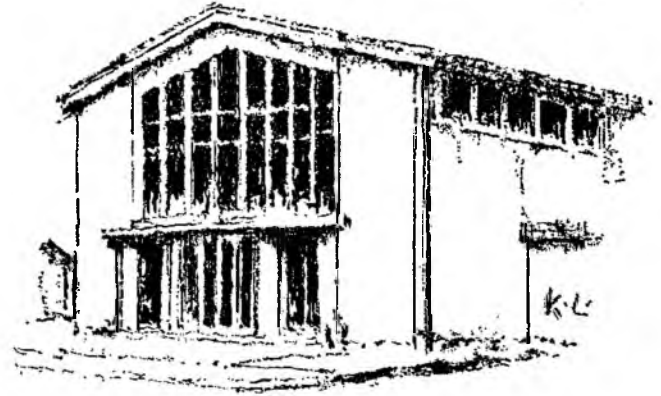


Churches have had ups and downs for seven centuries

Priest raised £15,000 — but he never got his spire

This is the church built by the Catholic community in Brigg in post-war years.

It is perhaps the best architectural feature in the town but Father Patrick O'Hanlon, who raised about £15,000 for the building fund, had only one regret - he would have liked a spire. Father O'Hanlon produced a further £800 when he went to the opening ceremony in 1966 and handed it to Bishop Ellis, saying, "When people come into Brigg they should be able to see the spire and say, 'There is the Catholic church'." Father O'Hanlon, who was ordained at 60 years of age, died in a nursing home near Dublin in 1973. He never got his spire - it would have been too costly and in any case out of context with such a modern design.



hemmed in by the Lamb Inn, later to be demolished to make way for a church hall, and by shop property on the other. A western door was constructed but immediately bricked up, the hope being entertained that it could be opened up when the adjoining property was acquired and demolished.

A fund to do that was created by the Lyne family of Brigg but the conditions imposed presented problems to those who were to have carried out the scheme. That, plus the outbreak of war in 1939, meant that no headway was made and today the parish church is as hemmed in as ever it was.

The Catholic Church

The history of the Catholic church in Brigg is almost as obscure as the rest and the Chapel of Ease of 1699, dedicated to St. Mary, is usually regarded as the starting point. In fact, the Catholic faith was established long before that, Mass having been said in Brigg in 1604.

There is one record in the archives of the English Province showing that Mass was said on the fourth Sunday of each month from 1770 to 1789 at the house of Mr. Bernard, Bigby-street. It seems fairly certain, however, that the house referred to was a Wrawby-street property now occupied by the Trustee Savings Bank, that it extended through to Bigby-street, from which Catholics using the chapel would enter.

Still there until 1968

A new chapter in Brigg Catholicism started with the arrival of two French emigrant priests, who built with their own hands a small chapel on the outskirts of the town, on the Scawby road. The chapel was still there when the land was acquired for a market garden by the Dickinson family, and was used as a store. It was not demolished until 1968 but even then it did not completely disappear, for some of the stone was incorporated into the bungalow built for the Dickinson sisters, Annie and Bella.

It was the conversion of Valentine Cary Elwes, of the Manor House, who revived the fortunes of the local mission. In 1874 he turned the Manor House coach house into a chapel and with some additions and improvements, this building served as the Catholic church until the mid-1960s, when a new church was opened in Barnard-avenue.

(continued on page 74)

THE history of Brigg's churches through the ages is necessarily sketchy because of the scarcity of authentic records and also because there were considerable periods when no church or chapel of any denomination existed. In the early days of the 13th century a hospital dedicated to St. John was provided for the poor and needy, and later a chapel was built close by. That, however, does not indicate the existence of a community of any size, for such "hospitals", fairly common throughout the country, usually served the purpose of inns or almshouses and were places where pilgrims and travellers might obtain a night's lodging.

Hospitals were robbed

Or, perhaps more historically correct is the theory that the hospital was no more than a place of call for the Selby brethren of the Benedictine foundation when they came to visit their estates in the neighbourhood. There is also evidence of another chapel or oratory in 1385 but there followed a bleak period when almshouses and hospitals were plundered and robbed and something like that seems to have happened

at Brigg. The Hospital of St. John and the Free Chapel which stood by its side were ransacked, the revenues confiscated and the town left spiritually destitute.

No place of worship

For something like 150 years there was no place of worship in Brigg and when Canon A. N. Claye compiled his notes on Brigg towards the end of last century, he commented: "This fact does credit neither to the Clergy of the four parishes in which it stood, nor to the laity, none of whom apparently bestirred himself to supply the need."

But in 1699 a Chapel of Ease was erected and until the early 19th century that and the Quakers' Meeting House in Bigby-street formed the centre of Brigg's religious life. An independent Calvin Chapel was built in Wrawby-street in 1813 and about the same time the Anglicans, not satisfied that the Chapel of Ease was suited to the times, began to think of building their own church in Brigg and severing their dependence on the mother church of Wrawby.

A subscription list was headed by R. Cary Elwes, who also gave land to add to the old site; Sir John Nelthorpe supplied the stone; the Bishop of Lincoln gave £20 and Lady Nelthorpe sent a donation to bridge the gap between what had been collected and what was required to pay for the building.

Built in the Gothic style, the church was planned by Nicholson and Goddard, Lincoln, and cost about £2,700. On one side it was

Minister who preached hellfire and brimstone

DECLINE OF ONCE-THRIVING CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

(continued from page 73)

One that has failed to survive is Brigg Congregational Church, which made a modest start way back in 1798 with a capital of 10s. There had been a Protestant Dissenting Chapel in Wrawby-street since 1718 but it was demolished and the site left derelict. It was purchased for half a sovereign by the Rev. George Landers, of Hull, and a new chapel was built. As the congregation expanded, still another chapel was built, with schoolroom attached.

For nearly 150 years the church flourished but went into a decline in the 1950s, probably due to an over-zealous minister who preached "hell-fire and brimstone" and thought no sermon should last less than an hour. When he departed to scorch pastures new, the services were carried on by laymen deacons and when the Rev. George Ffarmer, a former minister, paid a visit in 1957, he found "a spirit of confidence and friendliness" which he thought would carry them through. He added: "If I were a younger man I should not be at all pessimistic about taking up where I left off."

Churches merged

A young, enthusiast minister did arrive, the Rev. Richard Taylor, in 1960, at a time when Congregationalism was undergoing reorganisation. He combined his duties at Brigg with those of industrial chaplain at a Scunthorpe steelworks and in 1967 the Congregational churches of Brigg, Barton-on-Humber and Scunthorpe merged to form a North Lindsey Group.

The group was launched with high hopes.

Their magazine, "Crossroads," described the merger as "a natural marriage" aimed at breaking down any lingering parochialism, highlighting what people were doing in North Lindsey, pooling news and opinions from church people.

Ominous warning

But in late 1969, "Crossroads" sounded an ominous warning that the future of the Congregational Church in North Lincolnshire was precarious. The Rev. John Berryman spoke of the dismantling of the group council, to be replaced by a group deacons' meeting, with deacons not sure if they wished to develop towards a group church with a lay chairman and the pooling of their common life and planning.

Some deacons, he said, were thinking of resigning because they did not feel able to cope with the demands of the new situation. There was a dearth of church members at Brigg and Barton, a realistic look at the membership showing that there were only 55 between the two churches "and half of those cannot be called active or be seen at worship."

Towards the end of 1973 the few local Congregationalists moved over the road to hold their services at St. John's Church. The Wrawby-street building, they said, was no longer fit for use and there was talk of it being sold for commercial purposes, most probably a supermarket.

The year 1973 also saw the demolition of the old Primitive Methodist Chapel in Bridge-street, a building that had stood derelict for

many years and was decaying to a point where the roof appeared to be in imminent danger of collapse.

Whatever Wesley may have thought of the indifference of some of the people to whom he preached on the occasion of his three visits, he would have been heartened to have witnessed the stronghold that Methodism eventually established in Brigg. It became necessary to build a Wesleyan church with 800 sittings and a Primitive Methodist and United Methodist chapels which catered for another 600.

Two churches demolished

Right up to the 1930s the Methodists held their ground but gradually the national trend reflected itself, as in most other denominations, in declining congregations. The United Methodist chapel in Bigby-street, perhaps the worst architectural feature in a town not noted for beautiful buildings, closed its doors and was demolished in recent years to be replaced by a plant centre. The Wesleyan church closed and is used for the storage of furniture, and the Primitive Methodist chapel a few yards away required only a few prods from the demolition men to collapse into a heap of dust and rubble.

The sacrifice that must have been entailed in the building and maintenance of those three churches can well be imagined and it would be sad to think it had all been in vain. It may be that the building programme was over-generous in the first place and that the time had to come for rationalisation and a pooling of resources. That was the aim of the so-called "Methodist Unity" and while it was not wholly successful in Brigg - there was always a kind of racial rift between the Wesleyans and the Primitives - enough was salvaged to build premises in Barnard-avenue that will serve as a Methodist church and church hall until resources can be mustered for a traditional church.

Army crowded out

The Salvation Army, while flourishing on either side at Scunthorpe and Barton-on-Humber, has never made any impact on Brigg. There is a hut-type "citadel" in West-terrace, seldom if ever used, and many years ago a tiny band could be seen and heard at street corners. It could be that the Army was crowded out in its formative years by an overweight of Methodism and that in such a small town there was no room for two fairly similar faiths which appealed to the same religious strata.

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Brigg goes back into history many centuries but really it didn't amount to much until the railway arrived about 150 years ago. In fact the Elwes family bought the whole of Brigg for £5,000.

BRIGG'S WILD WEST DAYS WENT OUT WITH THE STAGE COACH

ALTHOUGH much importance has been attached to Brigg's legendary market charter and the town's strategic position as a river crossing, there was no appreciable development until the early years of the 19th century. There is no record of any building operations during the previous century apart from the turnpike houses on the western boundary and at the extremities of Wrawby-street and Bigby-street around 1756. And the fact that the Elwes

family were able to buy the whole of Brigg some 300 years ago for £5,000 is an indication that there couldn't have been much more than a few farms and half a dozen or so houses and barns.

With the widening and deepening of the River Ancholme by John Rennie, the construction of the New Cut and the construction of the two bridges, the trade of the town was considerably stimulated.

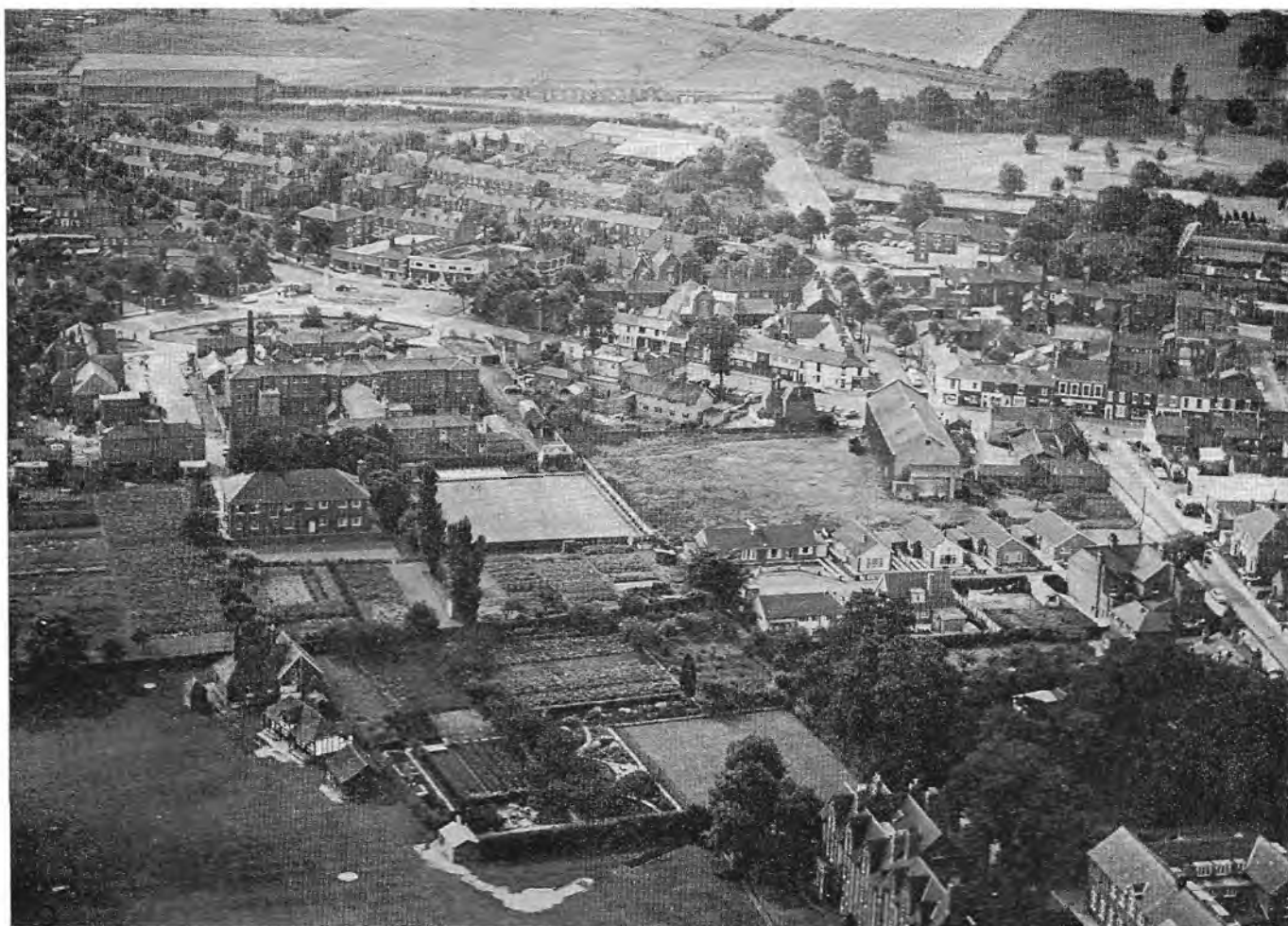
The improved communications, quite apart from the improved drainage, were appreciated by the farming community. Their recognition of Brigg as a convenient centre for the sale of

cattle, grain and potatoes laid the foundation for what was to become a first-class market town.

There was much activity in the early part of last century. It was a sign of the times when a group of enterprising Brigg businessmen decided it was time the town had street lighting. A diary entry for September 14, 1827, records that a Gas Company was formed, a decision that received such a welcome that all the shares were subscribed in 12 hours.

Works were erected on a site given by R. Cary-Elwes in Bigby-street but after some years they were transferred to a site on the bank of the River Ancholme. One of the

(continued on page 77)



Aerial view of Brigg, with the Grammar School in foreground.

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Brigg lost a railway junction

And perhaps a future

(continued from page 75)

considerations for transfer was doubtless the ease of handling coal direct from the barges which made regular trips from Hull via the South Ferriby lock. The Bigby-street site was used by the Bletcher family for the erection of Arley House, later acquired and converted into offices by Brigg Rural Council, soon to become the headquarters of the new Glanford District Council when local government reorganisation takes effect on April 1, 1974.

Best in the kingdom

The gas undertaking was described as having transformed Brigg. "Better lighted than almost any other town in the kingdom," said the newspapers of the day. The gasworks eventually passed from private ownership into the hands of Brigg Urban District Council but with the restricted revenue from small town rates, there was a lack of capital which hampered progress and created production problems.

It was not until 1937 that the gasworks made any substantial progress. A new manager arrived, Mr. Charles Smith, of West Houghton, Lincs. By that time new retorts had been installed and there was gas to spare. He carried out an ambitious scheme of piping gas to Broughton and Wrawby and would have gone even further afield had it not been for the outbreak of war in 1939.

The planned expansion did not materialise in post-war years. Nationalisation was looming and eventually arrived. The regional gas boards had the resources to lay more mains and distribute on a much bigger scale than could have been envisaged or accomplished by any local authority. At least, Brigg had been the pioneers.

Coming of the railway

But to return to the days of the stage coach – or, rather, to the days when the stage coach was being phased out. The coming of the railway in 1848 had a significant impact on a large tract of rural Lincolnshire which had hitherto been untouched by any such development.

Up to that date, Brigg had been well-served by the coaches which operated from the Angel Inn and the White Lion Hotel, on the London-Barton-on-Humber route. Improved roads had cut down the 170-mile journey from four days to an incredible 22 hours and in the early 1840s, in addition to the London run, there were services also to Nottingham and Leicester.

Brigg, therefore, was an important hub of the coaching service but in mid-November, 1848, the last coach left Brigg Market Place on the Barton-Lincoln run and the cheering horn was heard no more.

The coach proprietors had had ample warning. The Kirton tunnel had been constructed, two new bridges had been built to carry trains over the old and new River Ancholme and a station and goods shed had been constructed at Brigg.

A special train had been commissioned in September of 1848 to take Lord Yarborough from Brigg to New Holland but it was not until November 1 that the railway service was opened to the public.

It will always be a matter for speculation as to how Brigg might have developed if full

advantage had been taken of the opportunities offered by the railway.

Grimsby, for instance, was described in the mid-19th century as "a small, sleepy, coast town." It was the coming of the railway and the taking over of the docks by the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway Company which transformed it eventually into a thriving port.

Brigg had no deep water channel to exploit but it had many urban facilities, a navigable river, a grammar school – quite a lot, in fact, on which to build. That might have been done if the junction had been sited at Brigg, as the railway authorities wished to do. Instead, it went to Barnetby because the Elwes family refused to sell the required land.

The fact that Barnetby did not push Brigg off the map because it got the all-important junction is neither here nor there. It may be idle to speculate as to what might have been but always there is that nagging feeling that much though the Elwes did for Brigg through the centuries, they slipped up on this occasion and perhaps put the clock back for Brigg a couple of hundred years.

It was approaching the halfway mark of the 19th century when Brigg began to think in terms of law and order – the provision of a police station.

Constables were "Elected"

Up to 1846 there had been a "Wild West" system under which local tradesmen had to allow themselves to be elected constables – with results that can be well imagined. It must have been difficult for a tradesman to have to give evidence against one of his own customers and there must have been many sighs of relief when for the first time Brigg had a salaried, resident chief constable, Insp. Potton.

Work on the new police station was commenced in August, 1846. It promised to "add much to the improvement of this entrance to the town" and to provide a substantial building combining a room for the conducting of petty session, governor's residence and "ample accommodation for evildoers."

Building operations in those days depended not on planning authorities but on the landowners. In those days, if anything resembling a motorway had been planned, they had the final say – and they generally said "No." But the general spate of activity following the advent of the railway prompted Sir John Nelthorpe and R. Cary-Elwes, the two principal landowners, to release land for residential and business development in Brigg.

The Workhouse was built in 1837 and many properties began to spring up away from the Market Place around which Brigg had been huddled for centuries. The Town Hall had been built in the early years of the century, the ground floor being a buttercross in which the farmers' wives sold their chickens, eggs and butter on market days. Residential development appeared in Albert-street.

Primitive conditions

Another important feature was that sewers were laid in 1849. Up to that time the conditions in Brigg must have been as unbelievably primitive as they had been for centuries before. One medical report of 1828 referred to a "town drain" full of putrid animal and vegetable matter, a drain that was never cleaned.

Brigg managed to avoid an outbreak of cholera that swept the country in 1831 but in 1845 it was reported that smallpox was raging in the town. Three years later there was another outbreak of fever, attributed to "filthy stench" in the lanes and passages off Wrawby-street, where the poor Irish peasantry wallowed in filth and mire. At least, with new and better buildings, a water supply pioneered by the Elwes, and a sewerage scheme, there was some attempt at social reform.

In other directions there was a move forward, an attempt to provide Brigg with some social life. In the area surrounding the town the ploughs were still being drawn by oxen and bathrooms were a novelty even in the houses of the well-to-do. But there was an occasional theatre, dancing and "card assemblies."

The Corn Exchange

The building of the Corn Exchange in 1850, designed for the strictly utilitarian purpose of establishing a clearing house for grain, provided a place for the presentation of a variety of entertainment. There had been a Choral Society in existence, perhaps with occasional lapses, since about 1836. In July 1852 it was announced that the society had undergone reorganisation and was to present a concert of vocal and instrumental music in the Corn Exchange. In the previous year a Philharmonic Society had been formed, with William Rowbottom as leader, George Robinson as conductor and Fred Garfitt as president.

The Choral Society, with the occasional lapses dictated by current enthusiasm – or the lack of it – continued until the 1960s, the last conductor being the late Mr. T. G. Richards, a member of the staff of Brigg Grammar School and a musician of exceptional ability.

Nobody has come forward since his death to carry on the good work but it is undoubtedly one of those things which will come again as some newcomer to Brigg asks, "Why is there no choral society in this town?" This has always been the way of things in Brigg. There is good support for anything that looks like getting off the ground but local leaders have never been too plentiful. It seems to require an influx of new blood to get anything moving.

It seems odd, also, in an age when sport of all kinds is followed with such avid interest, that there was no cricket club in Brigg. As far back as 1826 there was the Scauby and Brigg Cricket Club and although the partnership was dissolved in later years, they carried on successfully for many years as individual teams. At one time, you were somebody if you played for Brigg Town Cricket Club but it failed to survive the first third of the 20th century. Stumps were drawn for the last time in 1931 and although it was almost revived in 1949, the attempt failed because it was thought a town team might result in the collapse of a flourishing Brigg Sugar Factory team – and that wouldn't have been "quite cricket."

Plenty to do

In September 1973, however, there was good news for the cricket enthusiasts. A meeting was convened at the Angel Hotel and a decision was taken to re-form a Town Cricket Club. Coun. B. M. Robins was elected chairman and Mr. Brian Parker secretary. And at the first annual meeting in February it was decided that a team should be fielded this season to play in the Grimsby League.

There are several institutions which have survived the years, such as Brigg Town Football Club, Brigg Town Silver Band, Brigg Amateur Operatic Society and the less publicised Brigg Reading Room. Some of these are dealt with more extensively in other parts of this book. Two world wars resulted in a temporary suspension of activities of some of these organisations but all are based on the original foundations. The football club, for instance, celebrated its centenary eight years ago and the band, all being well, is due to celebrate its centenary in five years' time.

Elsewhere in this book is a classified list of Brigg organisations, giving a whole range of sporting, social and cultural interests, together with the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the main officials.

For those people coming to settle in Brigg there is no need to ask, "What is there to do in a small town like this?" If they have any interests at all outside television, the main trouble is trying to fit everything in.

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The cast of Brigg Amateur Operatic Society's 1973 production,
"KISS ME KATE"

THEY ARE STILL RINGING UP THAT CURTAIN AFTER SEVENTY YEARS

THIS is something of the story of Brigg Amateur Operatic Society.

Not the full story by any means, for one thing because of the limitations of space and secondly because there are gaps in the society's history which research has done nothing to fill. As was inevitable in a period of over 70 years there were frequent changes of officials and membership, while two world wars meant that activities had to be suspended for some years. Those who were left holding the records may have thought that things would never be the same again and disposed of all the documents, probably to some war-time salvage drive.

The good days did return in spite of pessimists who forecast the doom of the amateur theatre when radio and the "talking pictures" arrived in the mid-1920s. The same prophecies were made some 20 years later, when television made its debut in the immediate post-war years. The fact is that many of the shows in recent years, including a brilliant "Merry Widow" in 1967 and an equally brilliant "Fiddler On The Roof" in 1972, proved that live performances by local amateurs were as much in demand as they had been in more leisurely and uncompetitive days, with members firmly innured in the tradition that the show must go on.

But to go back to the beginning. The foundations were really laid in 1900 by a Brigg curate, the Rev. H. T. E. Lambert, who used his musical skills to raise funds to build a parish hall. With the choir of the parish church as a nucleus he formed the St. John's Musical Society and the first public performance, in 1901, was Stainer's Crucifixion.

The oratorio Christ and His Soldiers followed in 1902 but in the following year the society broke away from the religious pattern and produced Sherwood's Queen in the spring of 1903. They went straight into rehearsal for HMS Pinafore, Gilbert and Sullivan's original nautical comic opera and staged that at Brigg Corn Exchange in November of the same year, for two performances only.

That production, which broke new ground in Brigg, was under the patronage of the Earl and Countess of Yarborough, Mr. Gervase Elwes and Lady Winefride Elwes, Mr. R. N. and the Hon. Mrs. Sutton Neithorpe and a Mr. F. B. Newman.

Among the cast of that 1903 show were people like Richmond Flowers, headmaster of Brigg Grammar School; Percy Waddingham, later to become Clerk of Works for the Lincolnshire Show Society; Godfrey Goodman, whose family did a lot for Brigg's culture in those days; Mabel Porkess, G. W. Green, W. Robinson, C. Caudwell and T. Young.

Golden Jubilee

Two of that number, Percy Waddingham and Mabel Porkess (Mrs. Mabel Lord, Scunthorpe) were still around when the society celebrated its golden jubilee in 1963 and were the principal guests at a reception given in conjunction with that year's show, "Land of Smiles." Right up to his death in 1967, Percy Waddingham was known as "Nanki," originating from the Nanki-Pooh which he played in Brigg's 1904 Mikado.

For that production of The Mikado there was a new musical director, a rising young local musician destined to become a Doctor of Music, Mr. W. E. Rowbottom. Pianist, organist and composer, he was to be associated with the Brigg society until the late 1930s.

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Two World Wars — and the show still went on — eventually

(continued from page 79)

The accompanist was another well-known local musician, Charles Bramley, who later became headmaster of an Ashby school. In the orchestra was young Matt Hutchinson, a trombone player who doubled between orchestra and scene-shifting and who still appeared in the 1972 programme as "Hon Assistant Stage Manager." He was then 92 years of age and despite having been in hospital with a broken hip, the result of a cycling accident, still took an active part in the preparations for "Fiddler on the Roof."

That was definitely Matt's last appearance, shy, cheerful, hard-working Matt, certainly the most popular figure in Brigg. He died in February of 1973 ending a link with the operatic society that had lasted 75 years.

Another long-serving member was Harold Green, whose name first went into the programme in 1904. He was a member of cast for the society's first production of Yeomen of the Guard, that being followed by Pirates of Penzance and, in 1907, La Mascotte. The society broke even more new ground with La Mascotte, for in addition to the three performances at Brigg they transported the whole show to Caistor Town Hall — players and orchestra, 60 in all, in wagonettes, plus scenery and props. There was a crowded

house, a warm welcome and an invitation to return the following year.

That return visit was never made, however, for there is no record of any show in 1908. That was about the time Nanki Waddingham left Brigg for his new job with the county agricultural show society, while another principal, Mabel Porkess, had gone to Scunthorpe to become headmistress of Gurnell-street school. There was a revival of The Mikado in 1909, an indication that they had to fall back on something with which they were familiar and after that — complete silence until 1921.

A revival meeting was convened in 1921 by Dr. Frank Goodman. A new committee was formed and the organisation was launched again under a new title, Brigg Amateur Operatic Society. Once again, with limited talent available, it had to be a familiar show — and out came The Mikado again.

Among the survivors of the Edwardian era was David Rands, who was also prominently connected with Brigg Town Silver Band, and, of course, Matt Hutchinson, still ready to drop his trombone at the interval and dash backstage to change the scenery. It was his job, also to build the stage from the merchants' corn boxes.

There were many new names — T. W. Bush, John Watkinson, Harry Cook, Dolly Couldrey, Dolly King, Jonathan Cash, Mabel Dickinson, Eva Glentworth, Gladys Glover, Kathleen Maguire, Minnie Rowbottom, Horace Draper, Walter Shaw, Horace West and Fred Sergeant.

Dr. Goodman, with his 'cello, was one of the mainstays of the orchestra; Nellie Caunt was the accompanist and W. E. Rowbottom was wielding the baton, with Algernon R. Haynes as assistant musical director. The hon secretary was Albert Rhodes, local chemist and councillor.

There followed a series of Gilbert and Sullivan successes in which the Laynes of Brigg played a leading part. Frank Layne was a fine tenor who served the society well for many years, as did his two sisters, Isobel and Julia. Then came the Taylor sisters, Rene, Barbara, Marjorie and Connie, all good singers.

With a departure from the traditional Gilbert and Sullivan productions, however, the fortunes of the society began to sag. Business manager Tom Clark called for new blood after a particularly dismal Floradora in 1935 and his new look policy was put into operation in 1936 when a well-staged Rose Marie had a liberal sprinkling of young people in the principal parts.

Wanda was played by 17-year-old Joan Lyon. In the 1937 Desert Song another 17-year-old, Valerie Green, played Susan, opposite her father, the Harold Green who had made his debut in the 1904 Mikado.

The local Press critics who had made little effort to conceal their boredom at Country Gili and Floradora, were enthusiastic over Tom Clark's new look. They described Rose Marie, produced by live-wire Odette Vinton, a member of the original London cast, and Desert Song, as the society's biggest and brightest efforts to date.

The next year saw yet another rousing musical, The Vagabond King, starring Arthur E. Lawrence, the singing cobbler from Hibaldstow who had made his name as a radio vocalist in the days of 2LO. He looked destined to play many principal parts for the Brigg society but just as rehearsals were getting under way in 1939 for The Arcadians, the war clouds gathered over Europe and activities had to be suspended "for the duration."

(continued on page 83)

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Remember Iolanthe? Gremlins instead of fairies

(continued from page 81)

Still, it had been good while it lasted. There had been some good, some indifferent shows but they had all made a great contribution to the social life of the town and it was with regret that the parting of the ways came with the outbreak of war.

They owed a lot to such singers as Hetty Roberts, a natural soprano who took many principal parts in the 1930s; Ronnie Whitehead, who must have travelled hundreds of miles from his Scunthorpe home to rehearse for *Hard-Boiled Herman* in *Rose Marie* and *Red Shadow* in *Desert Song*. Other staunch supporters included Charles Dunham, Billy Dickinson, Billy Michelson, Arthur Jackson, Sam Dunkin, Jack Johnson, John Boldero, Dorothy Bratley, Jessie Silverwood, Ursula Robinson, Dorothy Preston, Ron Robinson, Gassy Milne and many others.

Life in a dead town

There was no automatic revival when the lights went up again in 1945. Some members were too old to wish to get involved again in the turmoil of amateur productions. A new generation was growing up which knew nothing of such things and the in-betweens were waiting for somebody else to make a move.

The gap had stretched to 10 years when Coun. George Hewson told the Town Development Committee that a town without an operatic society was a dead town. That made the national headlines and the daily newspapers, with their extraordinary powers of manipulation, sent their reporters to explore the dead town and came up with stories that had nothing to do with operatic societies.

Local action resulted in two members of the old society being deputed to convene a meeting at which the possibilities of revival would be considered. A year went by and nothing happened. It looked as though it had gone back on the shelf – as did most of the ideas emanating from the Town Development Committee. And when the Town Development Committee itself went on the shelf, that seemed to be the end.

It was Harold Green and Ted Dodd who took it upon themselves to call a meeting at Brigg Town Hall in 1950 – they had talked it over while having a pint in the Queen's Arms. There was an immediate response once a lead had been given; a new committee was formed,

with Ralph Patchett as chairman, and the debts of the old society were liquidated.

Keen to get going after a lapse of about 13 years, they went straight into rehearsal for *Iolanthe* – always, it seemed, it was Gilbert and Sullivan to the rescue. Laurie Mumby, conductor of Brigg Town Silver Band for 25 years, took over as musical director and Quinton Golder, with whom the society had had pre-war associations, was engaged as producer.

Everything went wrong that could go wrong. Ken Smith (Strephon) handed in his part within a week or two of the opening date and a replacement had to be imported from Newark. Avis Tossell, in the principal part of Phyllis, had bouts of illness during the week of the show, with the result that Verity Price had to switch from her part of Celia to Phyllis at practically no notice.

One such switch came during Friday night's performance. After an uncomfortable pause the curtain went down and Lord Chancellor Charles Dunham announced that normal service would be resumed as soon as possible. Five minutes later the new Phyllis made her entrance – and the show went on.

Peter Bell (Lord Tolloller) went sick after the first night and a gallant Arthur Lavington stepped in at a few hours' notice. And after the final performance, just as Ralph Patchett was reviewing a show which had survived all those misfortunes, the main fuse blew and plunged the Corn Exchange into darkness.

Tolerant audience

Taking the hilarious week as a whole, however, there had been a tolerant and generous audience prepared to make allowances for a "first time for 13 years" effort and they went away quite happy with an *Iolanthe* that had used gremlins instead of fairies. To anybody but an imperturbable Tom Tossell, who was hon. secretary as well as a member of the Peer's Chorus, it would have been an experience only paralleled by the content of the Lord Chancellor's "nightmare" song. As it was, he took it all in his stride.

Certainly from that time the society never looked back. Successive musical directors included Bill Lofthouse, Cyril Gammidge, Avis Tossell and, latterly, Ivy Bell, who with her husband Peter were in that original *Iolanthe* and never missed a show for over 20 years.

Not every show has been a winner – some were dictated by economics rather than musical or entertainment content. But the

memorable ones that come to mind are *White Horse Inn*, *Merry Widow*, *Gypsy Baron* and the 1972 *Fiddler on the Roof*. This year's *Kiss Me Kate* was a light-hearted contrast and looking ahead to 1974 there will be yet another ambitious production, Richard Rodgers's *Carousel*.

Brigg Amateur Operatic Society, with a varied history of over 70 years behind it, is today one of the most successful and most firmly-established of all local organisations. The music side is in the capable hands of Ivy Bell, who came to Brigg after ATS service to join the staff of the old Manor House Convent School. Former violinist and viola player, she is also a useful contralto and in the early years of the revived society played a number of principal parts, the most notable, perhaps, being *Katisha* in *The Mikado* and *Gandersluis* in an otherwise not too-meritorious *Tulip Time*.

Musical mainstays

Ivy Bell was assistant musical director for five years before tackling *The Dubarry* on her own in 1971. She is fortunate in having Yvonne O'Boyle as leader of the orchestra, a talented violinist whose husband, Tony, is another of the society's mainstays, on and off stage. Also, there are two expert accompanists, Mary Mitchell and Alma Banks.

Behind all this is one who seldom appears in the limelight yet without whom the whole organisation would sag – hon. secretary Horace Bartle, whose musical and versatile wife Jean has also contributed much to the society's success over the years. There have been other secretaries – Ted Foreman, Doug Field, Frank Rhodes – all deserving medals for the prodigious effort they have put into a voluntary job.

Looking back over so many years produces memories of so many who have worked equally hard in their own particular spheres – Nancy Hewson, Felicia Taylor, Doris Tinn; instrumentalists like Jack Robinson and Vin East who played in the orchestra for over 20 years without asking for a fee; so many that it is impossible to remember them all or to list them all – but they all did a good job.

At the helm, chairman since 1953, is Coun. George Hewson, the man who said in 1948 that a town without an operatic society was a dead town. Now established in permanent headquarters at the old Town Hall, this society, with Dr. R. E. Holme as president, is certainly doing all it can to see that Brigg is very much alive and that it retains its place on the map.

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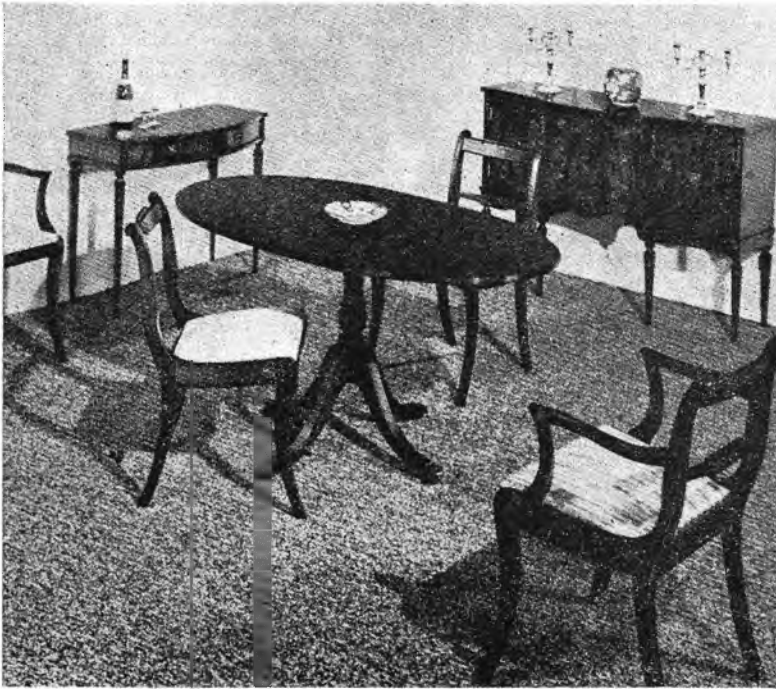
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Local Music Festival

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Remarkable Elwes of 'Dear old ugly Manor House'

IF there is one feature of Brigg which deserves generous mention in any account of local activities, it is the North Lincolnshire Music and Drama Festival Society. That owed its existence to Gervase Elwes and his wife, Lady Winefride, two contrasting personalities who left their mark indelibly on Brigg and indeed on many parts of the world.

Gervase and Lady Winefride went to the Manor House in 1895 to live with Mr. and Mrs. Valentine Cary-Elwes. Gervase had given up a diplomatic career for a variety of reasons, his resignation coinciding with the increasing ill-health of his father, who needed some help in the supervision of his estates at Roxby, Wrawby and Bigby, in addition to which he owned a considerable portion of Brigg.

Also, Billing, the family residence in Northamptonshire, had been let on a long lease, hence their arrival in Brigg, described by Lady Winefride, fresh from the social whirl of Munich and Brussels, as "a quiet little market town on the River Ancholme with no special claims to distinction."

Lady Winefride would have liked to have seen her husband enter Parliament but it was thought that, popular though he was, his being a Catholic would militate against his chances of success in a neighbourhood where Non-conformity flourished. He did, however, stand for the Urban District Council of Brigg and was elected in spite of his point-blank refusal either to canvass or to make any speeches. When the result was announced, Gervase, standing on a chair in the middle of a seething crowd outside the Manor House, made his solitary contribution to the campaign with a characteristically charming speech about the merits of his defeated opponent.

In the spring of 1898, Mr. and Mrs. Cary-Elwes returned to Billing, the lease having come to an end, and Gervase and Lady Winefride were left in sole possession of the Brigg Manor House which had already been made over to Gervase in order to secure him a vote.

How it all started

It was in the spring of that year that they were introduced to something which was to become an absorbing interest. Miss Mary Egerton, of Revesby, an accomplished musician, invited Gervase and Lady Winefride to go to York and hear the musical competitions there. In the autobiography, "Gervase Elwes," written by Lady Winefride and one of her six sons, Richard Elwes, there is an account of the impressions formed at York which led to the founding of the Brigg festival.

"We spent the whole day listening to the various competing choirs and were charmed, not only by the high standard shown but also with the atmosphere of friendly rivalry. We

determined to start musical competitions in Lincolnshire and at once began to make plans and enlist sympathy. In some quarters we met with discouragement; we were told that in Yorkshire the system succeeded because music was innate in the people but that Lincolnshire was an unmusical county and we should be sure to fail. However, we knew better . . . the thing was to get at the people in the villages and create enthusiasm there."

In the autumn they called a meeting of representatives from every town and village in the neighbourhood and Mary Egerton made a speech, urging every village to start a choir and enter for the first competition the following Easter. "The response was better than we could have hoped. We discovered undreamed of musical talent in isolated corners of the county and brought together music lovers who had never heard of each other's existence."

Corduroys, straw and Brahms

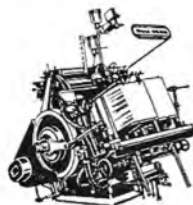
"My brother Everard (himself a good musician and gifted accompanist) threw himself into the game with characteristic energy. He and I toured the whole neighbourhood on bicycles, for we had neither carriages nor horses, only one pony for the children to ride about in a 'tub'. We settled that Gervase should conduct the combined choirs and he visited the villages, taking each choir in turn."

The result was that the first festival was held at the Corn Exchange in the spring of 1900 and, as Lady Winefride observed, the eagerness with which the people for miles around entered into the spirit of the festivals was a complete refutation of those Jeremiahs who had disparaged "unmusical" Lincolnshire and predicted failure.

"We found one small choir got up by the schoolmistress in a distant village where four-part singing had never previously been heard, which would collect in the schoolroom in the dinner hour, the men coming in from the fields with their corduroys hitched up out of the muck, wisps of straw round their knees and ear-rings in their ears, to sing a Brahms part song."

They went to Bigby, where the villagers agreed to form a choir but said they did not know how to sing - not even a comic song or a hymn. When Gervase asked them if they could sing "God save the Queen," well, some

(continued on page 87)



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Joseph Taylor sang 'That Lovely Haunting Melody'

(continued from page 85)

of them thought they might and were coaxed through it in turn. They were sifted out into sopranos, contraltos, tenors and basses and in a few weeks were singing easy part songs.

"To watch their growing and finally absorbed interest was an extraordinary experience. Eventually they actually won a money prize at the festival with a trio for female voices and we were most touched and delighted when a few days later the amount was returned with a charming letter, offering it as a contribution to the funds of the festival which had given them so much pleasure."

In an age of motor cars with heaters it is interesting to look back and reflect that people like Gervase Elwes and his family volunteered for so much discomfort in their enthusiasm for the cause of music. Lady Winefride recalled one 10-mile drive home in a blinding blizzard where Gervase had been training a choir "when he almost wept with the pain of having to drive with frozen hands." In the second year of the festival, Everard decided that push cycles would not do and suddenly appeared in triumph with "an explosive and highly dangerous machine which he explained was a motor cycle."

Every corner a death-trap

"The tours round the villages were then performed by us with Everard in front on his motor cycle and myself on an ordinary bicycle attached to him by a piece of rope," wrote Lady Winefride. "Oh! Those hazardous expeditions! Every corner was a death-trap. The following year he bought a new motor cycle with a sort of bath chair tied on behind it. This was slightly less dangerous, principally because it could only very rarely be persuaded to go at all."

"Relations between myself and my brother became gravely embittered, the reason being that as the hours of repairs by the roadside exceeded by far those of actual progress, I used to take a volume of 'Marcus Aurelius' to induce a philosophic spirit, and sit in a hedge reading it while he fiddled at the jibbing engine. On one occasion one of the pedals broke, so that the only way of starting it was for me to push the whole contraption downhill and then jump in as soon as Everard got the engine to pop."

The generous newspaper coverage for that first festival and for the Grand Concert which followed suggested that this was the highlight of the year. The town was "en fete." The shopkeepers decorated their premises and hung out the flags. The Great Central Railway ran special excursions to Brigg so that in successive years, as Gervase Elwes and many of the prominent personalities of the musical world gathered for those final concerts, the audiences collected from miles around. There would have been a riot if Gervase had not sung – and indeed, such was the enthusiasm with which he was always received that there was always something very like a riot when he did.

Perfect chorus

That Brigg festival very soon prompted similar ventures in other parts of the county and "unmusical" Lincolnshire became before long, as Lady Winefride described it, "a perfect chorus of triumph."

By 1905 the Musical Competition Festivals at Brigg had become a most flourishing institution and in the spring of that year there was a new development. It appeared in the schedule in these words:—

Class XII. Folk songs open to all. The prize in this class will be given to whoever can supply the best unpublished old Lincolnshire folk-song or plough-song. The song should be sung or whistled by the competitor but marks will be allotted for the excellence of the song than of its actual performance. It is specially requested that the establishment of this class be brought to the notice of old people in the county, who are most likely to remember this kind of song and that they be urged to come in with the best old song they know."



Wrawby Street as it was in the days of Lady Winefride and Gervase Elwes.

Lady Winefride records: "The entries were not numerous but some wonderful tunes were unearthed. The first prize was won by Mr. Joseph Taylor, who brought from Saxby-all-Saints that lovely, haunting melody, 'Brigg Fair' which has passed into musical history. Most people know the rhapsody which Delius was happily inspired to compose on its theme; and when this received the first performance some years later, Mr. Joseph Taylor was sitting in the Queen's Hall, next to Everard, whose guest he was, hearing his tune in its exquisite, poignant orchestral setting."

Folk song tour

Fired by such discoveries, Percy Grainger decided to make a cycle tour of Lincolnshire, gathering folk tunes. He was accompanied by the Elwes boys and would go up to a ploughman ploughing and ask him if he knew any songs. "As often as not the man would stand for a minute or two and sing him a song in the most natural way in the world. Percy used to jot down the tunes while Geoffrey or Rolf caught the words."

"He also 'drew' the Brigg workhouse where he found, among others, the most charming gentleman, a real product of Lincolnshire, whom he brought in to lunch with us and who sat at the table with us and our party without a trace of shyness, perfectly at ease as if with friends – as indeed he was."

At the big festival concert in the following spring the main feature of the programme consisted of Percy Grainger's settings of some of those enchanting folk-songs. Gervase sang "Brigg Fair" with the combined choirs. Percy Grainger had excelled himself in this "and a recurrent effect made by the solo following the strange, unearthly cadences of the tune against a hummed background of male voices had a haunting beauty impossible to imagine."

The songs appeared on the programme with the names of the people who had originally

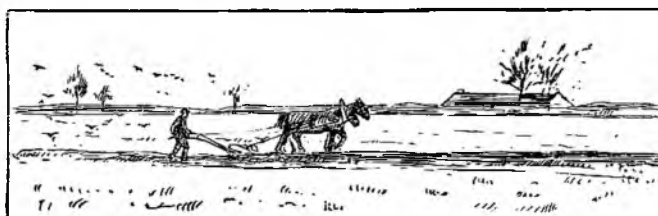
brought them to the festival. They included: Marching Tune (from the singing of Mr. J. Taylor, Saxby); Six Dukes Went A-fishing (from the singing of Mr. G. Gouldthorpe, Barrow-on-Humber and Mr. Dean Robinson, Scawby Brook); The Gipsies' Wedding Day (from the singing of Miss Ann Hiles, Kirtou Lindsey); I'm Seventeen Come Sunday (from the singing of Mr. Fred Atkinson, Redbourne).

After a busy 1911 season – he missed a Russian tour because he collapsed through overwork – Gervase Elwes gave up his London house and returned to Brigg. It was to be their last stay in the "dear old ugly Manor House." After a little more than a year the Elwes family decided to take over at Billing again instead of leasing it. In the spring of 1913 they said good-bye to Brigg and all its friendly neighbourhood.

Parting — such sweet sorrow

"Gervase's way of taking leave of the people was characteristic. He sang to them. Supported by the family, who played and acted sketches, he went to each village in turn giving concerts and the villagers flocked to hear him. The Lincolnshire man is an undemonstrative soul but I saw many indications of sorrow at the parting. Of course, it was not in any sense a complete or final one. He would always come back for the shooting season but he was not going to live among them any more and they would miss him, especially as the Musical Festival came round. That, at any rate, was to be a permanent memorial to those happy years in Lincolnshire and so it still remains."

The Manor House was handed over to nuns, rent free, to be used as a convent school. The community flourished, later bought the freehold and was still thriving when Lady Winefride returned for the festival's golden jubilee in 1950.



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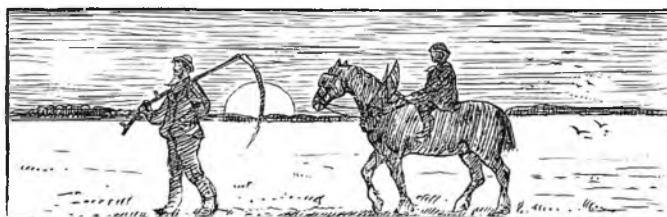
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This used to be the scene in Wrawby Street, Brigg where the horse-age prevailed right up to the mid-1960s. This was the traditional Brigg Fair, when the gipsies took over the centre of the town, including the busy A18 trunk road. Motor traffic had to take second place. When "No Waiting" signs arrived they were welcomed by the gipsies as convenient tethering posts. Strange that this survival of an ancient fair should have produced the "Brigg Fair" from which the blind composer Delius composed his classic rhapsody.

Another World War Got In The Way



(continued on page 87)

The intervening years had not been easy. There had been an immediate feeling of anticlimax with the 1913 evacuation of the Manor House – the loss of such an eminent artiste as Gervase Elwes and the driving force of Lady Winefride. Then came the 1914-18 war and a gap of nine years until it was revived in 1924, although there had been a joint festival with West Lindsey, Gainsborough, in 1919. Elocution classes were added in 1929 and the festival maintained its former prestige until 1939, when another world war got in the way. In all, the festival was out of commission for about 10 years but it was put on its feet again in 1949 by Brigg Chamber of Trade under the presidency of Mr. Ralph Patchett, who also undertook secretarial duties.

It was in the second year of revival that Lady Winefride travelled from her flat in Westminster to present the trophies on the 50th anniversary of the festival. One trophy she had to present was to the Gainsborough Townswomen's Guild, winners of the ladies' choir class. There to receive it was her daughter, Mrs. Margaret Sandars, of Gate Burton, conductor of the winning choir. Appropriately enough, the trophy handed by one Elwes to another was the Gervase Elwes Cup.

Within a few years, however, the festival was in low waters. Entries were down, attendances dropped and there was little

encouragement from local schools except from Manor House Convent School and Brigg Preparatory School. There were some schools, in fact, where children had difficulty in getting time off to compete in day-time classes. With funds at such a low ebb that the festival faced bankruptcy if the events of 1959 were repeated, it was decided to suspend operations to see what could be done. In place of the festival there was a schools concert organised by Brian Morley, a young teacher at Glanford Secondary School. He not only raised a much-needed £50 but also took over as secretary and in the following year it was business as usual.

There was some measure of success until 1965, by which time Mr. Morley, who had been trying to carry out the secretarial duties from Lincoln, felt that remote control was not the answer, and resigned at the annual meeting. That year's festival had lost £5 compared with a £15 profit in the previous year and he advised some re-thinking. Already, however, much had been done by a new and energetic committee. Algernon R. Haynes, chairman of the festival for many years, had handed over to Mr. Ernest Urry, headmaster of Glanford Secondary School, where his wife, Jane, with RADA and Guildhall qualifications, had stimulated an interest in drama and was matching the competition that had always come from the

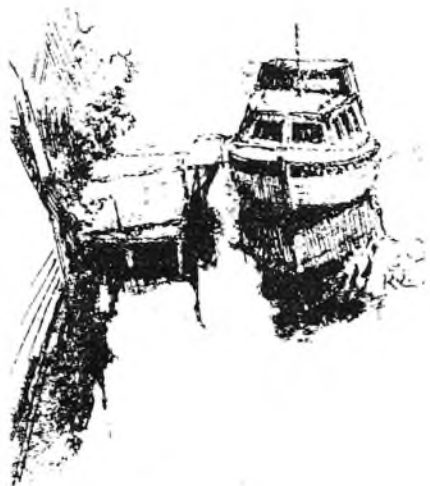
Manor House. There was strong support from Brigg Preparatory School and Brigg Girls High School. Things were looking up.

Traders no longer hang out the flags and newspaper coverage is considerably less than it used to be but the festival is healthy in spite of the continual difficulties which beset such local organisations in changing times. The policy has been to retain the best of the old and at the same time welcome new ideas and new approaches. In 1974, for instance, new ground was broken by the engagement of one of the country's top brass bands for the final session, Ransome and Marles.

Entries are fairly well balanced between music and drama, each section usually occupying three days. Choirs may be fewer than they were 50 years ago and it may need another Everard and Lady Winefride to make the grand tour to persuade people that it is still fun to make their own music. At the same time, it may be true to say that today's festival offers more variety than ever it did, including competitions for such things as guitar groups, string groups and even brass bands.

The important thing is that Brigg can still muster enough enthusiasm to build on the foundations so securely laid over 70 years ago by that outstanding couple of all time – Gervase and Lady Winefride Elwes.

Brigg Urban District Council come to the End of a Long Road



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for nearly 1,000 months

THE picture on the next page is the last-ever Brigg Urban District Council, due to go out of office on March 31, 1974. The wheels of local government reorganisation have been rolling for the past year with a specific aim – bringing to an end the local authority which has ruled the destinies of Brigg since it succeeded the Local Government Board on December 31, 1894, to be replaced on the following day by the new urban authority.

George Shaw Sowter, a local solicitor, who had been part-time Clerk to the Local Government Board, continued in a similar capacity with the urban council until he died in office in April 1923. His partner, Norman Gibson, looked after the council's business for six months, after which the first full-time Clerk was appointed, Reginald L. Sherwood.

Mr. Sherwood moved south in September, 1932, to be succeeded by Cecil F. W. Cotton. He stayed for six years and then came Joseph James Magrath, due to make the longest stay of them all, in fact, right to the end of the road.

J. J. Magrath has been the dominant figure in Brigg for the last 40 years. He came from Warrington to Brigg to join the staff of the rating department of Brigg Rural District Council. He transferred to the staff of Brigg Urban District Council in 1934 at a time when the then rating officer John Green, was about to retire. He was eventually promoted to Chief Financial Officer and in 1938, when Mr. Cotton resigned to take a post in Norfolk, Mr. Magrath stepped into the Clerkship.

From that time he has had unbroken service, retiring in December 1972 but continuing in a part-time capacity. Even when the change comes at the end of March 1974 he will still retain his connection as Clerk of the new Town Council.

Getting on towards the end of 40 years' service, Mr. Magrath, having acquired the title "Mr. Brigg" on the way, can look back on whatever achievements may have been made during this century. The first 30-odd years were years of near-penury in a small market town where the average income was low, a period interrupted by the 1914-18 war and the depressing years that followed. Things were not much better at the time of Mr. Magrath's appointment and they persisted until the time of his appointment – and then came another war.

It had been possible, up to that time, through the industry of gasworks manager Charles Smith and committee chairman Alfred Fairbank, to modernise the plant to some degree and to use a created surplus to pipe to surrounding villages.

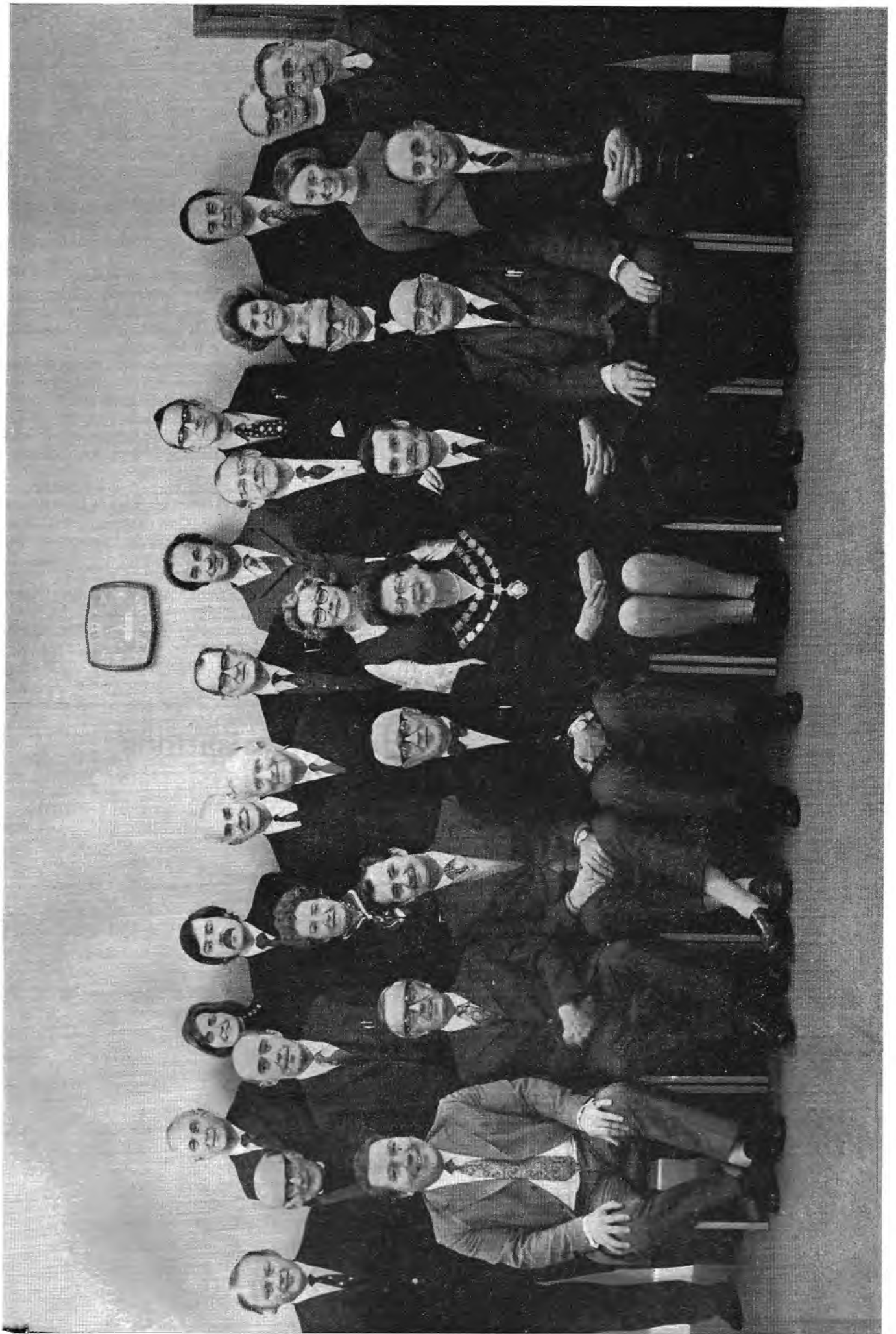
Brigg Urban Council were always builders of council houses, perhaps, some think, a disproportionate number but the demand was always there. A vast modernisation scheme was commenced on the Newlands Estate in 1973, due to be followed in 1974 by a similar scheme for the East Parade, Central Square and Hawthorn Avenue areas.

It had been planned to have spent around £4,850 on each dwelling but a careful Department of the Environment, mindful of the 75 per cent grant it was providing, insisted on some fairly rigorous pruning, with the result that some of the refinements had to be omitted. Still, at a final figure of £3,500 per house, it was a great step forward, putting council house tenants on a much better standard, including central heating.

It was a vision of the future that led the council in the immediate post-war years to acquire part of Woodbine Farm for playing fields. There were the critics, of course. An 18-acre playing field for a place the size of Brigg, they said, was presenting the town with a white elephant. So it was for some years. Only today, with every yard of land being in demand for building plots and with rapidly rising prices, are Brigg people beginning to realise how far-seeing were the councillors of 1949.

There had been a scheme in 1937, pioneered by Mr. A. A. F. Stubbs and Mr. A. R. Haynes, to acquire land for the purpose of a National Fitness Movement which stemmed from the Physical Training and Recreation Act 1937. The aim was to secure the compulsory purchase of land "for the purpose of gymnasiums, playing fields, holiday camps or camping sites etc."

(continued on page 92)



That scheme never got off the ground because of the outbreak of war in September, 1939, and it was to be 10 years before anyone got round to thinking about playing fields again. Mr. Magrath saw an advertisement in the *Lincolnshire Star* relating to the proposed sale of Woodbine Farm. The date of the sale, it was announced, was to be April 14 at the Angel Hotel, "unless previously sold privately."

Mr. Magrath persuaded the council to negotiate but by this time Mr. Stubbs, who had been so keen on the compulsory acquisition of land in 1937, now found that he had divided loyalties. It was doubtful, in fact, if they were even divided, for as solicitor to the vendor he had a duty to his client. The result was a reluctance to deal with the council, the feeling doubtless being that an auction sale would produce a bigger return.

In the absence of any definite assurance that negotiations would be possible, Brigg Urban Council held a special meeting on the very morning of the sale day and made a compulsory purchase order. Mr. Stubbs was duly informed. Mr. Magrath went to the sale-room later that day and stayed to hear the property withdrawn. The council thus acquired the 18 acres for £3,500, which, in terms of today's prices, must be regarded as one of the best investments in the history of the town.

It was about that time that the council performed another public service. The Corn Exchange, owned by the town, had at one time been used as a cinema and when that closed down, the building was leased to Mr. W. H. Webster, proprietor of the Grand Cinema. His only interest in the building was to make sure it was not used by a rival cinema. Breaking the lease enabled the council to put the Corn Exchange back into use as a multi-purpose hall, encouraging a wide variety of local functions by agreeing to remit the hiring fees where the organisers produced a balance sheet to show they had made a loss.

In a town restricted by boundaries containing less than 1,000 acres, where the small product of a penny rate meant that the local rates were usually among the highest in the county, it was never possible to carry out any schemes involving high capital expenditure. But for successive generations of councillors there has always been plenty to discuss at the thousands and thousands of meetings that have been held since Brigg Urban Council came into existence in January, 1895. They have been the great unpaid, the people who have given years of their spare time to serve their fellow-citizens. That service will continue, in a restricted form, with the new Town Council but as an urban authority with jurisdiction over many of the essential services of the town, the party's over.

The picture on the facing page shows members and staff of Brigg Urban District Council, 1973/74, the last of a long line.

Back row, left to right: Mr. W. Michelson, Markets Superintendent; Mrs. S. E. Couch, shorthand-typist, Clerk's Department; Mr. T. F. Moore, Deputy Surveyor and Public Health Inspector; Coun. J. Wattam; Coun. E. V. Gray; Coun. E. P. Gillard; Mr. R. H. Shacklock, Housing Rent Collector and Finance Clerk; Mrs. E. M. Robinson, clerk, Housing Department; Mr. L. Lingard, Works Superintendent.

Middle row: Mr. J. B. Cowdell, MAPHI, Surveyor and Chief Public Health Inspector; Mr. E. H. Clark, Clerk of Works; Coun. E. Taylor; Mrs. Audrey Broome, Clerk's Secretary; Coun. Dr. R. E. Holme, TD., JP.; Coun. Mrs. M. J. Turner; Coun. I. P. Strudwick; ex-Coun. H. Welbourn; Mrs. Helen Miller, Cashier; Mr. F. J. Speakman, Accountant and Deputy Clerk.

Front row: Coun. B. M. Robins; Coun. J. R. Gregory, FCA; Coun. K. M. Pearce; Mr. Joseph J. Magrath, OBE., FCCS., ARVA; Coun. Miss D. M. Selby, chairman; Coun. W. T. Smart; Coun. G. L. Hewson; Coun. E. W. Robinson.

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Watch the Local Press for Additional Information

There's nothing to do in Brigg

— that's what they say

... but take a look at this list printed below. If there's nothing to interest you here then there's nothing to interest you anywhere.

It is regretted that it has not been possible to include other officials and committee members, all of whom do a very good job and without whom there would be no presidents, chairmen or secretaries. It was felt that this list, as it is, will serve to show what is going on in Brigg and enable newcomers to make contact and become involved in something in this little town of Brigg where, it is so often said, "nothing ever happens."

If you can act, sing, swim, row, paint, if you play football, hockey, tennis, bowls, badminton or golf – or if you are merely happy with the role of spectator; or if you want to lend a helping hand to some of those people in less fortunate circumstances – then surely there must be something in this extensive list.

Angling, British Legion Club

Chairman: A. J. Dent
13, Knightsbridge Road, Messingham

Secretary: R. Heseltine
10, Springbank
Brigg. Tel. 3117 (BL)

Air Training Corps

Officer Commanding: Fl.-Lt. V. J. East
Nicolgate Lane
off Wrawby Road
Brigg. Tel. 2619

Group Captain: K. A. Hubbard
41, Grammar School Road
Brigg. Tel. 3343

Amateur Operatic Society

Chairman: G. L. Hewson
"Roseway"
Eastfield Road
Brigg. Tel. 2186

Secretary: H. Bartle
"Kimberley"
Bigby Road
Brigg. Tel. 3077

Ancholme Internal Drainage Board

Chairman: J. W. Cottingham
Top House
Snitterby. Tel. 067/381/244

Vice-Chairman: R. S. Nelthorpe
The Hall
Scawby. Tel. 4205

Clerk: K. T. Stubbs
11, Bigby Street
Brigg. Tel. 2251

Engineer: A. R. Haynes
18, Bigby Street
Brigg. Tel. 3190

Ancholme Rowing Club

Chairman: T. R. D. O'Neill
"Berwyn", Wrawby Road
Brigg. Tel. 3300

Secretary: J. M. Hookham
The Old Presbytery, Bigby Road
Brigg. Tel. 3317

Animal Welfare

RSPCA Inspector: A. Wood
32, Hammerton Road
Scunthorpe. Tel. 9/67458

Veterinary Surgeons: Birtwhistle, Barr & Wilson
Copper Beech, Bridge Street
Brigg. Tel. 3224

Ancholme Artists

Organiser/Tutor: Marjorie Burton
Langley Cottage, Howsham
Tel. North Kelsey 86/460

Treasurer: C. Parker
11, Central Square, Brigg

Army Cadets

Deputy County Commandant: R. Snell
"The Homestead"
Messingham Lane, Scawby
Tel. Brigg 4330

Officer Commanding: T. Fryer
18, St. David's Crescent
Yaddethorpe, Scunthorpe
Tel. Scunthorpe 9/68731

Arts Committee, Brigg and District

Chairman: Mrs. Enid Richards
"Staniland", Wrawby Road
Brigg. Tel. 2188

Secretary: Mrs. Jane Urry
"Dormers", Hedgerow Lane
Brigg. Tel. 3200

Badminton, Brigg Club

Secretary
Lincs. League: M. Butler
Glanford Council Office, Bigby Street
Brigg. Tel. 2441

Secretary
Ulceby League: A. Kemshell
2, Brocklesby Court, Bridge Street
Brigg. Tel. 2667

Ballet School

Principal: Carole Oldridge
"Caroleena", Manley Gardens
Brigg. Tel. 3466

Band, Silver Brigg and District

Chairman: R. E. Robinson
44, Albert Street
Brigg. Tel. 3342

Acting Secretary: C. A. Benson
The Bungalows, Ancholme Gardens, Brigg

Bellringers, St. John's Church

Captain: C. Bowness
31, Glebe Road, Brigg

Secretary: Miss E. M. Atkinson
"Rosedene", Bigby High Road
Brigg. Tel. 2156

Bowling Club, Brigg

President: J. C. Baggott
"Caledon", Glanford Road
Brigg. Tel. 3168

Treasurer: W. T. Good
"Inglenook", Bigby Road
Brigg. Tel. 2138

Bowling Club, Sugar Factory

Secretary: A. Brown
18, Hawthorn Avenue
Brigg. Tel. 2411 (Sugar Factory)

British Legion, Brigg Branch
Chairman: J. C. Goodge
 40, East Parade, Brigg

Secretary: A. Brown
 18, Hawthorn Avenue, Brigg

*Hon. Poppy Day
 Organiser:* Mrs. Jean Baggott
 "Caledon", Glanford Road, Brigg
 Tel. 3168

British Red Cross Society
Commandant: G. Smith
 11, Elm Way, Brigg

Cadet officer: A. Brown
 18, Hawthorn Avenue, Brigg

Burial Board, Wrawby-cum-Brigg
Chairman: B. M. Robins
 7, Albert Street
 Brigg. Tel. 3905

Clerk J. J. Magrath, OBE
 Civic Centre, Cary Lane
 Brigg. Tel. 2257

Cancer Relief Committee
Chairman: Mrs. Anne E. Fowler
 32, St. Helens Road
 Brigg. Tel. 3162

Secretary: Mrs. E. M. Curtis
 8, Mill Lane, Brigg

Chamber of Trade
President: J. R. Gregory
 Kingsley House, Wrawby Road
 Brigg. Tel. 3105

Secretary: E. Dodd
 22, St. Helens Road
 Brigg. Tel. 2951

Children's Theatre School
Principal: Joan Dodd
 22, St. Helens Road, Brigg

Civic Trust
Chairman: K. M. Pearce
 Bonby General Store, Church Lane
 Bonby. Tel. 88/641

CHURCHES
*St. John's
 Parish Church:* The Rev. R. A. Cochrane
 The Vicarage, 10, Glanford Road
 Brigg. Tel. 3989

*St. Mary's
 Roman Catholic:* Father John Berry
 The Presbytery, Barnard Avenue
 Brigg. Tel. 2221

Methodist: The Rev. H. A. Trevis
 Wesley Manse, Wrawby Road
 Brigg. Tel. 3253

*United Reform Church
 Congregational:* The Rev. John Berryman
 3, Low Street
 Winterton. Tel. 9/732558

Secretary: Miss Jennifer Parker
 11, Central Square, Brigg

Clay Pigeon Club
Chairman: N. C. Leonard
 16, Bridge Street
 Brigg. Tel. 2378

Captain and Secretary: Graham Leonard, as above

Convent, Poor Clares of Newry
Abbess: Mother Margaret McGill
 14, Grammar School Road
 Brigg. Tel. 2224

Council, Brigg Urban District
Chairman: Miss D. M. Selby
 "The Nook", Hedgerow Lane
 Brigg. Tel. 3271

Clerk: J. J. Magrath, OBE
 Civic Centre, Cary Lane
 Brigg. Tel. 2257

Council, Glanford Brigg Rural District
Chairman: J. L. Binns
 High Street, Messingham
 Tel. 9/762863

Clerk: R. E. Crosby
 RDC Offices, Bigby Street
 Brigg. Tel. 2441

Council, Glanford District
Chairman: G. L. Hewson
 "Roseway", Eastfield Road
 Brigg. Tel. 2186

Chief Executive: R. E. Crosby
 Council Offices, Bigby Street
 Brigg. Tel. 2441

**County Council, Lindsey County Council and
 Humberside County Council**
Local Representative: G. L. Hewson
 "Roseway", Eastfield Road
 Brigg. Tel. 2186

County Library, Brigg Branch
Librarian: Mrs. D. M. Crowther
 Princes Street
 Brigg. Tel. 3240

CPRE, Lincolnshire Branch
Chairman: Capt. Jeremy Elwes
 Elsham Hall
 Elsham. Tel. 84/738

Secretary: Miss Flora Murray, OBE
 86, Newland, Lincoln
 Tel. 0522/24020; 0522/20956

Cricket Club, Brigg Town
Chairman: B. M. Robins
 7, Albert Street
 Brigg. Tel. 3905

Secretary: B. A. Parker
 River Meadow, Silversides
 Brigg. Tel. 2806

Cricket Club, Brigg Sugar Factory
Secretary: R. Goulby
 6, Maisonnets, Sugar Factory
 Brigg. Tel. 2411 (BSC)

Darby and Joan Club
Chairman: Mr. E. J. B. Chaplin
 Stonecroft Lodge
 Barnetby. Tel. 84/319

Acting Secretary: Mrs. Joan Chaplin, as above

Dental Care
 A. J. and R. A. Jackson
 16, Bigby Street
 Brigg. Tel. 3163

M. J. Weightman
 2, Dudley Road
 Brigg. Tel. 2070

Electricity Consultative Council
Chairman: J. Morris
 "Jacenda", High Street, Broughton.

Representative: J. F. Day
 Tongs Farm
 Wrawby. Tel. 3122

Exchange Club
President: G. J. Booth
 Frogmore Farm, Thornton Curtis
 Tel. 7785/254

Secretary: M. Golland
 Burnham Beeches, Barton-on-Humber
 Tel. Brigg 3263

Fatstock Show Committee
Chairman: J. F. Day
 Tongs Farm
 Wrawby. Tel. 3122

Secretary: J. J. Magrath, OBE
 Civic Centre, Cary Lane
 Brigg. Tel. 2257

Flower Club <i>Chairman:</i>	Mrs. E. Downs 3, St. Helens Road Brigg. Tel. 3469	CLINIC <i>The Cedars:</i>	Child Heath Clinic and Foodsales Toddlers' Clinic Relaxation and Mothercraft School Clinic Mothers' Club Speech Therapy Cytology Clinic Careers Officer attends Dental Centre
<i>Secretary:</i>	Mrs. M. Smart "Keddington", Westrum Lane Brigg. Tel. 2330		
Folk Club <i>Organisers:</i>	Mike and Jenny Jackson 71, Scotter Road Scunthorpe. Tel. 9/61002	<i>Surgeries</i> <i>By appointment:</i>	Dr. J. H. Foxton Dr. E. R. Bowler Dr. K. S. Proctor Dr. G. Dixon Surgery Clinic, Bigby Road Brigg. Tel. 3960 Ante-Natal Clinic by appointment
Football Club, Brigg Town <i>Chairman:</i>	H. Williams 32, Grammar School Road Brigg. Tel. 3195	<i>Surgery, Bridge Street:</i>	Dr. J. H. Willis Dr. C. M. Willis 53, Bridge Street Brigg. Tel. 2154 Wressle House Wressle. Tel. 2164
<i>Secretary:</i>	C. Petch 5, Central Square, Brigg		
Gas Consultative Council <i>Brigg Representative:</i>	Mrs. E. K. Forman "The Villa", 21, Bigby High Road Brigg. Tel. 2345	Girl Guides <i>District Commissioner:</i>	Mrs. W. H. Dey 7, Burgess Road Brigg. Tel. 2749
Gateway Club <i>Chairman:</i>	G. Green "Rosecroft", 34, Wrawby Street Brigg. Tel. 2325	<i>Guider:</i>	Mrs. Margaret Evans Manley Gardens, Brigg
<i>Secretary:</i>	Mrs. S. Spencer Gainsthorpe Road Kirton Lindsey. Tel. 81/481	<i>Brownie Guider:</i>	Mrs. W. H. Dey, as above
		<i>Assistant Brownie Guider:</i>	Mrs. Muriel Scruby Churchill Avenue Brigg. Tel. 3982
Glanford Boat Club <i>Commodore:</i>	A. J. Rouse 45, Park Drive Grimsby. Tel. 72/56630	Hockey Club, Brigg Men's <i>Chairman:</i>	F. L. Vear 8, St. Helens Road Brigg. Tel. 2336
<i>Secretary:</i>	Mrs. A. J. Rouse, as above	<i>Secretary:</i>	J. E. Moore 35, Bigby High Road Brigg. Tel. 2158
Glanford Players <i>President:</i>	S. G. Sass "St. David's", Wrawby Road Brigg. Tel. 2066	<i>Captain, 1st XI:</i>	E. D. Brittain 39, Bigby High Road Brigg. Tel. 2160
<i>Chairman:</i>	Mrs. Pam Gurnell Station Farm, Sturton Scawby. Tel. 4258	<i>Captain, 2nd XI:</i>	A. C. Pieroni Gainsborough Lane Sturton. Tel. 4128
<i>Secretary:</i>	Miss E. W. Gleniworth 8, Bridge Street Brigg. Tel. 2826		
Golf Club, Elsham <i>Captain:</i>	M. J. H. Davey Somerby Top Bigby. Tel. 83/205	Hockey Club, Brigg Ladies <i>President:</i>	Mrs. I. G. Bell "Arlson", Brigg Road Wrawby. Tel. 2896
<i>Secretary:</i>	A. McGill 24, Burgess Road Brigg. Tel. 2017	<i>Secretary:</i>	Mrs. P. Spray "The Hollies", High Street Broughton. Tel. 2559
Golfing Society, Old Briggensians <i>President:</i>	A. I. Morris Lime Cottage Scawby. Tel. 4343	Horticultural Society, Brigg and District <i>Chairman:</i>	D. W. Woodcock Brigg Preparatory School, Bigby Street Brigg. Tel. 3237
<i>Captain:</i>	R. Day 324, Messingham Road Scunthorpe. Tel. 9/66002	<i>General Secretary:</i>	Mrs. H. E. Jones "Heathfield", Glanford Road Brigg. Tel. 3132
<i>Secretary:</i>	J. P. Kemp 12, Westover Drive Burton Stather. Tel. 972/445	<i>Social Secretary:</i>	H. V. Lewis St. Helens Park Brigg. Tel. 2556
		<i>Show Secretary:</i>	G. Green "Rosecroft", 34, Wrawby Street Brigg. Tel. 2325
HEALTH SERVICES <i>Medical Officer:</i>	Dr. J. S. Robertson Public Health Department The Cedars, Bigby Road Brigg. Tel. 3604/5	Hospital Social Car Service <i>District Transport</i> <i>Organiser:</i>	Mrs. Felicity Garth Hillborn House Wrawby. Tel. 2279
<i>Deputy Medical Officer:</i>	Dr. A. V. Sheard, as above	<i>WRVS Organiser:</i>	Mrs. Joan Patchett "South Haws", Wrawby Road Brigg. Tel. 3343
<i>Public Health Inspector:</i>	J. B. Cowdell Civic Centre, Cary Lane Brigg. Tel. 2257		

Ladies' Circle, Round Table

Chairman: Mrs. P. Weightman
Southfield House
Bonby. Tel. 88/259

Secretary: Mrs. Janet Llewellyn
Mill Farm, Appleby

Ladies' Guild, St. John's Church

Chairman: Mrs. Betty Lewis
1, West Terrace
Brigg. Tel. 3262

Secretary: Miss Audrey Newstead
59, Grammar School Road, Brigg

Ladies' Luncheon Club

Chairman: Mrs. A. E. Simpson
"Delaval", Kings Avenue
Brigg. Tel. 3319

Secretary: Mrs. K. Braithwaite
9, Manor Drive
Scawby. Tel. 3319

Ladies' Section, Brigg Town FC

Chairman: Mrs. Ivy Turner
1, Ash Grove
Brigg. Tel. 2697

Secretary: Mrs. Jane Hardy
19, Hawthorn Avenue, Brigg

Leprosy Relief Association, Brigg Committee

Chairman: Mrs. A. E. Fowler
32, St. Helens Road
Brigg. Tel. 3162

Secretary: Mrs. B. Morris
19, Wrawby Street, Brigg

Licensed Victuallers' Association, Brigg, Barton and Caistor

Chairman: G. Guest
Wheatsheaf Hotel
Hibaldstow. Tel. 4629

Secretary: Mrs. Eileen Ward
Marrowbone and Cleaver
Kirmington. Tel. 84/325

Lions

Chairman: P. L. Stott
Vicarage Lane
Grasby. Tel. 83/250

Secretary: V. Atkin
38, Bigby High Road
Brigg. Tel. 2180

Men's Society, St. John's Church

Chairman: J. E. Peart
37, Albert Street, Brigg

Secretary: P. Edlington
"Walton", Wrawby Road, Brigg

Mothers' Union, St. John's Church

Enrolling Member: Mrs. R. A. Cochrane
The Vicarage, 10, Glanford Road
Brigg. Tel. 3989

Secretary: Mrs. L. G. Watkinson
19, Bigby High Road
Brigg. Tel. 3306

Music Club, Brigg Grammar School

Chairman: H. B. Williams
The Grammar School
Brigg. Tel. 2120

Secretary: A. I. Morris
Lime Cottage
Scawby. Tel. 4343

Music and Drama Festival Society

Chairman: E. Urry
"Dormers", Hedgerow Lane
Brigg. Tel. 3200

Secretary: Mrs. Joan Berresford
"Cherry Garth", Mill Lane
Brigg. Tel. 2661

NALGO, Brigg & District Branch

Chairman: H. Johnson
Barton Council Office, Baysgarth Park
Barton-on-Humber. Tel. 80/32333

Secretary: B. Robinson
Glanford Council Office, Bigby Street
Brigg. Tel. 2441

National Farmers' Union, North Lindsey Branch

Chairman: L. Craven
Manor Farm
Sturton. Tel. 4236

Secretary: M. A. Logan
NFU Office, 4, Bigby Street
Brigg. Tel. 3144

NUAAW, Brigg & District Branch

Chairman: J. Clark
East End, Kirmington

Secretary: A. Schofield
High Street
North Kelsey. Tel. 86/343

*Organiser,
North Lindsey:* G. Curtis
23, Estate Avenue
Broughton. Tel. 3457

Nursing Association Trust Fund

Trustees: Dr. R. E. Holme
Wrawby Road
Brigg. Tel. 3156

Mrs. C. M. Atkin
38, Bigby High Road
Brigg. Tel. 2108

Secretary: E. Dodd
22, St. Helens Road
Brigg. Tel. 2951

Old Briggensians' Association

Chairman: A. Turner
The Mill, Northcliff Road, Kirton Lindsey

Secretary: L. Green
46, Darby Road, Scunthorpe

Old Girls Association, Brigg Girls High School

Chairman/Treasurer: Mrs. Joan Robinson
Silver Street
Barnetby. Tel. 84/617

Secretary: Mrs. S. Wainwright
Plot 16
Kennedy Close
Toll Bar Estate
Brigg.

Old People's Welfare Committee, Age Concern

Chairman: G. L. Hewson
"Roseway", Eastfield Road
Brigg. Tel. 2186

Secretary: Mrs. J. Taylor
"Arrochar"
Cadney. Tel. 86/466

Old Tyme Dance Club

Chairman: A. J. Bantock
Lees Road, Market Rasen

Secretary: Mrs. E. A. Green
13, Westrum Lane
Brigg. Tel. 3155

Parents' Association, Brigg Grammar School

Chairman: R. A. Kitchen
19, St. Peter's Avenue, Bottesford

Secretary: Mrs. K. J. Phipps
"Tinker's Castle", Chapel Lane
Elsham. Tel. 84/708

Parent-Teacher Association, Brigg County School

Chairman: Mr. B. Wass
Glebe Road School
Tel. 2155

Secretary: W. P. Christopher
West End, Winteringham
Scunthorpe. Tel. 9/732591

Parent Teacher Association, St. Mary's School
Chairman: Dr. C. H. Lalgee
34, Victoria Road
Barnetby. Tel. 84/203

Secretary: Mr. J. Darragh
47, St. Helens Road
Brigg. Tel. 2076

Parochial Church Council, St. John's Church
Chairman: The Rev. R. A. Cochrane
The Vicarage, 10, Glanford Road
Brigg. Tel. 3989

Secretary: Mrs. Enid Richards
"Staniland", Wrawby Road
Brigg. Tel. 2188

Pigeon Club, Brigg Racing
Chairman: H. Drewery
"Eastways", West Street, Scawby

Vice-Chairman: J. F. Proctor
"Windyridge", Messingham Lane
Scawby. Tel. 4264

Secretary: Mrs. Margaret Hunt
Hunts Lane, Hibaldstow

Pigeon Flying Club, Glanford
Chairman: E. V. Gray
"Ryndleside", 19, Glebe Road
Brigg. Tel. 3259

Secretary: R. Deeley
68, Hawthorn Avenue, Brigg

Police
Chief Inspector: M. Allcock
Police Station, Wrawby Street
Brigg. Tel. 2222

Potato Marketing Board
Area Supervisor: T. P. O'Brien
Bank House, 9, Market Place
Brigg. Tel. 2332/3

PMB Representatives: J. F. Day
Tongs Farm
Wrawby. Tel. 3122

Probus Club
President: L. J. Hall
34, St. Helens Road
Brigg. Tel. 3495.

Secretary: A. H. Lavington
"Willersley", Kings Avenue
Brigg. Tel. 3309

Physically Handicapped Society, Brigg and District Branch
Chairman: J. F. Day
Tongs Farm
Wrawby. Tel. 3122

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Scout Leader: R. Cross
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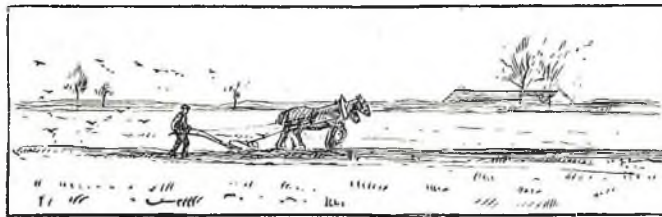
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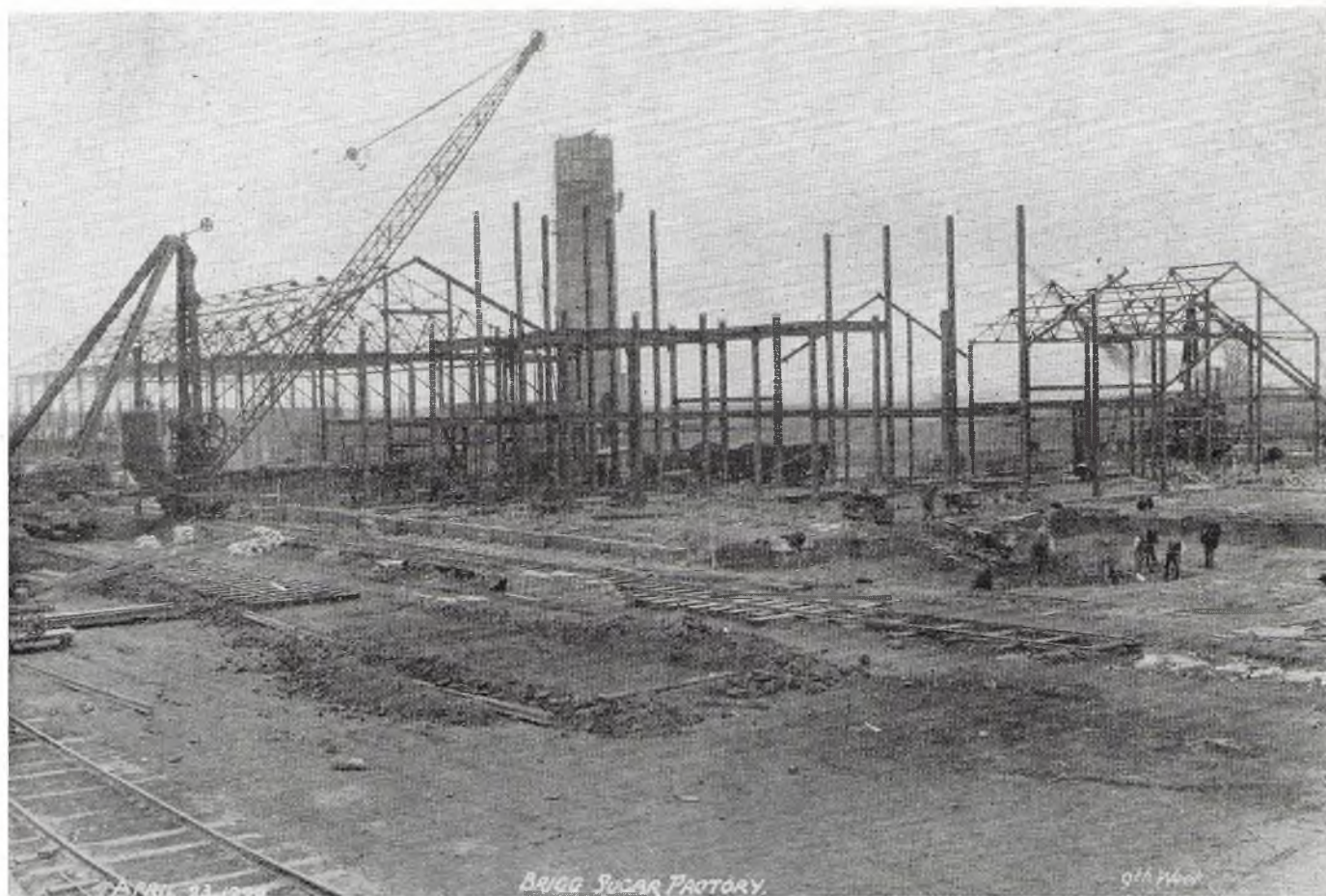
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After only nine weeks



Two young steel erectors arrived in March of that year, 23-year-old Sandy Cairns and Bill Searle, employed by the main contractors, Sir Robert McAlpine. This picture shows the progress after only nine weeks. The concrete chimney, a separate contract, is halfway up, steel sections bolted together being used for shuttering. Sandy Cairns stayed on to work at the factory, retiring during 1973 and now lives in Ancholme Gardens, Brigg.

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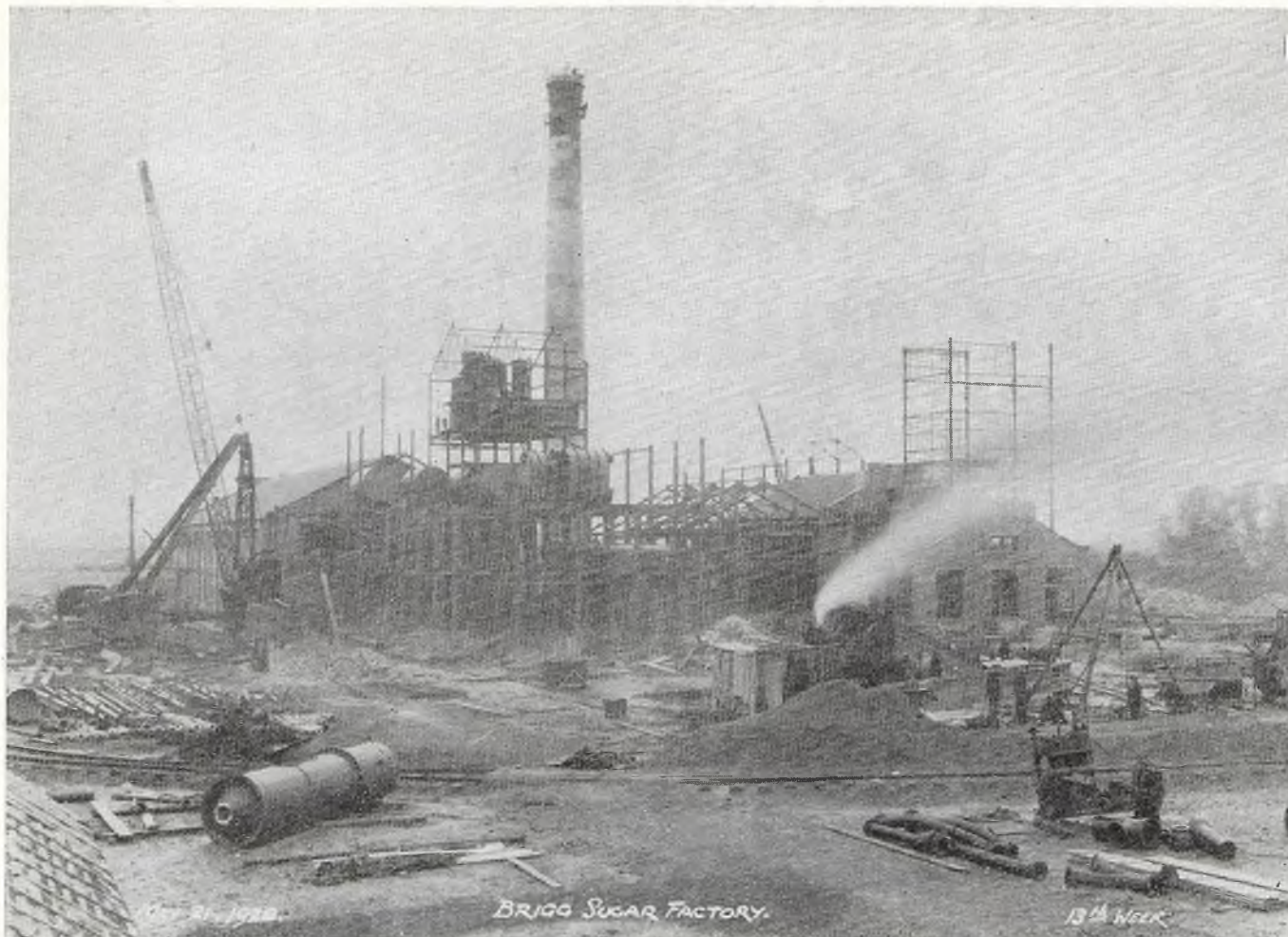
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Week No. 13 and still going strong



Week 13 and the men with their 15-ton Henderson crane have been busy. The oval tanks in line with the chimney are the evaporators and next to them, the crystalisers. The shear-legs in the foreground were part of the water-boring tackle – they had to find their own drinking water in those days. For industrial water they used a Ruston steam navy to drive a cut to the River Ancholme, connecting to a pumphouse.

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J HOLMES

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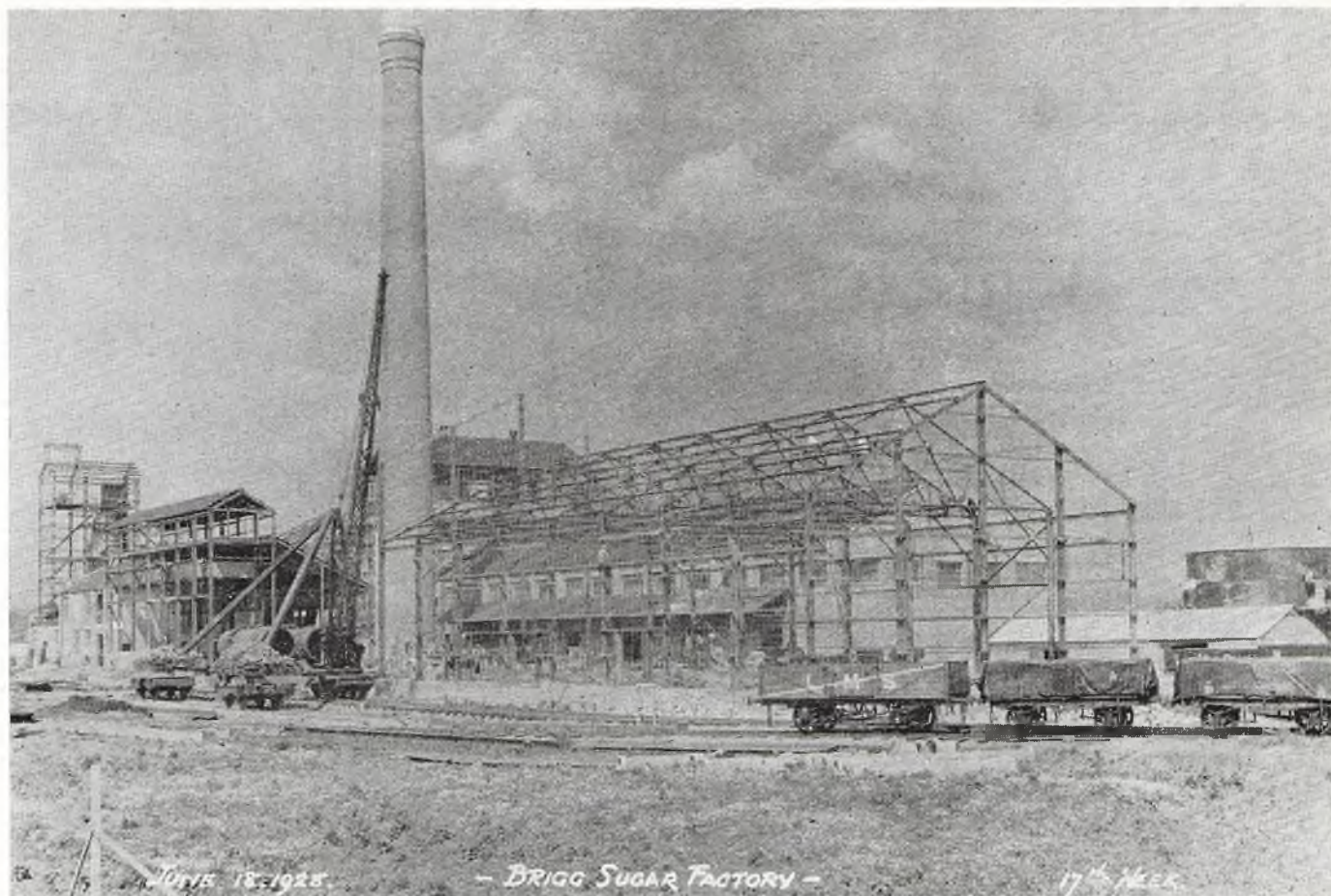
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17th Week and the chimney's smoking



Week 17 and the chimney is finished and smoking. On the extreme left of picture is the lime kiln and next to that the stores and fitting shop. In the boiler house there is a glimpse of the coal bunkers and the cylindrical objects near the crane are the pulp driers. On the right of picture is the pulp warehouse, with the molasses tank in the background.

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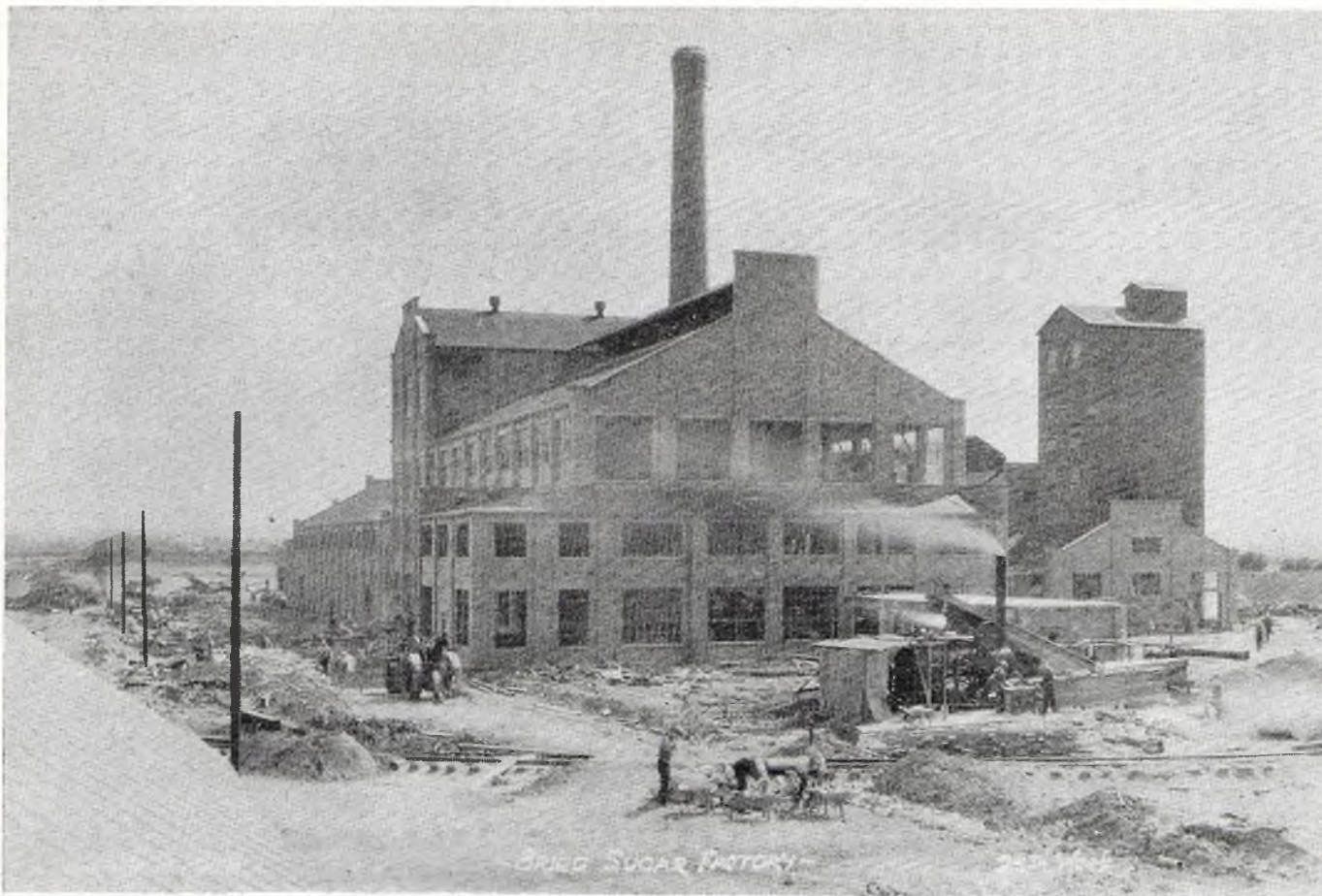
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After 25 weeks, almost ready to go



After 25 weeks the factory began to look ready for business. The lime kiln has been sheeted and on the left is the sugar warehouse. The tall building houses the pan floor where the first sugar was due to be produced at Brigg. In the foreground is a Marshall steam machine which provided the power for engineering drills and saws.

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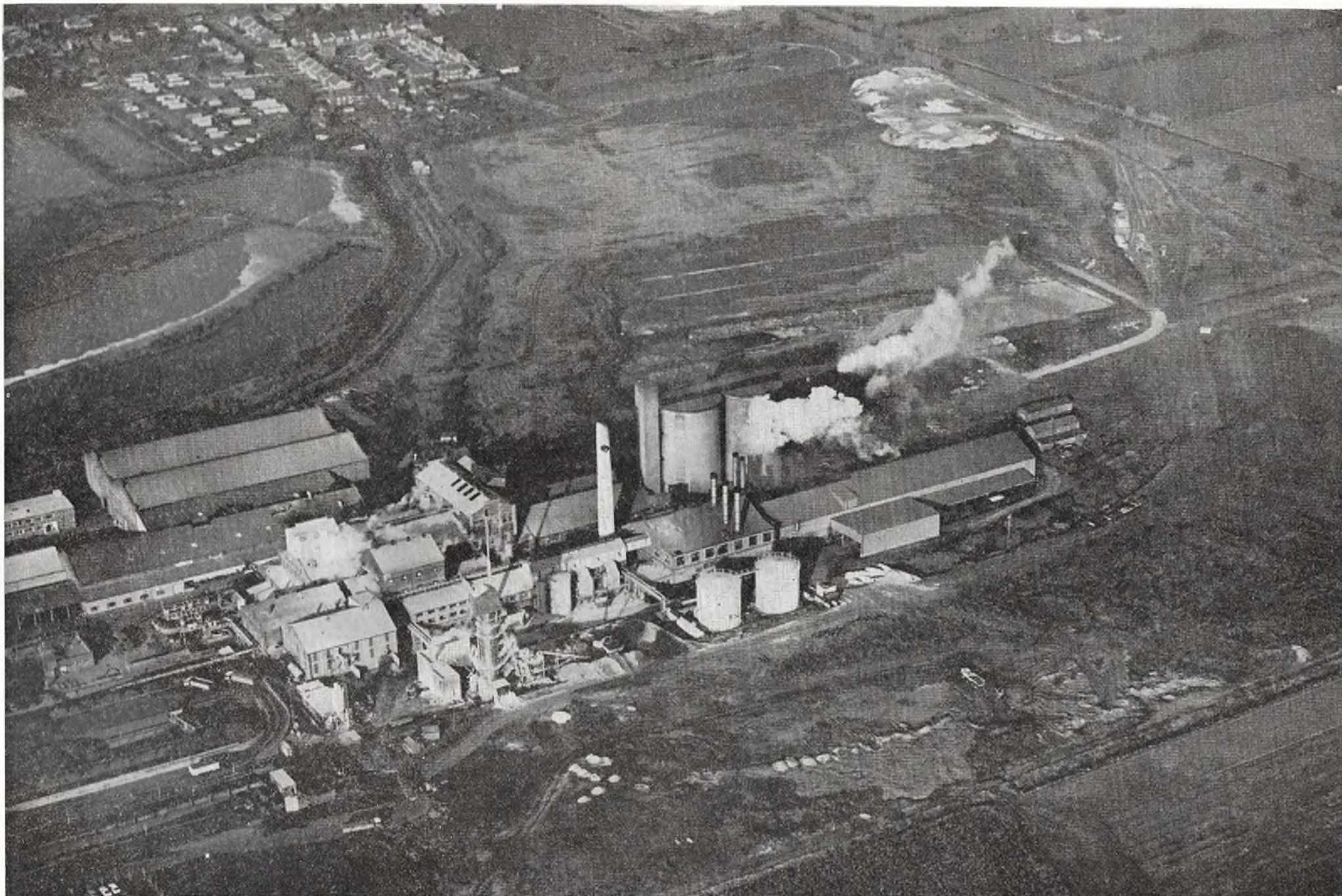
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Brigg Sugar Factory was completed within nine months and went straight into production, the first manager being an American, Mr. G. W. Schneider. This is an aerial picture of the factory taken in recent months. It has been added to since 1928, including the erection of two massive silos, but basically it is the nine-month miracle performed by a small labour force in record time. How long would it take today? Sandy Cairns was asked. "I just couldn't speculate when you think how men work today", he replied. "No doubt it would be years."

Picture reproduced by courtesy of the Grimsby Evening Telegraph.

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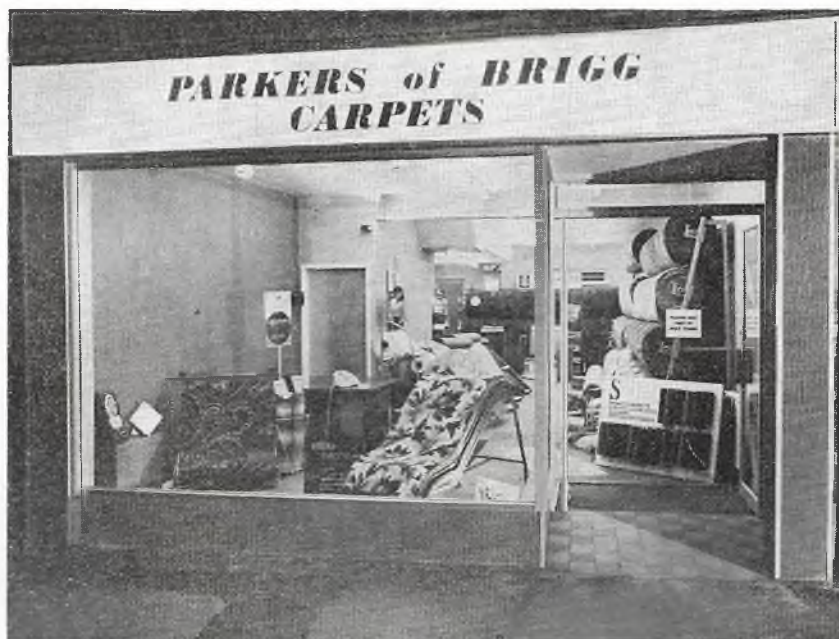
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The County Bridge over the River Ancholme at Brigg, as seen from Spring's Wharf by Ken Lamming.

Lock Gates keep floods from Brigg Streets

Ancholme now asset to Humberside Industry

HOW many people have ever given a thought to what would happen in Brigg if there should be a failure of the sluice gates at South Ferriby? The short answer is that Bridge Street would be under several feet of water and so would many thousands of acres of farmland between Brigg and the River Humber. Happily this is not likely to occur for although there was a breakdown a couple of hundred years ago, the present installation has stood the test of time.

The first steps to reclaim the marshy swamps of the Ancholme Valley were taken early in the 17th century. Until that time the natural watercourse of the Old River Ancholme remained in open communication with the River Humber. Records dating back to the 13th century show that very occasional scouring out of the river and a number of streams discharging into it was the only work carried out to assist the drainage.

It was not until 1635 that a determined effort was made to make the drainage of the Level of Ancholme efficient. It was in the years between 1635 and 1639 that the New River Ancholme was cut to assist the drainage by allowing the floodwater to flow through and the first sluice was erected at its outfall to stem the tides of the Humber.

During the first half of the 18th century, however, the drainage works were once again neglected and the sluice was broken down but in 1767 the landowners applied for and obtained the Royal Assent to an Act for the more effectual draining the lands lying in the Level of Ancholme and making the river navigable.

Catchwater drains recommended

Under that Act a body known as the Commissioners of the Ancholme Drainage and Navigation was set up. They improved the New River Ancholme and erected a new sluice at South Ferriby outfall, together with a new lock 14ft. 9in. wide and 70ft. long. Yet the drainage of the lowlands during periods of heavy rainfall was still in a very defective state because the sill of the new sluice was laid 8ft. above the level of LWOST in the River Humber.

Much has been written about the work of Rennie the engineer who did so much drainage work in the Brigg district but not many references have been made to *two* Rennies. It was in 1800 that Mr. John Rennie was consulted and he recommended that the New River Ancholme should be widened and deepened. He also recommended that two new locks should be built to preserve the navigation and with a view to preventing floods from the high lands from drowning the Level, he proposed that two catchwater drains should be

made in the line of the base of the highlands, bordering upon the Level, with separate and independent sluices at their junction with the River Humber.

Only part of Rennie's recommendations were adopted, mainly owing to the lack of funds, and as the drainage was still very inefficient and complaints universal, the Commissioners in 1824 consulted Mr. Rennie's son, Sir John Rennie. He recommended, among other things, that the catchwater drains which had been proposed by his father, should be carried out to their full extent.

He further recommended that the New River Ancholme should be widened, deepened and enlarged – much the same advice that had been given by his father – to double their capacity; and that an entirely new sluice should be built at the outfall, together with a lock 20ft. wide.

An Act of Parliament for those objects was obtained in 1825 and the works were commenced forthwith. Progress was slow owing to rating disputes and the fact that the cost was a heavy burden on the lands lying within the Level. By 1844 the New River Ancholme had been improved although it was not deepened to the extent proposed by Sir John Rennie. The new lock was completed but the catchwater drains were only partially made.

From 1844 until the constitution of the Ancholme and Winterton Beck Catchment Board under the Land Drainage Act 1930 in April 1931, no work of any magnitude was carried out. The Catchment area was approximately 238 square miles in extent, draining into the Humber tidal estuary, an area of about 38 square miles lying below the level of high water level of Spring tides in the Humber, protected therefrom by some six miles of embankments.

Run-off into Humber improved

In February 1933 the Catchment Board took over from the old authorities 98 miles of "main" river. Of that, 51 miles, including 20 miles of the canalized New River Ancholme, were transferred from the Commissioners of the Ancholme Drainage and Navigation, a body exercising jurisdiction in the Level of Ancholme. As a first step the Catchment Board made a detailed survey of the New River Ancholme and in due course that survey became the basis of a scheme for improving and lowering the bed of the river. The thinking behind the scheme was that the general level of the water could be maintained for navigation purposes and lowered for the benefit of drainage without reducing the draught of vessels navigating the river; and so that there would be a quick discharge of flood waters in periods of heavy rainfall.

The scheme also made provision for the improvement of the length of the Old River Ancholme passing through the town of Brigg and for three other subsidiary works, one with the object of providing an outlet into the New River Ancholme for an area which had hitherto discharged its water into the eastern catchwater drain; and another for increasing the efficiency of one of the sluices at South Ferriby. The estimated cost of that scheme was £22,305, towards which there was a grant of 60 per cent under the Land Drainage Act.

Although funds did not permit everything to be done that needed to be done at that time, a substantial amount of progress was made and the run-off into the River Humber during periods of flood was increased by approximately 80 per cent.

(continued on page 110)

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A glimpse of 19th century Brigg – 1835



Drainage Board spent £200,000 on pumps

(continued from page 108)

The Ancholme and Winterton Beck Catchment Board functioned for 20 years, being abolished in 1951 and its functions transferred to the Lincolnshire River Board, later to be known as the Lincolnshire River Authority. Also constituted in 1951 was the Ancholme Internal Drainage Board with an extended drainage district of some 36,450 acres.

The only income of the Drainage Board is from drainage rates levied annually and principally to defray the cost of maintaining in excess of 120 miles of watercourses within its district. Within the same district the River Authority is responsible for maintaining a similar length of watercourses including the River Ancholme; the Authority's income is derived principally from precepts on local authorities and drainage boards within its area.

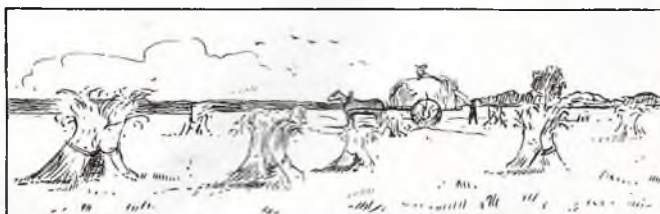
Within the Ancholme drainage district are six pumped areas covering 13,200 acres which in the past 10 years has involved the Drainage Board in gross capital expenditure of some £200,000. Four of the pumping stations are owned and under the direct control of the Drainage Board, the other two being the property of the River Authority, although the Board contributes towards the operational costs of the latter two stations.

Schemes for pumping two more areas were being planned in January, 1974, to serve an additional 3,050 acres at a gross capital cost of £118,000.

One of the few remaining doubts, from the farming point of view, is what effect there will be on the river from the Trent/Witham/Ancholme scheme designed to provide industry with 13,000,000 gallons of water per day. The farmers have argued that the river will be virtually converted into a reservoir and that the level of the water will have to be maintained at such a high level that land drainage will suffer.

To that the drainage engineers reply is that such fears are groundless. They point out there the scheme provides for a reservoir at Toft Newton, from which water will be transferred to the River Ancholme when there is insufficient water in the river to provide industry with the amount required. That water would flow down the river, to be extracted by the North Lindsey Water Board at Cadney, the site of another vast reservoir.

The general level of the River Ancholme, therefore, would be the same as it always has been but with water conservation assuming such prominence at a time of rapid industrial expansion, it may be said that this ancient river is at perhaps the most important point in its history.



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BRIGG*



The famous Lincolnshire Ox — A unique Inn sign

But, be honest
— have you ever
even noticed it?

THIS unusual and in some ways ungainly inn sign is one which may have gone almost unnoticed by generations of Brigg people, yet it is one which has interesting associations with Lincolnshire stockbreeding and with one of Britain's most famous artists. This historic sign, featuring the famous Lincolnshire Ox, hangs over the front door of the Brocklesby Ox Inn, Bridge Street, owned at one time by the Yarbroughs of Brocklesby Hall who still own a sizeable block of old property in that part of the town.

This remarkable Lincolnshire Ox is no legend, for its vital statistics have been recorded by reputable historians. The figures contrast so strongly with those relating to more normal standards, however, that many are still inclined to dismiss the whole thing as an old wives' tale. Why, they ask, in this day and age, when beef-breeding techniques are being developed at a cost of hundreds of thousands of pounds, when the Charolais and other exotic animals are being imported from France to breed weight into the British herds, should it have been possible for such massive cattle to have been bred centuries ago? And what happened that they never survived?

But the records show that at least this one did exist and there is a painting in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, to prove it. It was the work of George Stubbs, one of whose paintings was sold at Sothebys in 1970 for £220,000, a world auction record for a British painting. Stubbs was commissioned to paint the Lincolnshire Ox in 1790.

This massive animal was bred at Gedney by Mr. John Gibbons, of Little Sutton, and when fully grown was 5ft. 6ins. in height; from nose to tail, 11ft. 1in; across the back in three places — hips, shoulders and middle — 39ins; and live weight, 464 stones.

The Lincolnshire Ox achieved fame in London in the year that Stubbs did his painting, being taken along the Strand and exhibited at the Lyceum Theatre. The Stubbs picture shows the ox in St. James's Park with its owner and a fighting cock and was exhibited at the Royal Academy before going to the Walker Art Gallery.

Stubbs, a man of exceptional physique, was 32 years of age when he came into Lincolnshire with his niece, Mary Spencer, to live in a farmhouse at Horkstow. There were two things that brought him into this district. He had a commission to paint portraits for the Nelthorpe family and he had a most unusual sideline — he wished to make a study of the anatomy of the horse.

It was said that as soon as a horse fell dead in the shafts of a coach, Stubbs was soon after it. He was credited by the villagers with being so strong that he once carried the whole carcase of a horse on his shoulders up three flights of narrow stairs to his dissecting room.

For about seven years he was engaged on this task, without neglecting his painting. When he came to have the horse drawings engraved, however, he could not find anyone to undertake the work — the engravers hinted that it was, to say the least, unconventional and not very picturesque. So Stubbs did his own engraving and in 1766 produced "The Anatomy of the Horse," a folio illustrated by 24 large engraved plates.

This was the first authoritative work clearly defining the structure of the horse and must have proved valuable to those who were engaged in the maintenance of 18th century transport. At his death the original drawings were left to Mary Spencer and today they are in the Royal Academy library.

Some of the Stubbs portraits are still in the possession of the Nelthorpe family at Scawby Hall. The two paintings which brought him to Lincolnshire were portraits of Sir Henry Nelthorpe, 5th baronet, and his second wife, Elizabeth, in her wedding dress. The other was of Sir John Nelthorpe with two dogs, shooting over Barton Field, with the churches of St. Peter and St. Mary in the background.

He also painted a family group of the Rev. Robert Carter Thelwall, of Redbourne Hall, with his wife and daughter. The wife, Charlotte, was the daughter of Sir Henry Nelthorpe and their daughter married Lord William Beauclerk, later the Duke of St. Albans.

It must have been Stubbs's painting of the Lincolnshire Ox that prompted one J. Barenger to produce a print of it in 1823, a copy of which still hangs on the wall at the Brocklesby Ox.



Historic occasion - Brigg Women's Institute's Golden Jubilee dinner at the Angel Hotel. Left to right, seated: Mrs. Ruth Chatterton, County President; Mrs. Connie Hall, Brigg WI President; Mrs. Edith Burgess, founder-member and a past-President; Coun. Miss D. M. Selby, chairman, Brigg Urban District Council. Standing: Mrs. Marguerite Smart, past-President and member of the County Executive; Mrs. Kathleen Osterfield, founder-member; Mrs. Helen Jacklin, chairman's lady.



Another historic picture at the Golden Jubilee dinner - six past-Presidents of Brigg WI. Seated: Mrs. Minnie Grundy, Mrs. Joan Berresford, Mrs. Mary Atkin. Standing: Mrs. Ina Smalley, Mrs. Marguerite Smart and Mrs. Elsie Green. For the record, this was January, 1974.

Pictures by Tony Kett.

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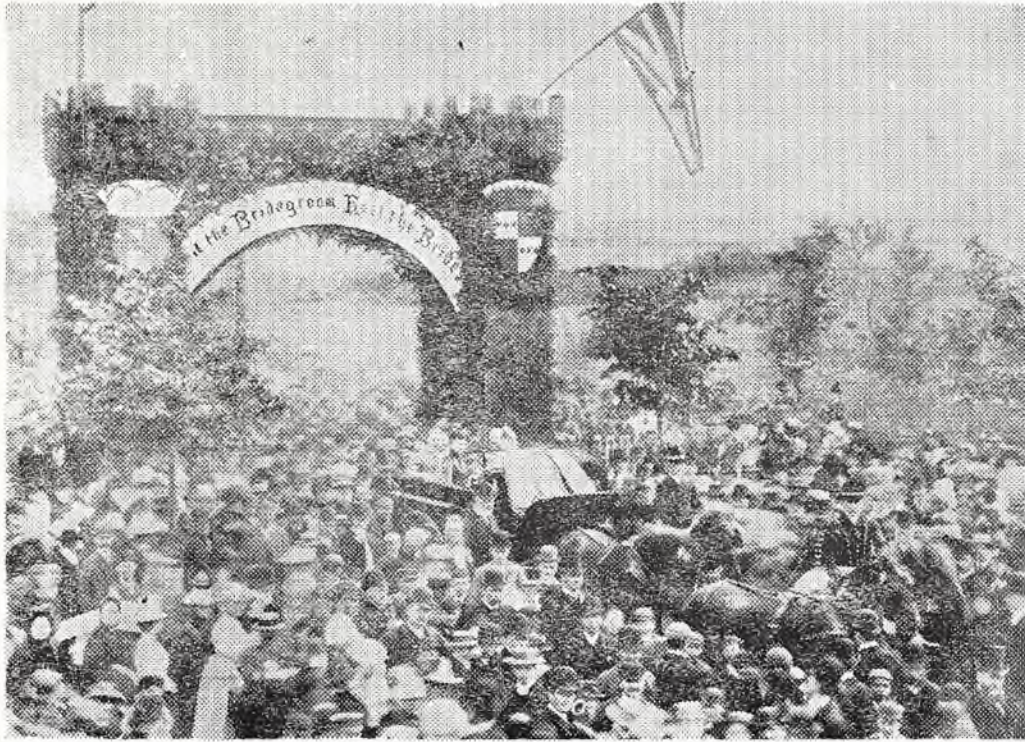
Why do we need to advertise
"No vacancies"?
We don't.
But this is a book about Brigg
And we are part of Brigg -
So we wouldn't like to miss out.

It also gives us a chance
To say a few "thank" you's
To Mums and Dads,
Stage crew, lighting crew,
Scenery makers and painters,
Accompanists and "front of
house".

All these - and more,
We couldn't do without a
single one,
Nor, for that matter, a
married one.

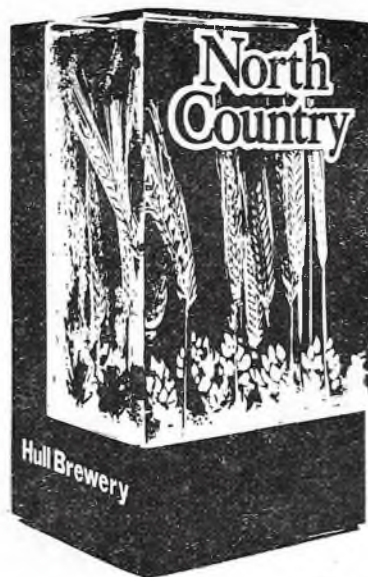
Thanks For Everything!

“The Lincolnshire ‘do’ was a sort of royal progress and I was perfectly thrilled with it” — Lady Winefride Elwes



This was the tumultuous scene when Gervase Elwes returned to Brigg with his bride, Lady Winefride, in the summer of 1889. This triumphal arch had been erected at the station gates by estate workmen. See story on page 15.

Strength



**North
Country
Beer**

The Hull Brewery Company Limited

Brigg had its own Theatre in 1794

But not even a
Cinema in 1974



You used to have to pay to get in and out of Brigg. This was the Toll Gate House – it was opposite the Workhouse.

THERE was some sort of theatre in Brigg as far back as 1794. According to records kept by Mr. David Briggs and Mr. Walter Thompson, a play was presented on December 16 of that year, "The Jew, or A Peep Into a Human Heart." Another mention is of a show in January, 1795, "The Children in the Wood" and "The Road To Ruin." The surprising thing is that both men state the admission to have been 2s. for the pit and 1s. for the gallery, with a subscription ticket costing 12s. entitling the holder to admittance to the pit for 12 nights. When it considered what 2s. would have been worth in 1794 compared with 1974, one is tempted to wonder whether some indistinct calligraphy might not have represented a more practical 2d. instead of 2s.

The next record of Brigg theatre was in 1844, about the time that railway development was going ahead in North Lincolnshire. A Mr. Bullen brought a "select but effective company" for a short season. There was a local prophecy that such a venture was not likely to succeed in a community which had built a church and two chapels in the short space of two years. There were priests who condemned the theatre as an "anti-Christian amusement" but in spite of that it seemed to have had the distinguished patronage of the Duke and Duchess of St. Albans, doubtless when they were visiting Redbourne Hall, and of Lord Worsley.

Mr. Bullen might not have repeated his visit but there were others and in later years there were the travelling theatres, the "penny gaffs" in the booths at the White Horse paddock, repertory groups who contrived to put on a different play every night and who supplemented their numbers from the ranks of local amateurs.

First silent films

One who would have liked to have joined in with those travelling companies towards the end of the 19th century was a young man named Harold Green. His parents, however, did not consider it quite the thing and he had to wait until the early years of the 20th century to find an outlet for his theatrical longings, joining the St. John's Musical Society, then concerned with a series of Gilbert and Sullivan productions.

Harold Green was very interested in the arrival of the first silent films in Brigg in 1896. Huge placards in the White Horse paddock heralded the entertainment wonder

of the age, "The Great American Bioscope." The films were shown in a booth holding 25-30 people at a time. The enterprise was owned by two men named Ball and Eva and on the death of the latter, Harold Green bought the projector and films from the surviving partner. For an outlay of £5 he was in the cinema business – except that he had no cinema and no capital. Moreover, he nearly put himself out of his own business trying out the projector.

"My father had just put me into a shop in Wrawby-street," he recalled later, "and when I was trying the projector I nearly had the place on fire. The light was produced by using a mixture of coal gas and hydrogen in conjunction with a lime cylinder, resulting in an intense white light. It also produced a lot of heat and when I stopped cranking the machine everything went up in smoke."

The Electric Playhouse

The first people to show films in Brigg on a regular commercial basis were the Wilmore Brothers, who operated at the Corn Exchange, the only suitable hall in the town. When they decided to move out, Harold Green decided to move in but while he was enquiring about the lease he was beaten to it by a Mr. George Henry Wilson, who opened up under new management and under a new name – "The Electric Playhouse."

Then, about 1930, competition came in the form of a new cinema built by a consortium of local businessmen. It opened with a flourish of free drinks and dancing and definitely had more to offer than an all-purpose hall such as the Corn Exchange. The Electric Playhouse had to close its doors and the Grand Cinema did good business when it was taken over by Mr. Billy Webster, a bluff, Yorkshire type with a touch of the old showman about him.

Shortly after his death it was acquired by Star Cinema Holdings Ltd. By this time, however, other changes were taking place. More people had cars, almost everyone had a television set. It was not cheap to go to the pictures but it was cheap to stay at home. Also, the real cinema enthusiasts would not wait until the films came to Brigg. They preferred to go to Scunthorpe or Grimsby, combining their films with shopping and bingo.

The Grand Cinema closed its doors on February 27, 1965, even though the advertisements promised "To Russia With Love" on March 11.

An executive of Star Cinema Holdings Ltd. said at the time, "We have tried to keep it going for several years, without much success, so this is not something that happened overnight. We have kept it going

as long as this because in a big organisation like Star Cinemas we could afford to carry a few non-profit making cinemas for so long. As there is such an obvious downward trend, however, we have no alternative but to close."

Even this was not quite the end. Harold Green by this time was 78 years of age and having seen the start of the cinema industry was convinced that he had also seen the end, that there was no more money to be made from the cinema.

Not so convinced was Mr. Roland Shacklock, of Caistor, who had experience of running one-night shows in a number of North Lincolnshire villages. He had studied the set-up at the Grand Cinema, where staff and overheads cost money seven nights a week yet doing business only at weekends. He decided to put on film shows at the Corn Exchange, former home of the old Electric Playhouse, picking the plum nights, Fridays and Sundays, with a children's matinee.

The children turned up with their sixpences for such films as "Old Mother Riley" but there was little demand from adult customers for "Reach For The Sky" and similar films. As they said, "We can stay at home and see the old-timers on television."

End of an era

A disappointed Mr. Shacklock lost money on the venture and decided to call it a day, although he did say at the time he still thought there was a future for a Brigg cinema. It was significant, however, that he did not repeat the experiment. There were two others who came after him but it was the same story, hardly enough revenue to pay the rent. It was the end of an era so far as Brigg was concerned.

On the other hand, there has always been good support in Brigg for live theatre. Brigg Amateur Operatic Society's 1972 production of "Fiddler On The Roof" ran for 10 nights and broke all records. The Glanford Players, a local drama group which has covered a tremendous range of theatre in the last 30 years, is consistently well-supported and did record business with their 1973 production, "Anne Frank."

Then there is a well-supported Children's Theatre School and a wealth of talent in the drama groups at local schools. All that is supplemented by a Brigg and District Arts Committee, who work in conjunction with the Lincolnshire Association and whose sponsored events so far have ranged from the Grimsby Colliery Band to Ballet For All.

With all that going on, little wonder that Hollywood and Denham just couldn't compete!

Glanford Players still vigorous after 36 years

It took a
war to get
the Women's
Institutes
going

IT was in 1938 that half a dozen or so people met in a house at Wrawby and decided it was time that Brigg had an established drama group. In the early 1930s there had been some excellent plays produced at the local Corn Exchange by a group which comprised the combined staffs of Brigg Grammar School and Brigg Girls High School. There was also a drama group formed from the ranks of Brigg Amateur Operatic Society. But drama groups tend to wax and wane depending on what enthusiast happens to be around at the time to give a lead and in the immediate pre-war years the drama groups were no more.

Meeting at the home of Mr. and Mrs. F. A. Willman, Wrawby, were Mr. and Mrs. S. G. Sass, Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Johnson and Mr. C. C. Irvine. They discussed the possibilities of forming a society which would stimulate an interest in the theatre by means of play readings, lectures and stage productions. That meeting resulted in the debut of The Glanford Players.

Their first public appearance was at a hospital garden fete in Brigg in July, 1939, at a time when hospitals were dependent upon voluntary efforts for their very existence. Their first full-scale production was at the High School during the early years of the 1939-45 war, later being taken to village halls and to RAF stations in the neighbourhood.

Kept flag flying

From that modest start of 35 years ago there has been a regular flow of productions, keeping the drama flag flying successfully in Brigg and over the years raising substantial sums for charity.

Members of the group meet for acted play readings, talks by experts in the field of drama and for visits to both amateur and professional theatre. They have built up an impressive stock of sets and props, while Miss Dorothy Stewart, former art and needlework mistress at Brigg Girls High School, for many years the group's wardrobe mistress, designed and made a collection of period costumes, one of their most valuable assets.

John Marshall, teacher of handicrafts at the Glanford Secondary School, one of the back-stage enthusiasts, makes the sets, also storing and maintaining them, while Alan Keylock, another member of the Glanford school staff, is concerned with lighting.

Much of the production in the early years was by Ruth Briggs but today that arduous task has passed to Jane Urry, one of the mainstays of the drama and festival movements in Brigg. One of the highlights of 1973, in fact, was her production of "Anne Frank's Diary," one that required

JAM and Jerusalem? To some people this may be the image the Women's Institute movement conjures up. Probably because it began in this country during the 1914-18 war, in 1915, in the first place as a combined effort with the Agricultural Organisation Society to help food production and preservation.

The first Women's Institute was formed at Stoney Creek, in the province of Ontario, Canada, in February, 1897. It took a world war to get one going in this country.

What is a Women's Institute? It is the association of the women of the village or small country town. It is based on the spiritual ideals of fellowship, truth, tolerance and justice, being strictly non-sectarian and non-party political in character.

It is open for all women to apply for membership, whatever their religious or political beliefs, and includes women of all interests.

Range of interests

Each Institute is self-governing within the framework of the Rules and it elects annually its President and committee. All Institutes are united in their County Federation. A County Federation Executive is elected annually and it is this executive committee that decides county policy.

All Institutes belong to the National Federation and this committee is elected every two years by postal ballot.

Institutes meet once a month, observing the rule that meetings are to be "of an educational and social nature." This education is of the widest kind. Members acquire not only a practical knowledge of household skills, gardening, handicrafts,

delicate handling to avoid an all-pervading gloom and to bring out the human qualities and the humour of what is undoubtedly a first-class piece of theatre. That was one to go down in the group's diary as an unqualified success, doing more business than any previous production.

It is good, therefore, to be able to put on record that an organisation formed as far back as 1938 is still as vigorous as ever and is still receiving the loyal support of Brigg and district audiences.

Catering for the younger generation is the Children's Theatre School, of which the principal is Joan Dodd. Its primary function is to interest young people in theatre and to teach them some of the basic skills. The annual productions are something of a by-product but they cover a wide range, from musicals to straight plays and generally achieve a high standard and a good following.



Dr. R. E. Holme, who practised in Brigg for over 40 years, is a member of Brigg UDC and Glanford Borough Council. Grateful patients presented him with silver tankards when he retired.

etc., but they also hear talks on historical, literary and other cultural subjects, such as science as it affects our everyday lives, on foreign countries, local government and on topics of public interest which widen their outlook, stimulate their ideas and fit members to play an intelligent part as citizens.

Each monthly meeting is also a business meeting and in the business part of it, members supervise the management of their own Institute. This system of government safeguards the right of every member to have a voice in the control of her own Institute, her County Federation and the National Federation, and to stand for election as a delegate, a committee member or an officer.

Governments take notice

The Institute is a training ground for democratic citizens and awakens in its members a sense of responsibility towards the community in which they live. Members have learnt that government departments take heed of sensible representation based on well-informed opinion and the movement can take a great deal of credit for many practical reforms, locally and nationally.

The monthly meeting is social as well as educational and there is time for a friendly chat over a cup of tea. The social element also involves members doing things together, acting, singing, dancing, taking part in competitions, quizzes and debates. It gives opportunity for getting to know one another and for the exercise of all kinds of talents.

Brigg Women's Institute which has 60 members meets in the Church Hall, Bigby Street, on the first Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m.

Those of you who may have had a rather different image of Women's Institutes and feel they would like to join in what is being done, or new residents who feel the need for such an interest, would be most welcome.

The annual subscription is a modest 50p.



*Mr. John Gregory, President of Brigg
Chamber of Trade, 1973/74.*



Original sketches by Ken Lamming

AMONG the more attractive features of this book are the original sketches by Ken Lamming who has contributed five full-page works and a number of vignettes which were designed to vary the presentation and make-up.

Born and educated in North Lincolnshire he trained as a painter at the Lincoln and Leicester Colleges of Art, later gaining his N.D.D. and A.T.D. He spent some time in teaching posts in various parts of the country before returning to this part of the country and today is head of the Art Department at Briggs Girls High School, also lecturing on art in this area.

Ken Lamming has exhibited widely as a painter and has held one-man shows at the Scunthorpe Art Gallery, Grimsby Gallery, the Lincolnshire Association galleries in Lincoln and Corby, also at the Mid-Pennine Arts Association, Burnley, the Gulbenkian Gallery at Newcastle-on-Tyne, at the Colin Jellico Gallery, Manchester and the New Lane Gallery, Bradford.

He has contributed to group shows in those galleries, also at the Compendium 2 Gallery, London; the Austin Hayes Gallery, York; the Fermoy Art Gallery, King's Lynn; the Peckover House Gallery, Wisbech; and the Portfolio Gallery, Scunthorpe.

His work can be seen regularly in the Portfolio Gallery, where it is available for sale, also at the Bull's Eye Gallery, Lichfield and at the York and Manchester galleries.

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Matt Hutchinson, Brigg's legendary bandsman who died early in 1973. Born at the Rose and Crown Inn, Wrawby-street, where his father was a licensee, joiner and wheelwright, he was apprenticed to a firm of local printers but later followed his father's calling as carpenter. He joined Brigg Town Silver Band in 1898 and was still playing his trombone on his 87th birthday.

Matt was associated with Brigg Amateur Operatic Society from the year 1900 right up to the time of his death. At one time he had a dual role as member of the orchestra, in which he played the violin, making a dash backstage at the interval to help change the scenery. He was still assistant stage manager for "Fiddler on the Roof" a few months before his death at the age of 93.

One of the highlights of his life was his golden wedding party at the Angel Hotel in 1965, when a full brass band turned out to play his favourite tunes while he and his wife, family and friends were at dinner.

Kind, cheerful, everybody's friend, Matt had spent all his life in Brigg and knew more about the town than any living person. He would have been most interested in this book about Brigg and would have been invaluable as a source of reference.



Bird's eye view of Brigg Market Place showing the Angel Hotel and the Midland Bank. Picture by Bryan Robins.

Abject pupils of another age

ONE of the pupils of Brigg Grammar School in the early part of the 19th century was John Booth Good, a member of a well-known Wrawby family – there are still many Goods living in Brigg and Wrawby. John Booth Good later entered the ministry, being primarily interested in the missionary field and for 16 years ran the Mission to the Thompson and Fraser River Indians in the newly-formed colony of British Columbia.

In 1892, as Canon John Booth Good, he wrote a book on his travels and experiences, including a vivid account of his years at Brigg Grammar School. This confirmed at first hand some of the complaints made by the townspeople of those days. This is what he had to say:

"I can just recall how, as soon as I could walk, I learnt my letters at a dame's school in the village (Wrawby) and when a little older, accompanied by my elder brothers to the Free Grammar School of the adjoining town (Brigg).

"This was one of those foundation legacies of the past whose headmasters received so much emolument from the Trustees.

"Twas also before Parliament had initiated a rigorous investigation into these public Trusts and the manner in which they were being executed by those battenning as well as fattening on the emoluments, whilst those who were the proper objects of this rich provision of pious benefactors were being treated as the off-scouring of mankind.

Abject pupils

"I can see as though it were but yesterday, these abject house-pupils of the headmaster's, coming in the morning reeking with the odour of the stable, where they had been since the break of day, engaged in servile toil, doing, as we would say in colonial slang, "all kinds of chores" in the place of hired labour.

"Their clothing was on a level with their outdoors occupation and as they had not been allowed proper time for the preparation of their lessons, they could not keep up with their class and were thrashed and cuffed in our presence and ignominiously hounded to their own miserable quarters, there to brood over their woes."



Office Boy in 1929

Sugar Factory Manager in the 70's

Charles William Hutchinson left Brigg Grammar School towards the end of 1928, two years after the General Strike and at a time when jobs were not easy to come by.

From his home at Scawby Brook he had seen a complete sugar factory materialise in a matter of months and in 1929 applied for a job there. He got one – as office boy. From that he graduated to the post of fieldman, a job which put him in close contact with the growers and the crop. That led to promotion – he was appointed assistant agriculturist and in 1962 was transferred from Brigg to Peterborough, where he was responsible for the setting up of a central pulp-selling organisation.

Whatever he had done during all those years he must have done it very well, for in 1964 the British Sugar Corporation appointed him general manager of the factory where he had started as office boy 35 years earlier.

Eight years later, in 1972, the Corporation doubled his responsibility – they made him general manager also of the Bardney Sugar Factory.

Cover picture is not just a “pretty-pretty”

This is Brigg on
any market day

THE superb view of Brigg Market Place which has been used for the front cover of this book was provided by David Lee of Barton-on-Humber. David Lee, a grandson of the late Harold Dudley, for many years curator of Scunthorpe Museum, and Edith Spilman Dudley, whose love of Lincolnshire was evident in her many volumes of poems, progressed from the ranks of enthusiastic amateur photographers to the status of skilful professional who has always retained the enthusiasm of the amateur.

David Lee went to a lot of trouble and took lots of pictures before coming up with this particular shot which tells almost the whole story of Brigg in one attractive page. This was the land on which the market was founded nearly 800 years ago and around it has developed the things that go with any market enterprise – the banks, the inns, garages and shops.

The predominance of inns in former days was not as indicative of high living as might be supposed. The need for refreshment for man and beast at one time kept five inns going in Brigg Market Place – the Ancholme Inn, Woolpack, Hope Tavern, Angel and the White Lion. In addition, until the early years of this century, the Tadcaster Brewery had distributive offices at the corner of Cary Lane and on the site now occupied by the National Westminster Bank was a wines and spirits store owned by Symonds and Symonds.

Barclays Bank took over the Tadcaster premises and the Midland Bank stands where the White Lion used to be. The Ancholme Inn and the Hope Tavern became defunct, victims of the motorised age. In the background of the

cover picture is a glimpse of Lloyds Bank, Bigby Street and, beyond that, the Parish Church of St. John.

The whole object of the exercise, including the covers and everything that is between them, has been not to paint a pretty-pretty picture that bears no resemblance to the real thing. This is Brigg as it is, whether we like it or not – and on the whole we like it very much, thank you.

Add to that the Town Hall, headquarters of Brigg Urban Council for over 70 years, and this must be the story of Brigg in a nutshell.

Reaction from some who saw this cover picture prior to publication was: “Pity those lorries were there – and those Springs’ girls.” The answer, of course, is that the lorries, curse ‘em, and the Springs’ girls, bless ‘em, are part and parcel of everyday Brigg.

PREHISTORIC BOAT BLITZED BY NAZI BOMB

ONE of the most interesting archeological finds in Brigg was undoubtedly the famous dug-out boat which came to light during excavations on the gasworks site, near the Ancholme, in 1886. The longest prehistoric boat recorded in Britain, it was formed from one huge tree which showed no signs of having borne branches of any size less than 40 ft. from the ground.

Great ingenuity had been shown in the way the stern-board had been fitted and also in the closing of a natural flaw in the bottom of the boat with a large wooden patch. This had been carefully fitted to shape and then fastened, first with cleats and later sewn along its edges in the main timber. Comparison with the North Ferriby boats of about 1200 BC showed that the same sewing techniques had been employed.

Squire Elwes went to Law to claim it

The Rev. D. Cary-Elwes, reputed to be an authority on such matters, assigned the use of the boat to be before the beginning of the Christian era and estimated the age of the boat to be between 2,600 and 3,000 years. It was claimed by the lord of the manor, Mr. V. D. H. Cary-Elwes. He had to go to law to establish his claim but he won the day and housed it in a building near the station approach. Later it was presented to the Albion Museum, Hull.

It was ironic that after being preserved safely in mother earth for thousands of years, it should fail to survive the “civilisation” of the first half of the 20th century. Both museum and boat disintegrated when a German bomb made a direct hit during one of the many air raids Hull experienced in 1943. Surviving fragments, however, were submitted to the new technique of radio-carbon dating, confirming that it had originated between the mid-tenth and mid-eighth centuries BC.

Earliest find in town’s history

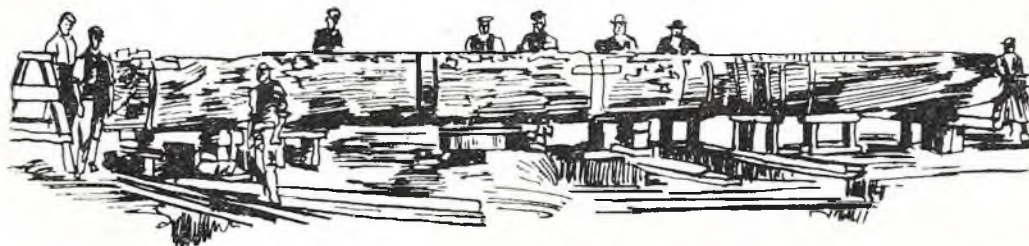
Two years before the boat was unearthed, in 1884, a remarkable wooden causeway was discovered below the bed of the New Cut some 500 yards north of the Yarborough mills. It was believed to be the earliest find, in order of date, in the town’s history. The causeway had been constructed by primitive man of huge squared oak logs, overlaying a rougher bed formed of the boughs of gigantic oak, hazel and yew that flourished in the district in neolithic times. It was a remarkable example of the engineering skill of Stone Age man. Some day it will provide another glimpse for it was covered up again.

Another object which owed its preservation to the clay bed which runs the length of the Ancholme valley was an ancient raft formed of squared, shaped and fitted oak logs. It measured some 40 ft. in length, 5 ft. 6 in. wide at one end and 6 ft. 6 in. at the other. It was constructed of five huge planks each tapering at both ends. In the upper side of each plank, 10 cleats were left cut from the solid in parallel rows and through these rough tie bars were thrust to keep the whole together. An excellent model of this raft may be seen in the County Museum, Lincoln.

Prehistoric relic

Recorded archeological finds in Brigg, compared with neighbouring towns which were Roman settlements, have been few, but one interesting item in 1856 was the discovery of an immense hock bone. It was unearthed, as was the raft, in the bed of the river Ancholme and had a circumference of 64 inches, the lower part measuring 48 inches. It passed into the possession of a Mr. Leary, Lincoln, and was identified as belonging to the Megatherium, a gigantic, extinct sloth-like edentate of the Pleistocene period of a million years ago. One other had been recorded in Buenos Aires, in 1789, a complete skeleton, 20 ft. long, plus a 6 ft. tail.

The river bed yielded one other find in 1827, the skeleton of a red deer, complete with skull and antlers, in a good state of preservation 10 ft. from the surface. It was purchased by Lord Yarborough as a rare curiosity.



An artist's sketch of the prehistoric boat taken from a rare print published soon after the boat had been exhumed. After being on show at Brigg for years, it was sent to the museum in Hull, but unfortunately destroyed by enemy action during the 1939-45 war.

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 Briggs, T. and D., 21/22, Wrawby Street
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 Brigg Coal Supplies, Pingley Lane
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 Brigg Urban Council, Cary Lane
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