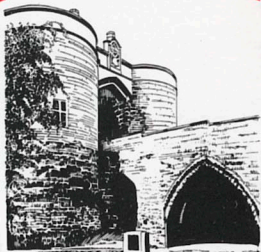


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**Nottingham
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Society**

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Secretary: R. Banks ☎ (0115) 925 4679
Editor of Newsletter: Ken Brand ☎ (0115) 985 8821

This Society exists to develop a worthwhile environment in Nottingham. To achieve this it encourages good architecture in all its forms, planning, and the preservation of the desirable aspects of the heritage of the city. The Society likewise will discourage, criticise and even fight bad planning, destruction of amenities and vulgarity in design.

We need your support. We invite you to join.

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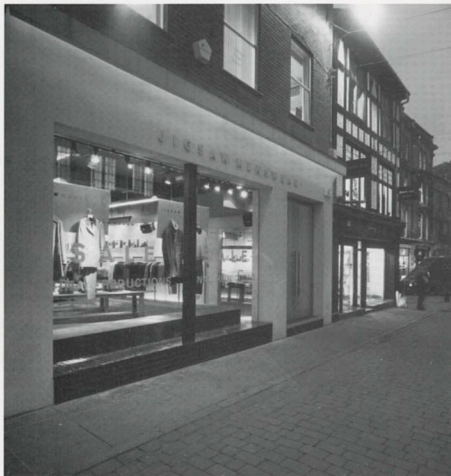
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NEWSLETTER

April 1998

**Nottingham
Civic Society**

106



Jigsaw Menswear
Bridlesmith Gate
Architects: The Tugman Partnership
Mark of the Month, February 1998

80p

INDEX

1. Annual Report 1997
5. Castle Design 2
6. Tracing Isaac Vardy (iii - concluded)
10. Mark of the Month, January-April 1998
11. Refurbishment of The Malt Cross Music Hall, St. James' Street
14. Conversion of the Stevex Building to Via Fossa, Canal Street
18. New Shop for Jigsaw Menswear, Bridlesmith Gate
21. The Heart of the City Initiative, Sheffield
23. Exchanges, Old and New (ii)
25. The Chinese Bell Tower, The Arboretum
27. Nottingham 1897

For your diary: A Public Lecture

Urban Spaces

Tim Stonor

in association with

Professor Bill Hillier

(Bartlett School of Graduate Studies)

(University College London)

May 12th. 1998 7.30pm

Friends Meeting House, Clarendon Street

ANNUAL REPORT, 1997

We continue to play a very positive role in the affairs of Nottingham. Publicising our work is a continuing problem and there are still far too many in the city who have only the vaguest idea of what we do and what we stand for. We can only continue to try.

We suffered a very sad loss during the year with the death of our President, Professor Jack Garner. A detailed obituary appeared in the January Newsletter, so I will not repeat what was said there. He will be greatly missed for his unfailing support of the Society. Despite the handicap of loss of sight, he took part in all our functions, including attendance at our members' meetings and outings. He was a keen critic of what we were doing - or not doing!

Once again our membership subscriptions show a fall. This year, £4,400, last year £4,528. We are barely holding our own in membership. We recruit a few new members, but this is offset by resignations and natural wastage. We are planning a recruiting campaign at the moment. Our great problem, to which I have several times drawn attention, is our failure to attract younger people. Why is this? What can we do about it? Suggestions, please. Once again, too, we would urge members to covenant their subscriptions. The procedure is quite painless and costs nothing! But it can give us a not inconsiderable income in recovered tax. Incidentally, although the minimum period is four years, a covenant can now continue as long as you wish. So once done, we shall not need to trouble you again. Payment of subscriptions by Banker's Order is also helpful. Whilst I am on this subject, may I give special thanks to our Membership Secretary, Lynn Irvine for coping so well with an exacting task - including persuading sometimes reluctant payers!

Ken Roberts and his team, in particular Graham Godfrey, Fred Hudson and Stan Saunders, have operated a very active Guided Walks programme, an exacting and time-consuming job. This brings us before the public and is also a very useful source of income.

Ken Brand is absolutely indispensable. He not only manages the "Mark of the Month" and looks after the Newsletter and our publications, but he has devoted a great deal of time to seeing the Wollaton Hall book successfully launched - about which more anon. *The Centenary History of Nottingham*, of which he was part author, has been published, but the Committee is still busy, completing the project. He is a member of the Plans Sub-committee, where his knowledge of matters historical and architectural is extremely useful.

Once again we congratulate the Photographic Recording Group, under the guidance of Eddie Woolrich. Though small in number, they show great

dedication and professionalism. Their contribution to the City's archival records is invaluable.

The book by Pamela Marshall, Wollaton Hall, an Archaeological Survey was officially launched in April, in a function at Wollaton Hall. It has been very well received, with a number of favourable reviews in academic journals. The 'popular' version will shortly be published, thus completing the major project started several years ago and dedicated to the memory of Professor Maurice Barley.

We have complained about the down-grading of the Conservation Partners Forum, which is no longer regarded as an official committee of the Council. This means that it is no longer serviced by the Council and there is a problem with the keeping and publication of the minutes of its proceedings. The Conservation Partners Forum (and Panel) was itself a tampering with the functions of the Conservation Areas Advisory Committee and shows, in our opinion, a lack of recognition by the City Council of the important role of conservation and the environment. Ken Brand represents the Society on the Forum and Bob Cullen is a member of the specialised Panel, which gives detailed professional consideration to controversial planning applications.

The Low-Level Station is still in limbo. It is now a part of the Island Street site and subject to planning proposals which are far from acceptable. The Island Street site, now bereft of all its historical features, which we tried very hard to preserve, is being developed slowly and somewhat haphazardly. The speculative building which is a component of the development gives some cause for misgiving.

The planned redevelopment of the Evening Post site continues its inexorable, if halting, progress. Permission was given for demolition and this is planned to take place in April. There are still no firm clients for the accommodation and matters have recently been complicated by submission of revised plans to include a major use by multi-screen cinemas. The Plans Sub-Committee has objected to the design on several important grounds and we have also expressed our fear that the City may be left with 'a hole in the ground' for a very long time whilst any finalised scheme is approved and marketed.

There has been a general urge for the Society to do something - within its financial capabilities - to improve the amenities at the Castle. The grounds generally are in a very run-down state, the result of years of inadequate maintenance. Specifically, we drew attention to the sorry state of the various information panels - including that on our excavation site. After prolonged discussion, we have agreed to sponsor the renovation or replacement of these panels. In addition we are to contribute to the much needed improvement of

facilities at Mortimer's Hole. We have also commissioned a model of the 'historic' castle to present to the City.

Members will have noted the present interest in the layout of the Old Market Square. Opinions vary widely about what should be done. The official policy of the Society is in favour of a major reconstruction with the aim of creating an open 'market place' with scope for varied public events and activities. Bob Cullen is planning a public meeting with an outside speaker, Prof. Hillier of University College, London, to stimulate discussion on market square design in general terms. Additionally, the City is proposing to set up a steering group to consider the problem. We shall be represented on this group (by Bob Cullen).

A report on the Shop will be given elsewhere on the Agenda, but we should like to record again our immense admiration for the work of our band of voluntary helpers, who have made the shop such a success for so many years. Our special thanks are due to Joy Wilkinson, who organises the rota, a job which must often present difficulties and to David Hand, who keeps a very professional eye on financial aspects. Not forgetting the other members of the 'team' also, Malcolm Bradstock, Ruth Norman and David's wife, Doris.

The social side has not been neglected. The attendance at our Christmas Party was only just over 80, half that of the previous year, but those who came had a very enjoyable evening, with the entertainment provided by a jazz quartet. The venue was the Trent University Djanogly Innovation Centre for Europe, one the exciting new buildings in this rapidly growing University.

Our first outside visit was to Luton Hoo in Bedfordshire, noted for its strong imperial Russian connections and for its collection of Faberge jewellery. Unfortunately much of it was no longer on view, because of security problems. However we were fortunate, because the estate has since been sold and its future is uncertain.

We visited Leeds, at the invitation of the Leeds Civic Trust, who visited us the previous year. We had a very interesting, if tiring, day. We are planning to visit the Royal Armouries there this year.

In August, we very much enjoyed one of the John Severn's ever popular Rural Rides. The high point of this was a visit to the lovingly restored St. Edmund's Chapel at Spital-in-the-Street, where we were conducted by Dr David Marcombe, who later gave the Keith Train Lecture on the same subject.

Our final visit was to Tatton Park, a National Trust property in Cheshire, where there was much to see and we spent a very full day.

This year's visits will start with a visit to the Ragged School, which has been completely restored by the Notts. Wildlife Trust. Then the Royal Armouries Museum at Leeds, followed by Powis Castle the gardens of which are quite outstanding. The house has a fine collection of Indian treasures linked to Robert Clive. Finally a return visit to Lincoln, where much has happened since our last visit.

Our members' meetings had as speakers Diane Lees, the Chief Executive of the Galleries of Justice, Norman Lewis, on the work of the Notts. Wildlife Trust, your Secretary on Chemical Manufacturing at Boots, Island Street, Michaela Butter on plans for Nottingham Castle, Geoffrey Oldfield on Nottingham 1897-1997 and Ian Wells, who spoke on the Architecture of Transport. And, of course, Dr David Marcombe, whom we have already mentioned.

Unfortunately, the alterations at the Victoria Centre prevented our usual Environment Week Exhibition and the position this year is still uncertain. We were also frustrated in our plans for Heritage Open Days, but we hope to do better this year, with visits to a number of local architects' houses, organised by Bob Cullen.

May I conclude by thanking our Chairman for her unfailing enthusiasm and support. She is retiring this year, so a special valediction to her. Thanks also to members of the Executive Committee. My apologies to anyone whom I may have omitted to mention.

Ray Banks
Secretary

The New Boots Library, Nottingham Trent University

Although much fuss was made in the Newsletter (No. 104, pages 9-11) of the new Boots Library, Nottingham University, Shakespeare Street and Goldsmith Street, the completed building, disappoints and by no means enhances the townscape.

Its interior has been justly praised but the final exterior appearance seems at variance with the various planning proposals. One withering comment was that it resembled something cut out from a corn flake box, folded and glued. As members of the Society saw a model of the earlier scheme, on this occasion is it a case of "Here's one I didn't make earlier"? Have members any observations?

Editor

Castle Design (2)

The article "Castle Design" in the last Newsletter was included literally at the eleventh hour to provide Society members with the latest news about the City's approach to making good the damage caused by the rock fall of Christmas 1996. At that time a bare half dozen members of the Executive Committee had glanced at the proposals.

Early in the New Year your full Executive Committee carefully examined the plans and drawings of the intended repair. After a long and wide ranging discussion the designs were rejected unanimously, with one abstention.

The proposed solution involving a mast and supporting guy ropes, currently it seems an architectural "must", will have quite an impact on the appearance of the Castle and Castle Rock. What is done now will be there for a long time, unless there is another natural intervention.

The prospect of the Castle aligned along its rocky promontory and with the distinctive flagpole in front is widely visible and much admired. It is as much Nottingham as the Market Square and the Council House. One of the main reasons for pursuing the suspended Viewing Platform concept is to provide a sighting of a small section of the Castle's mediaeval wall. Surely this is hardly universally exciting and never enough reason to impose a modernist symbol on the historic skyline of the City.

There can be on objection to a genuinely modern solution, provided it is obtained through thoughtful design and not dictated by fashion. What is finally put in place must be easily maintained, both structurally and visually.

Ken Brand.

The Pitcher and Piano

Planning approval for the development of The Pitcher and Piano in the former Lace Hall, High Pavement, was given by the City Council on 6th March. (See the last Newsletter, pages 14-16).

TRACING ISAAC VARDY (iii) – Concluded

In the sad absence of Isaac Vardy, Mr Rigley, who had taken his place as underviewer, invited Newman to see what changes had taken place in the mine since his last visit; Rigley, said Newman, was 'a thorough practical miner, having been engaged in the work for over forty years'. On this occasion the driver of the winding engine lowered the cage at a brisker pace than Newman was used to, the author relating that they went down 'almost like dropping a stone'. A new seam of coal was being worked, at a greater depth than hitherto, and a steeply inclined tunnel was cut through the road to gain access to this. The safety measures in force on the underground railways were keenly observed by Newman; a man always rode on the last wagon of the cable-hauled trains, so that if any mishap occurred, he could jump off, and by striking together the two telegraph wires overhead, signal to the engine-room operator to get the train stopped. At one point Newman found his hand vigorously shaken by a man on the coal face, clad only in a pair of trousers. For a few moments he could not recognise him, covered as he was by coal dust, and sweat-streaked, but then remembered their previous meeting, when the collier had been dressed in his best clothes, 'and with his family enjoying the solace of a very comfortable home – such a one as the majority of the Cinder Hill miners possess, and such a one as, I trust, all of them will possess in a few years, when education has taught them to be men in every sense of the word.' On this visit to the mine, Newman found the stables almost empty, with only three of four ponies left down the mine; these were 'as sleek as moles, and seem quite contented.'

A brief word might be said here about the Cinderhill pit dwellings, which so favourably impressed George Newman. Thomas North, the original owner of Cinderhill and the neighbouring collieries, quickly realised that it would be convenient for employer and workers alike if the men and their families could be decently housed close to the mine. Accordingly, he built in the 1840s and 1850s three separate groups of miners' cottages. These were Holden Square (at first named Brickyard Square) at the corner of Cinderhill Road and Nuthall Road; Babbington Cottages in Nuthall Road; and Napoleon Square, near the bottom of Broxtowe Lane. These remarkable examples of industrial housing, all demolished after the Second World War, represented one side of North's character. Though highly praised for his beneficence, he was in some ways not an ideal employer, and his financial situation was always very shaky. A surprising choice as Mayor of Nottingham in 1844/45, he saw his principal business partner, and political mentor, Thomas Wakefield, go bankrupt a year or two later. By the time North died in 1868, at his home, Basford Hall, which he leased from the Edge family of Strelley, he owed his bankers about £190,000. Four years later, the Seely family purchased the Babbington Coal Company; Charles Seely is judged by history to have been a more liberal employer than North, and under him, many miners had houses with gardens, pig-sties, coal,

water, and gas, at a rent of 2/6d a week. Newman's remark about miners and education may not have been as patronising as it now sounds; the 1876 Education Act had established the principle that all children should receive elementary education, and it seems likely that he was making the point that many of the men working at the pit in 1879 would have been better equipped for life had they had the same chance of going to school.

To his great surprise, Newman was invited by Mr Rigley to see the mine's underground 'flower garden', and, while on his puzzled way to this improbable destination, witnessed a curious incident. Some 800 feet underground, they encountered a lad whose duty was to open and shut an air-door whenever horse-drawn wagons had to pass. The underviewer asked the youth the time, and was told: 'A few minutes past twelve, sir'. The author was mystified, since the lad wore no watch, and the sun was, of course, of no help to him here. Rigley explained that the young man had, when first doing this duty, been very frightened from time to time by rumbling vibrations he could not account for, but, 'being naturally a courageous lad, and withal a Christian lad too', had found out the cause of these rumblings. Newton was told that the Great Northern Railway passed directly above the youth's head, and that what he had either heard or felt were passing trains; by pressing his ear to the wall, he could now distinguish the different note given off by mineral, general goods, or passenger trains, and could thus always tell the time of day within a few minutes. The reference to passenger trains indicates that this was no colliery branch, but the GNR line from Basford to Derby, which had opened for coal traffic in September 1875, and for passenger trains in August 1876. If the lad had indeed mastered the art of telling which sort of train was which, he had had a maximum of three years in which to perfect this skill. Readers must decide for themselves just how likely an accomplishment this was.

Newman was shortly afterwards startled to hear a sharp cracking sound, and called Rigley, who found several pit props broken by pressure of the roof; the underviewer gave instructions for these to be replaced immediately. (Almost a century afterwards, one of my uncles, who had worked underground at Cinderhill's twin colliery, Babbington, and before that at five other Nottinghamshire pits, maintained in conversation with me that he had always much greater confidence in wooden props than in hydraulic ones, for the very reason that they made a noise when buckling, thus alerting colliers to any possible danger.)

The incredulous author then arrived at the 'subterranean garden', to be shown a stone roof entirely lined by fossil ferns and grasses, 'as perfect as in a fresh-gathered frond in Sherwood Forest at this day.' Newman remarked: 'I could hardly tell which to venerate most, these beautiful relics of a bygone epoch, or the grand old miners, who, many of them, pass their lives among

them.' Mr Rigley then offered Newman a bunch of flowers to take home with him; this turned out to be a fossil tree stem weighing over two hundredweight, which was, of course, too heavy for him to remove. It was eventually forwarded by rail to Newman at Gravesend, and subsequently given to Maidstone Museum.

George Newman left Cinderhill Colliery for the fourth time, reflecting on what he had seen there since 1875, and on what old miners had told him of changes in working conditions over the past decades. One man declared that he had worked underground for forty years, since the age of six, when miners earned fifteen shillings a week for a fifteen-hour working day. Now, he said, they received twice or three times as much, and worked an eight-hour day. Newman's informant also contrasted the pitman's coal allowance in 1879 of 16 hundredweight a month with the 1840s practice of allowing each man or boy to take home each night the biggest lump of coal he could carry. The miner also recalled that, when he started in the pit, coal was conveyed, not by underground wagons on rails, but by a kind of sledge, and that the men descended from the surface in a sort of chain harness, rather than in a cage. In a high-minded final anecdote, Newman related how a young miner known to him had spent the first twenty pounds saved from his earnings on a piano for his sister; he admitted that such an instance was uncommon, but that it was a sign of how young men in the mines could aspire to higher things. He ended with these thoughts: 'There are many traits in the character and conduct of some of the men, which could well become many of the great and noble of the land. Of this we have had abundant evidence in the accounts in the daily papers, showing their sterling and unflinching courage in the face of danger, and even death in its most awful forms. And we may well and earnestly hope, and fervently pray, that the many efforts now being made by our eminent mining engineers and others for the amelioration of the miner's lot - the improvement of his home, his education, his surroundings - may be crowned with success, believing as I do that in the breast of many a humble miner there are the germs of every noble quality that tends to make a Christian hero.' A hundred and twenty years on, everything we have heard about Isaac Vardy suggests that he exemplified this, the very best type of coal miner.

As a tailpiece, it should be mentioned that, fascinating though it is, George Newman's record of life at Cinderhill Colliery is not our first eye-witness account of this mine. In his anonymously - published *Rambles Round Nottingham*, which came out in 1856, W W Fyfe also devoted a number of pages to the pit, and to others nearby, then still owned by Thomas North. His is an equally instructive description, and compares and contrasts most interestingly with Newman's account of twenty years afterwards. Fyfe was, like Newman, bowled over by the beauty of the fossil plants he saw underground. He was, throughout his narrative, at great pains to praise all the good things done by North for his workers. Fyfe's report also includes a remarkable

first-hand description of a ride on North's private mineral railway, from Bobber's Mill to Radford Bridge wharf, and back again all the way to Cinderhill. His book is as well worth seeking out as is Newman's.

Isaac Vardy's headstone must be one of the most absorbing memorials in and around Nottingham, but, as indicated at the outset of this article, there is no doubt that many stories of equal interest and importance remain to be written up by the gravestone recorder. It is never safe, however, to take for granted the permanence of such memorials. When I first photographed the obelisk in memory of Thomas North, in Basford Old Cemetery, off Church Street, it bore a slate inscription reading thus: 'THOMAS NORTH OF BASFORD HALL. PROPRIETOR OF THE BABBINGTON AND CINDERHILL COLLIERIES, DIED FEBRUARY 28th 1868, AGED 57 YEARS. BY GREAT ENTERPRISE HE WAS THE MEANS OF FINDING EMPLOYMENT FOR A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE SUBSCRIBED TO ERECT THIS MONUMENT IN HIS MEMORY'. When I next visited the old burial ground the obelisk remained, but the inscription plate, alas, had disappeared.

It cannot be repeated too often that a constant eye needs to be kept upon the cemeteries and burial grounds of Nottingham, which remain vulnerable to official indifference and acts of individual vandalism. They are distinctive and irreplaceable features of the urban landscape, and vital repositories of local history.

In the 19th century, the place name was often given as 'Cinder Hill'. In direct quotations from original sources which employ this older form, it has been retained here. Otherwise the modern 'Cinderhill' has been used through the article. My thanks go to my cousin, Trevor Worthington, once an underground worker at Babbington, for reading the text and offering valuable suggestions. To him, and my miner uncles, Frank Widdowson and Arthur Worthington, this short article is dedicated.

Stephen Best

MAIN SOURCES CONSULTED

- Census returns, 1871
Fyfe, W W *Rambles round Nottingham*... London & Nottingham, 1856
Griffin, Alan R. *Mining in the East Midlands 1550-1947* London, 1971
Griffin, Alan R. *Thomas North: mining entrepreneur extraordinary*. (Transactions of the Thoroton Society of Nottinghamshire v 76, 1972) Nottingham, 1973
Newman, George. *White upon black*... London, 1884.

MARK OF THE MONTH: January – April 1998

Recent recipients of the Society's Mark of the Month commendations have been:

JANUARY	Restoration of the Malt Cross Music Hall
Client	The Malt Cross Music Hall Trust Co.
Architects	Helmore Bewers
FEBRUARY	New Jigsaw Menswear shop, Bridlesmith Gate, Nottingham
Client	Jigsaw Menswear
Architect	The Tugman Partnership
MARCH	Conversion of Stevex Building into Via Fossa Greenalls Pubs and Restaurants
Client	John Dixon and Associates
Architects	
APRIL	Regent Court, Derby Road
Client	Derwent Housing Association Ltd
Architects	Maber Associates
Main Contractor	Sol Construction Ltd

MARK OF THE MONTH – SEPTEMBER 1997 New Porch, 8 Victoria Crescent, Mapperley, Nottingham

The occupants have a young growing family and with only one door exit from the kitchen were continually faced with the problems of bikes, wellies, muddy shoes, coats, shopping etc. The new porch acts as a lobby between the outside world and the inner house and needed to be of reasonable size to cope with the 'droppings' of children.

The location of the porch abutting the house was particularly conspicuous from the main road and although a range of ideas were considered, it was felt that a traditional approach, sensitively relating to the character of the existing house was the most appropriate. Care was taken to match bricks, stone, glazing details etc.

The porch conceals an unsympathetic previous extension and provides a conspicuous entry point for regular users.

The project recently received an East Midlands Craftsmanship Award.

Allan Mulcahy

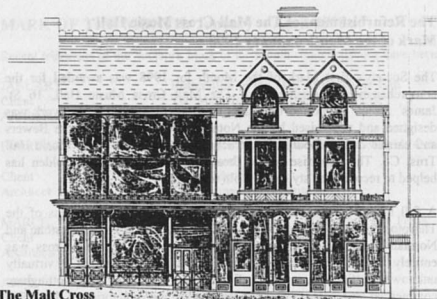
The Refurbishment of The Malt Cross Music Hall Mark of the Month January 1998

The Society's first Mark of the Month for 1998 was awarded for the comprehensive refurbishment of The Malt Cross Music Hall, 16 St. James' Street. Supported by grants totalling £1.8 million, the work was designed and supervised by the Nottingham architects Helmore Bewers and carried out by Bodills Construction for The Malt Cross Music Hall Trust Co. The expertise of the theatre consultant Michael Holden has helped to recreate the style of the old music halls.

A full history of the building can be found in the Transactions of the Thoroton Society Volume 66, 1963, in an article by H.L. Featherstone and Norman Summers. The essential facts are that The Malt Cross was entirely rebuilt in six months in 1877, to the designs of a virtually unknown Nottingham architect, Edwin Hill, for a low key Nottingham commercial entrepreneur Charles Weldon. In the directories of the 1870s Weldon was variously described as a lead and glass merchant, plumber, gas fitter, provision merchant and cheese factor, temperance hotel proprietor.

Hill had problems in March and April 1877 getting his proposals for a "New Public House and Skating Rink" approved by the Council. He succeeded at the fourth attempt, although a late submission in August to alter the agreed front elevation and roof design was "Disapproved". No doubt the presence of recently opened skating rinks nearby on Market Street and Lower Talbot Street wisely prompted Weldon to settle for a public house with an upper gallery and a small stage, and with a dining room replacing the intended basement skating rink.

Although the Victorian splendour of the galleried interior with its cast iron columns and decorative dolphins is much admired, the talking point is the roof structure. Still in place is the original glazed, laminated wood, barrel vaulted roof which tapers to fill the space available. The roof arches were at first to be cast iron frames but they were actually constructed in laminated timber. Into his roof, Hill incorporated over 250 panes of glass, their replacement causing some problems in the restoration work.



**The Malt Cross
Music Hall
St. James' Street**

Above: The design of March 1877
Below: As built, before 1980's refurbishment



ELEVATION TO ST. JAMES'S STREET

It is this use of laminated timber, at this date, in Nottingham, as a second choice, by an all but unknown architect, that is so remarkable. To quote from Featherstone and Summers "...the simplicity and efficiency of the structure is in close sympathy with the early modern movement." Lewis Cubitt had used laminated wood at King's Cross station (1851) and near at hand in Nottingham, at St. Matthias Church (1867-68), T.C. Hine supported his unusual truss roof with laminated wooden arch braces.

Hill did some other speculative work for Weldon during 1877, including terraces of ten houses on Waterway Street and on Traffic Street. For Hill, the unknown on the brink of producing something unique, the reason for the disapproval of his first application for the ten, three storey cottages on Waterway Street would have come as a sharp reminder of architectural normality - he proposed 4 1/2 inch walls instead of 9 inch!

The Malt Cross was never really commercially successful, despite the efforts of a succession of publicans. Who actually appeared "on stage" there does need some research, the Nottingham based Fred Karno might have paraded an early version of his Army on the boards of The Malt Cross. The venture's slide downwards, lubricated by an ever increasing disreputable reputation, culminated in the loss of its licence late in 1913 and its sale by the Newark brewers, Warwick and Richardson, in March 1914.

The building's subsequent use for warehousing and general storage did not need any alterations, except for flooring over the light wells. Thus our faded Victorian music hall remained more or less preserved. Modest refurbishment in the 1980s gave us a glimpse of what we had. Now our hopes of what might be possible have been fully realised.

Ken Brand

The more historic architects' drawings are reproduced with the permission of the County Archivist. The drawing of the Malt Cross Music Hall, as built, is reproduced with the permission of the editor of the Transactions of the Thoroton Society.

Mark of the Month - March 1998

No. 44-46 Canal Street - Refurbishment and Conversion VACANT WAREHOUSE (THE STEVEX BUILDING) AND ADJOINING BUILDINGS.

Objectives

To develop a series of bars and restaurants, in the new Via Fossa, together with Managers and Assistant Managers residential accommodation, and future office space to 2nd and 3rd floors with independent access.

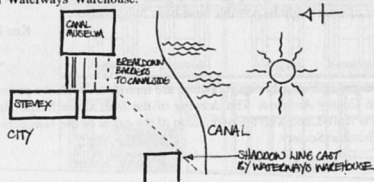
Strategy

The strategy was established to break down barriers between the existing warehouse and the canal side to develop interesting and pleasant spaces to drink and dine, expressing the contrast between the mass and security of the brick warehouse and the fluidity and movement of the water.

The north elevation of the warehouse addresses the city, evoking memories of the original warehouse function whilst the south elevation is extended to strengthen the connection to the canal side.

The south elevation is predominately a lightweight structure reflecting the fluidity of the water and begins to break down edges between internal and external spaces, including an external balcony to take full advantage of the evening sunlight. The copper roof material expresses this further and suggests clues towards the quality of the space below, and also acts as a measure of time. Sun louvres protect the internal space from excessive solar gain.

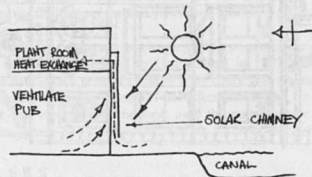
To strengthen this elevation a brick gable projects out along the line of the Stevex building. The form of this gable is influenced by both the detail of the adjacent canal museum and the sun angle and shadow line dictated by the British Waterways Warehouse.



Redefining the function to the South Gable

Redefining the function to the South Gable

Redundant of use to the day to day workings of the canal, the function of the South Gable is redefined by a glass block solar chimney. Ventilating the internal public area as well as providing a constant source of warm air feeding a heat exchange system in the plant room above.



Internal Spaces

The internal spaces evolved as a series of journeys and events captured between the mass and the light. Enhanced further via the themed expression of the "Gothic". The security of low level vaults interplays with the energy of ascending voids connecting volumes of pockets and levels to create a hive of energy, space and movement.

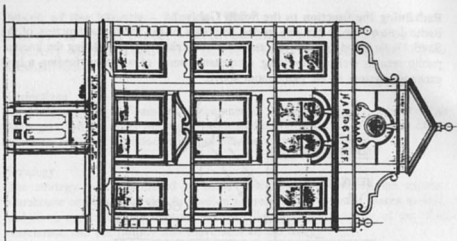
The project is now in the capable hands of Graeme and Debi, the managers, to ensure Via Fossa becomes a fundamental landmark to relax and enjoy life in the heart of Nottingham

Positive Influences

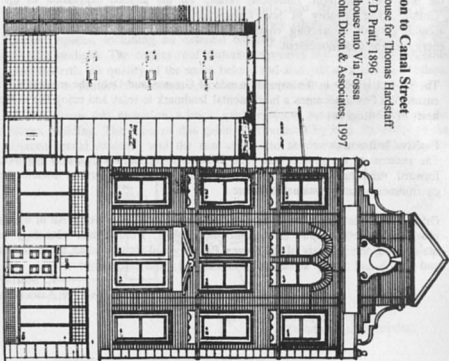
The success of the project has been influenced by the backing of a positive, forward thinking client to develop the public house industry towards an environmental and sustainable future.

Other positive influence came from Nottingham Local Authorities. All of which provided valuable input throughout the project, from Urban planning, to maintaining the integrity of the Stevex Building and strengthening the concepts and Health and Safety strategies both internally and externally.

R. Murray
John Dixon & Associates



Elevation to Canal Street
 Left: Warehouse for Thomas Hardstaff
 Architect: W.D. Pratt, 1896
 Right: Warehouse into Via Fossa
 Architects: John Dixon & Associates, 1997



Before the Via Fossa, Canal Street

On 17 July 1896 the Nottingham architect and surveyor W. Dymock Pratt of Long Row, received approval for his design for a new warehouse on Canal Street for Thomas Hardstaff. The site was adjacent to the offices and warehouse of the canal company Fellows, Morton & Clayton.

Thomas Hardstaff, who was a wholesale basket, perambulator and wicker furniture manufacturer, moved to Canal Street in 1897 - the building carries the date - from premises nearby at 89 Carrington Street, adjoining the Nottingham canal. He appears to have been successful. He lived at 56 Ropewalk and around 1901 he took over the perambulator factory of Philip Blee which had been established at 1 Chard Street, Basford c. 1883.

Hardstaff remained at Canal Street until about 1927 when the firm of Samuel Bullivant & Son, more or less in the same line of business moved in from Angel Row / St. James' Street. Bullivant & Son are still there in 1953, seemingly sharing the building with L. Linnell, a ladies underwear manufacturer, and an I.C.I. Ltd. depot. In the last Kelly's Directory, that of 1956, Bullivant & Son have gone, being replaced by the lace manufacturers, Modern Lace (Nottingham).

It was only in more recent years with the clothing manufacturing company Stevex Ltd. occupying the building that the building acquired its more familiar name. The warehouse became vacant when Stevex Ltd. relocated to George Street early in 1995.

Ken Brand

N.B. When Stevex Ltd. moved onto George Street they became George Street & Co. Refer to Newsletter 97, pages 10-12.

Note: The Mark of the Month award for March 1998 has been awarded for the refurbishment of the former "Stevex" building, Canal Street, and the work to the rear. It does not include the appearance of the new structure, left front, for which the architect was not really responsible.

Mark of the Month February 1998 Jigsaw Menswear, Bridlesmith Gate

Jigsaw Menswear clothes were introduced to Nottingham last November with the opening of a large new shop on Bridlesmith Gate in the city centre. It was designed by *The Tugman Partnership*, a London based architectural practice, who collaborated with their client *Jigsaw*, to create a space which both enhances and reflects the distinct spirit of the clothes.

As a client, *Jigsaw* are always enthusiastic to employ young design talent, with whom they can work closely to develop the concept for each shop. Each shop is conceived as a unique space, which relates to both its specific location, as well as to *Jigsaw's* interest in experimenting with new ideas and materials. Their interest and engagement in the design process make them a continually stimulating client to work with. For the Nottingham shop we were briefed to specially prototype and design elements such as the hanging system and the suspended steel lighting trunking, as well as to design a large mosaic for the floor. To develop these we worked in conjunction with specialists such as the lighting designers *Isometrix*, and found that as always we learned a lot from and greatly enjoyed this collaborative process.

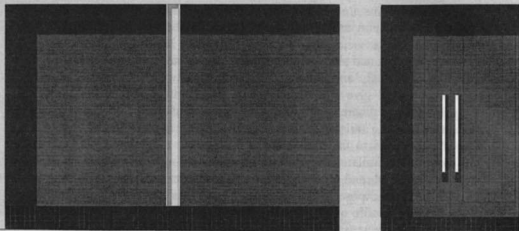
Jigsaw Menswear clothes embody a very urban and contemporary feel. Their designs range from suits to clubbing gear, with particular attention given to colour and texture. It was intended that the shop should reflect both the elegance, and the sense of gutsiness and toughness about the clothes. This was achieved through the creation of a very large and simple space, which was articulated principally through the use of rich and varied textures and surfaces, and a luxuriousness of scale not normally found in clothes shops. The existing floor area of the shop (which was previously leased to another retail tenant) was almost doubled by breaking through the back wall and building a new extension out into the rear yard, which also housed a stockroom at first floor level. Rather than fill every available square metre of the shop with display systems, it was given a more relaxed and spacious atmosphere, in which the design established specific areas for large sofas and low tables. It was felt that this spaciousness would also give a greater clarity and refinement to the clothes that were displayed, and avoid the customer becoming disorientated and overwhelmed by an excess of hanging rails.

The interior of the shop is defined by a long wide ramp which connects its changing floor level. This is bordered by a continuous 7m long plinth, whose black slate surface is used as a display space for clothes. The steel trunking containing the air conditioning runs directly above the ramp. The changing rooms are placed to the rear of the shop, set slightly apart from the main display areas, with their large solid chestnut timber doors employing a similar generosity of scale. Rather than briefing us to create a completely slick and shiny shop interior, *Jigsaw* wanted a space which was more unusual, and where the contrast between rawness and refinement would give it a distinct sense of character. The materials range from the deliberate industrial quality of the screed floor, to the mild steel hanging rails, set against the rich sensuous of the chestnut timber joinery and to the thick slabs of black slate topping the plinths and cash desk. Similarly the existing concrete ceiling soffit within the shop was revealed, and all the galvanised aluminium cable trunking for the electrics left exposed in an arbitrary way. This contrasts with the elegant curved profile of the stainless steel lighting trunking suspended below it. The large mosaic at the front of the shop was designed so as to appear as if it had always been there, and to look like a partially excavated ruin set within the screed floor. It was designed by ourselves, taking inspiration from ancient Anglo-Roman patterns, using a muted palette of colours, and specially made in Paris by a mosaic artist.

On the exterior a similarly generously scaled shop front was created so as to reveal the size and depth of the new interior from the street. The existing shopfront, made from a series of unattractive red brick arched openings was removed and replaced by a very large window formed from a single sheet of specially cast glass set within a rendered surround. The full height front doors were made from chestnut timber, and the whole width of the shop front is lit with a concealed source of blue neon light which spills down from its curved cornice, giving the shop a seductive presence on the street, and drawing people towards its unusual interior.

Annabel Chown,
The Tugman Partnership,
Richmond, Surrey.

JIGSAW MENSWEAR



Proposed New Winter Garden, Sheffield

HEART OF THE CITY

On 10th February Andrew Beard enthralled Society members with his well illustrated and informative talk 'Major City Centre Development in Sheffield'.

Sheffield is England's fourth-largest city but in recent years its city centre has faced major problems. As other cities developed and renewed their central area Sheffield came to be seen as being in relative decline in comparison, and the views of shoppers and visitors - "I prefer Leeds/Manchester/Nottingham city centre to Sheffield" - were clear. Sheffield has never had a clearly defined centre, rather a rambling central shopping area stretching from the Haymarket to Moorfoot. Even so this commercial meander has been severely threatened by the out-of-town Meadowhall Shopping Malls and the disruptions caused by the Supertram building works.

From its origins in the informal, over lunch meetings of a group of the City's senior officials, spurred on by the later, outside, advice not just to thinkbig, but to think bigger, Sheffield's Heart of the City redevelopment initiative took shape. To add clout to a submission for Millennium funding the London architects Pringle Richards Sharratt, and Terry Farrell and Partners were engaged. The soaring ambition has paid off, Sheffield now has a £120 million scheme in place and already under construction.

The Heart of the City project consists of:

Three new public squares - the Peace Gardens, Town Hall Square and Hallam Square.

A Winter Garden - possibly the most important temperate plant house built in Britain in the last 100 years.

The Gallery - housing exhibitions from the Victoria and Albert Museum collection, the Ruskin Gallery and the Hawley Collection of Sheffield made tools.

A 4/5 Star Hotel - with 220 bedrooms and run by a major hotel operator.

New Council Offices - these will replace the Town Hall Extension, which was only completed in 1977 and is now in need of expensive refurbishment. They will be paid for by private finance and will incorporate a one-stop shop to make it easier for residents to contact the department they need in the Council.

Private finance has been attracted to the Heart of the City project. The Millennium Commission provided half of the £41 million cost of the winter

garden, gallery and public open spaces. The other half will come from the European Regional Development Fund, the Single Regeneration Budget, English Partnerships, Sheffield Hallam University, private contributions and the value of the City Council owned land. The remainder of the £120 million scheme, the offices and hotel, will be paid for by private finance. Around 1,800 new and permanent jobs will be created.

There are a number of major street works being undertaken as part of this regeneration. In Arundel Gate and around the Town Hall pavements have been widened and thus the roads have been narrowed. Two unpopular subways in Arundel Gate will be replaced by three Pelican crossings. Arundel Gate was a major road "conceived in the 1930s, built in the 1960s and as early as the 1970s beginning to be seen as the wrong solution" – it cuts off the City Centre from the bus and rail stations and Hallam University. The Heart of the City project is expected to be complete by Christmas 2000.

I have dwelt at some length on one aspect of what is a major reshaping of Sheffield. This was the subject of Andrew Beard's stimulating talk. Overall it is exciting, bold and imaginative and tends to make our ditherings over our Market Place – 'Shall we, shan't we' all rather petty.

Ken Brand

Based on material provided by Andrew Beard and generated by the Heart of the City, Public Relations Unit, Town Hall, Sheffield S1 2HH.

NOTE The Gallery building and the Winter Garden are being designed by Pringle Richards Sharratt (in part ex-Michael Hopkins architects) whilst Terry Farrell and Partners are responsible for the master plan for the buildings.



Peace Square,
Sheffield

- Transformed!

EXCHANGES OLD and NEW (ii)

The building of the new Exchange, the Council House, was well advanced when Professor Granger gave a lecture on Greek architecture in the city on 12 October 1927. As can be seen in the following report of the lecture in the *Nottingham Journal* Professor Granger now easily embraced the new Exchange, without a hint of nostalgia over the loss of the old building. Once again he manages a dig about his contemporary Nottingham.

"Praise for Nottingham's new Exchange characterised the lecture on Greek architecture given by the Vice-principal of Nottingham University College, Prof. Frank Granger, last night.

The Corporation he said, erected an example of an Ionic front such as might have been in front of a temple at Ephesus. He congratulated the city on the revival of architecture of which the New Exchange was a symbol.

The new University Buildings being mainly utilitarian in character, were dependent upon bare proportions and fine material for their effect. Some local critics, without intending it, paid them a compliment in comparing them to a factory.

Unique

The New Exchange was designed with a view to the picturesque. Facing one of the finest open squares in England, the Exchange formed one whole with the unoccupied ground in front.

It would be something unique in England to have a classical building overlooking a fine open space.

He called attention to the pediment, where Mr. Else's bold yet restrained, modelling struck an appropriate note. He understood Mr. Else was being assisted by two* other Nottingham sculptors, Mr. Doman and Mr. Woodward (who obtained a prize at the Roman School).

Whatever the final architectural judgement upon the towering dome, there was no doubt about the contribution it would make to the general picturesqueness.

*(There was a third Nottingham trained sculptor, Ernest Webb).

Dull Repetition

Dealing with the repetition in design, with special reference to the reception hall in the New Exchange, Prof. Granger spoke of the dulling effect constant variation. That was why Clumber-street, where all the designs were different, was so uninteresting, and also why people became tired, ultimately, of jazz in music.

Showing a lantern slide of a Greek "war memorial" in Athens, by an almost unknown sculptor, the lecturer said that it was incomparably better in his opinion, than the Nurse Edith Cavell memorial in London. In the Cenotaph in Whitehall there was nothing to be proud of."

A final point in this story, in the impressive official commemorative publication on "NOTTINGHAM NEW EXCHANGE BUILDINGS & COUNCIL HOUSE 1929", the text, "a review", was written by Frank Granger.

Ken Brand

The Arboretum

A design study, financed by a grant of £14,700 from the Heritage Lottery fund, has recently been undertaken by Landscape Design Associates of Peterborough for the City Council to form the basis of a bid for Heritage Lottery money. One of the major features of any refurbishment would be the restoration of the Chinese Bell Tower, in the study's proposals a sum of £150,000 was put down for this purpose. A similar amount was suggested to refurbish the bandstand and its terraces. At the other end of the scale £1,500 was recommended to restore the Morley monument and a mere £500 was allocated to "Restore O'Connor Monument as necessary". The overall package had some 32 named items located on the master plan of the Arboretum. In addition there were nine items of a general nature, for example: £15,000 for "New seats, bins etc." and £25,000 to "Establish dedicated ranger service for the Arboretum."

The design brief has been completed and public consultation has taken place. Now the funding bid, for £1 million of Heritage Lottery money, goes before the City Council for its approval this month (April). If approval is given the bid will go forward to the Heritage Lottery assessors in May.

John Severn, who carried out a detailed survey of the condition of the Chinese Bell Tower for the Society in the early 1980s, provides here some historical background information on the structure.

Editor

The Chinese Bell Tower (1)

The Arboretum was formally opened on 11 May 1852 by the Mayor, William Felkin. There was an admission charge of 6d. for adults and 3d. for children. A small brass plate in front of the west lodge of the Arboretum gives some background information:

"These grounds, selected under the authority of the Act for enclosing the Commonable Lands in Nottingham, passed in the 9th. year of the reign of Queen Victoria were laid out in the year 1850, with the public funds of the town for the benefit and recreation of the inhabitants pursuant to the said Act in the Mayoralty of Richard Birkin, Esq. under the direction of the Committee appointed by the Town Council for the purpose."

The actual design and setting out of the Arboretum was by Samuel Curtis of London. This opening of the Arboretum was such an significant event in the life of the town that for several years afterwards the anniversary of the opening was observed as a public holiday.

The Chinese Bell Tower, as it widely known today, was erected in the early 1860s to form the centre piece of what was called the Arboretum Bell Garden. It was designed to commemorate a number of circumstances and for this reason it should be preserved in situ to record a part of the history of the City.

Richard Birkin had served the town as Mayor on four occasions: 1849, 1855, 1861 and 1862 and it was decided to acknowledge this achievement, permanently, in the pleasure gardens. The 59th. (2nd Nottinghamshire) Regiment of Foot deserved to be remembered for the Town and County had sent it so many of its men. During the Crimean War of 1854-56 some Russian cannon were taken at Sebastopol and two pieces were sent to Nottingham. After the capture of Canton during the Chinese Opium War of 1857, a bell was taken from a temple close to the East Gate of the town by troops from the Nottinghamshire Regiment. It was secretly shipped back to England and was subsequently presented by the Nottinghamshire Regiment to the town..

On 3 October 1855 a great gala was held at the Arboretum, where between 15,000-20,000 people saw, among the entertainment, a grand representation of the siege and fall of Sebastopol. The two pieces of cannon from Sebastopol duly arrived in Nottingham during April 1857. Replica Russian

gun carriages were obtained from Woolwich Arsenal and the guns were mounted and placed in front of the Refreshment Rooms in 1858.

The tower for the bell was designed by Mr Mariott Ogle Tarbotton, the Corporation Engineer and Surveyor, and erected between 1862-63. To preserve Victorian symmetry two replica cannon were cast by the Britannia Foundry in Canal Street and until 1950, when local youths rolled them down to the lake, a pyramid of (wooden) cannon balls stood between each pair of cannon. For safety reasons they have not been replaced.

In the mid 1950s there was a public complaint that the bell had been obtained by theft and should be returned to Canton, and as about the same time the tower had become unsafe, the bell was removed. It was not returned to Canton, but as it was considered a spoil of war it was given to the Museum of the East Lancashire Regiment in Preston. That regiment had been formed in 1881 by an amalgamation of the Nottinghamshire Regiment and the Cambridgeshire Regiment and was the only regiment in the British Army to have Canton as a battle honour on their colours.

In spite of the Civic Society attempts to have it conserved, the Bell Tower has received no attention since being declared unsafe. It is hoped that it will now be repaired.

John Severn.

A review of the Society's publication *Wollaton Hall: An Archaeological Survey* by Pamela Marshall in the latest number of the *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* was very complimentary of Pamela's work.

"It was characteristic of the late Maurice Barley that he should have a hand in the initiation of the *Archaeological Survey* of Wollaton Hall, one of England's most splendid and curious municipal museums, which has now given us a pioneering study of the archaeology of a great post-medieval house. It is magnificently illustrated, with plans plain, coloured, and three dimensional, which is necessary for the essential business of disinterring the original plan from the ravages of Wyatt and others."

Later:

"Meanwhile, Pamela Marshall must be congratulated for seeing through his (Maurice's) vision, and the Civic Society for sponsoring such an important study that will undoubtedly inspire others to follow."

Pamela's book can be obtained from the Editor, price £16-50. If posted add £1-50 for postage and packing.

NOTTINGHAM 1897

During 1897 *The Builder*, a respected national architectural journal, ran an occasional series "The Architecture of Our Large Provincial Towns". In the issue of 28th August 1897 was No IX in the selection, Nottingham. The next, on 9th October, was to be Sheffield.

The anonymous author started with a few generalisations about the town including, "Like many towns which have grown up on medieval foundations, the older and busiest portions of the town are lacking in anything like important thoroughfares, and as far removed from anything approaching the 'Haussmann'* ideal of town planning as can possibly be conceived".

There followed observation about churches. Besides the big three of St Mary's, St Peter's and St Nicholas; St Andrew's, All Saints' and St Catherine's are also included. Of the latter the writer noted "... newly erected ... and is a good example of modern work designed by Mr R Clarke".

The Market Place was examined, "... one of the largest in England; a long irregularly shaped area ... and the so-called Exchange" was dismissed as "... of little architectural interest". Not all was considered bad "... passing through the archway beneath (the Exchange) one reaches a picturesque part of the old town, the Shambles (i.e. the butchers' section of the Market Place) where was the birthplace of Henry Kirke White, Nottingham's poet". (Check out the metal plaque on the southern end of the Council House crossing). The Piazza or colonnaded way of Long Row and, to a lesser extent, South Parade reminded our Observer of the High Street in Winchester rather than the "rows" of Chester.

Nottingham's potential, a town worthy of exploration by seriously minded visitors was revealed in several low key remarks: "Nottingham, by the way, is a delightful place for the architectural student to poke about in, sketch book in hand, amongst the older parts of the town. In looking for old work, "... he will not of course, omit to visit the famous Nottingham Castle" and "... an interesting thoroughfare for the seeker after old work in Nottingham is the series of streets leading from St Mary's Church, towards the Castle, known as High Pavement, Middle Pavement and Low Pavement". Finally a little tracking down was suggested, an activity we can no longer fully share, "Nottingham is rich in almshouses, the finest architecturally being Collin's Hospital in Park Street, whose history is given on a tablet on (the) northside".

The writer gave a sweeping review of some of the most modern work in Nottingham, along the newly formed King Street and Queen Street, and of the more important buildings in the town. A minor error was attributing the

Nottingham Express office of 1876 (it was not enlarged until 1899) to Messrs Watson & Fothergill in a section informing all that, "Nottingham, indeed, is fairly well supplied with examples of the Modern Gothic era." Two examples given were the Nottinghamshire Guardian offices of 1873-4 on South Sherwood Street - North Street (Evans and Jolley), and the original Albert Hall of 1873-6 by Fothergill Watson, as he then was. The Hall was considered to be in a style "... which is neither quiet nor restrained, but an excellent design admitting the possibility of the use of florid French Gothic as a basis of modern work". The influence of the Gothic era, it was proposed, dies hard in Nottingham.

A more forward thinking architect, well received in the article was Albert Nelson Bromley. He was complimented for his work in the Lace Market and for the then recently opened High Pavement Higher Grade School for the Nottingham School Board on Stanley Road. "An example of more modern and more satisfactory school design" was the verdict. This was in contrast to the High School for Boys "... perversion of the style of the Tudor period, with battlements, long mullioned windows, and other misunderstood detail ..." and the High School for Girls which "... is of a nondescript style of design, with a quasi-modern French feeling rather unhappily carried out".

After a brisk jaunt along Bridlesmith Gate pulling in John Howitt's King John Chambers and Lloyd's Bank, originally the Hart, Fellows Bank by Evans and Jolley, the author closes his Nottingham review: "Thus in Nottingham, as elsewhere, there is architecture good and bad, old and new; but less that is good, less that is important than the size of the soi-disant 'Queen of the Midlands' might lead one to expect".

Ken Brand

(With thanks to the unknown staff reporter(?) on *The Builder* who dropped in during 1897)

*Baron Georges-Eugène Haussmann (1809-91), improved Paris 1853-1870. His town planning was characterised by long straight boulevards - in the traditional French manner.

The design of the (Boys') High School was by Thomas Simpson with a little help from T C Hine and Robert Evans (1866-7). The core of the Girls' High School was actually designed by a Frenchman, Emile Vanderberg of Lille, as Clarence Lodge for the lace manufacturer James Hartshorn in 1875.

WOLLATON VILLAGE DOVECOTE MUSEUM

In 1987 the Civic Society reported that the Family First Projects Agency were progressing well with restoration work at the Wollaton Village Dovecote. New window frames had been fitted, electric lighting and power had been installed. Nesting boxes had been unblocked and repairs to walls and floor carried out.

In 1997 Wollaton Village and Park Conservation Society were proud that the Dovecote Museum was one of only six buildings in Nottingham open during Heritage Weekend.

This year the Kitchen/Parlour will be on view and a comprehensive gallery of photographs showing Wollaton's past. The Special Exhibition for 1998 will be prepared by Wollaton Village Playgroup.

The opening times for the Museum for the 1998 season are on the following SUNDAYS from 2pm to 5pm:

May 17th, June 21st, July 19th, August 16th, September 13th.

Private parties can view by arrangement, please contact:
Maureen Jones, telephone 0115 928 2567

NOTTINGHAM PARK GARDENS

OPEN DAY

Sunday 17th May

2pm - 6pm

18 gardens open

Teas Plant Stalls Cake Stall Ice cream

Free parking inside The Park

Entrances: Derby Road, Castle (Lenton Road),

Peveril Drive

ADMISSION

Adults £2.50, Children Free, Senior Citizens £2.00

Proceeds to the NSPCC