

# THOROTON

Number 11: Summer 1997

*A Message from the Chairman . . .*



With so much to report as a result of events connected with the centenary, it would be easy to overlook a major development for the Thoroton Society which shows that far from still living with our founders in the 19th century, we are preparing for the 21st century - yes, the Thoroton Society has its own home page on the World Wide Web! For those of you to whom this comes as a fascinating, but perhaps rather confusing revelation, let me explain. The Internet, as it is commonly known, is a vast database of information which enables individuals with a computer connected via a telephone line to the outside world, to consult 'home pages' for organizations, businesses, and all sorts of other concerns, worldwide. Our member Andy Nicholson offered to write and then to update a Thoroton Society home page, and those of you who have access to the Internet will find it under the URL (location):

<http://www.cthulu.demon.co.uk/thoroton.htm>

The home page needs a little more work yet to get it sorted out, but people across the world can now find out about the Society just by 'hitting' its home page on the Web. Our thanks are due to Andy for setting this up, and it represents just part of our efforts this year to raise awareness of the Society and to attract new members. The exhibition is helping with awareness, and you will see from information later in the Newsletter that the number of members is also showing a healthy increase.

Finally, please carry on enjoying Centenary Year. I look forward to meeting you at the main events, and if you are a new member or one who does not come to all the Society's events, do come and introduce yourself to me and to other officers. We shall try to remember to wear our name badges!

*John Beckett*



Councillor Brian Grocock, chairman of the County Council, and the Society's President, Miles Thoroton Hildyard, at Rufford for the opening of the Centenary exhibition in February.

**THE THOROTON SOCIETY OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE  
THE COUNTY'S HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

## THOROTON CENTENARY EXHIBITION

On 6 May the travelling exhibition reached Nottingham, where it was opened at the Angel Row Library by Councillor Brian Grocock, chairman of the County Council. An audience of about 50, including Thoroton members, visitors and members of the Bromley House Library, were welcomed by Mrs Joan Bray, local studies librarian at Angel Row, who invited Cllr Grocock to open the exhibition. Cllr Grocock told the gathering that he had first learnt about the Society when he opened the exhibition at Rufford in February, and that he was pleased to discover how much was known about the history and archaeology of Nottinghamshire. He referred to the work of Dr Robert Thoroton, which he had recently consulted, and to the Thoroton Society's own work over many years. He wished the Society well in its future work.

Professor John Beckett, replying on behalf of the Society, thanked Cllr Grocock for his interest in the exhibition, and in the work of the Thoroton Society. He then introduced Mrs Jean Nicholson, who explained the purpose and nature of the Thoroton Society's Schools' Competition, and the prizes which were to be awarded. Cllr Grocock then presented the prizes to Adam Marsh of Clarborough and King Edward VI School, Retford, and Rochelle Severn, Emma Smith and Rebecca Moore of Spring Street Primary School, Hucknall. Emma Staples of Walkeringham, the other prize winner, was unwell and not able to be present. The Society is grateful to Phillimore's, the publishers, the Kodak Company, the Boots Company PLC, and The Local History Press, for their contributions towards the prizes.

Cllr Grocock was then presented with a copy of *A Centenary History of Nottingham* by Tom Huggon, chairman of the Centenary History of Nottingham Advisory Board. He thanked Mr Huggon, and spoke briefly of his interest in the city over many years. Finally, Neville Hoskins, Vice-Chairman of the Thoroton Society, spoke briefly about the buildings and people of the area around the Angel Row Library, including Bromley House Library, and finished with a few comments about the Old Malt Cross building, originally a music hall, on St James's Street.

Professor Beckett thanked Mrs Bray for hospitality, and over coffee guests looked around the exhibition, which has now been expanded to include the winning entries from the Schools' Competition.



**Winners of the Schools' Competition are seen here with Jean Nicholson, Cllr Grocock, and Society Chairman, John Beckett, at Angel Row in May**

## CENTENARY EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

**STOP PRESS:** Owing to a change in the Lord Lieutenant's busy programme it has been necessary to change the date of the Hodsock Tea and Reception to the following day, **Sunday 14 September**. We hope this will not prevent members from attending what promises to be a very pleasant occasion.

**FRIDAY 10 October:** Reception with the Chairman of Nottinghamshire County Council, County Hall, followed by the **Centenary Dinner** - guest speaker Sir Neil Cossons, Director of the Science Museum in London. Application forms will be circulated in the usual way.

The **Carol Service** will not take place as originally forecast: watch out for details of date and venue.

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### NEW MEMBERS

The list of members continues to grow at an encouraging rate, due to a number of factors: the availability of the new 'recruiting leaflet', the interest generated by the Centenary Exhibition, and the quality of lectures. Media publicity, together with personal recommendation, has brought an increase in the number of non-members attending.

Welcome, therefore, to the following (with apologies if your form of address is wrong or missing - please inform the Treasurer!):

B. Brown, Mr & Mrs J. Beighton, C.W. Leivers, Mrs V. Mellors, Mrs E.M. Appleton, Ms P. Shearlaw, Mr P.L. O'Malley, Mrs B. Bradley, Mrs I Wade, Ms L.D. Quinn, S.M. Mortimer, J. Fletcher, Mr & Mrs J A Davis, Mr & Mrs K.A. Palmer, Mr & Mrs J.L. Bramwell, P.E. Jones, Rev. & Mrs J. Pulman, Mr & Mrs M. Wescott, Ald & Mrs F. Dennett, Ms G Chalk, Mr & Mrs J.P. Flathan, Mrs E.A. Dilks, Mr M. Harrison, Miss B. Smith, Mr & Mrs G.F. Morrison, W. Tomlinson, D. Hutchinson, Ms J. McNeil, L. Elliott, W.J. Nicholson, Miss H. Nicholson, H. Nicholson, C.M. Whyld, Ms C.I. Hood, A. Kelly, Mrs M. Murray, Mr & Mrs J.H. Frisby, Mr & Mrs B. Sutherland, Mrs J. Mee, P.A. Bloor, E.A. Nickerson.

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### THOROTON A.G.M.

**O**n Saturday 26 April the lecture theatre on the Nottingham Trent University campus at Clifton was the venue for the Centenary A.G.M. of the Society. Professor J.V. Beckett was in the chair.

After the business meeting, the Vice-Chairman Mr Neville Hoskins gave a talk on Clifton Hall and the Cliftons. This family played an important part in the history of the county and country for over 800 years. For nine generations, until 1866, the head of the family held the rank of baronet and though this title then appeared to become extinct, a distant

relative successfully had it revived in his favour. The last Clifton to live in the Hall was Lieut. Col. Peter Clifton who was obliged to sell the estate to Nottingham Corporation in 1947. He then moved to Hampshire, and died only last year. Mrs. Clifton was a Thoroton member for many years before, during and after the Second World War.

Fittingly, and to symbolize the continuity of history, the A.G.M. concluded with a tour of the Hall, now a part of the campus, led by Dr Anne Bloomfield of the University staff; and a visit to the church, where members were welcomed by Rev. Lynn Fox, to look at memorials to several members of a distinguished family from the county's past.

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### EXCURSION PROGRAMME

**T**he Centenary Year excursion programme was launched with a half day school entitled '**In the Footsteps of Richard Bankes**' and led by Steph Mastoris.

The 1609 Forest Map has been 'trailed' for several years and members are patiently awaiting its publication, appreciating the vast amount of work involved. Steph and Sue Groves have toiled for many months.

On Saturday 17 May almost sixty members gathered in Lowdham WI Hall to start an afternoon looking at one area featured on the map. Steph provided a general introduction and referred to the commissioning of the map, the surveyors' skill, and how various members of the survey team interpreted their brief slightly differently, e.g. by including, or not including, churches. He stressed the fascinating way in which the survey of almost 400 years ago could be 'overlaid' on a current map showing the astounding accuracy of early work. He then introduced Mike Worrall who illustrated his talk on the Mill of Dover Beck, followed by a car-borne tour of the area on the way to Woodborough Church.

Here David Bagley showed transparencies of the Woodborough part of the map, related it to the present appearance of the village, and compared it with the pre-enclosure map. He related the history of the church and village and some of the families involved in its development.

The party then visited Lambley Church and were welcomed by the Rector the Rev. Nigel Peyton, and had a splendid tea provided by Lambley Women's Fellowship.

Then Jean Nicholson spoke on the church and village, again referring to the 1609 map, after which most of the party toured the highlights of the village including the site of Ralph Cromwell's manor house, with Jean and Joe Nicholson.

The afternoon whetted members' historic appetite and the publication of the facsimile maps and text is eagerly awaited.

**SATURDAY 11 JANUARY****DR. ROBERT THOROTON: HIS LIFE AND TIMES (1623-1678) - Mr Adrian Henstock****Chairman: The President, Mr Miles Thoroton Hildyard**

The Society's Centenary Year was splendidly launched by a lecture from which an audience of over 100 learned a great deal about Dr Robert Thoroton of Car Colston, whose life spanned the Civil War: 'that late horrid rebellion' as he described it. There were three main aspects to his life. As a physician, one of only four or five in Nottinghamshire at the time, he achieved 'competent success' with patients from a 40-mile radius (who often consulted him by correspondence!). He was appointed a Magistrate because his High Church and Royalist sympathies ensured that he would persecute the Quakers: he did so with such effect that a book of the Sufferings he inflicted on them was published in 1676. As a historian, he is to be ranked with his friend Sir William Dugdale as one of the two earliest and best in England: in his own language as a physician, he declared to 'practice upon the dead... to preserve their memory'.

Dr Thoroton was a family man, proud of the marriages of two daughters, one into the Irish nobility and the other into money made from coalmining! Like many members of the Society, his interest in local history began with his researches into the origins of his own family. He used original sources, some of which have subsequently disappeared, which makes his *Antiquities of Nottinghamshire* singularly valuable - Adrian confessed that he consults it at least once a week!

Dr Thoroton recorded coats of arms, tombs and other artifacts of interest to historians and was a pioneer of maps and street plans. He was intelligent, a sincere friend of many including Archbishop Gilbert Sheldon of Canterbury, and a man 'whose company I infinitely delight in' (as the Headmaster of Repton put it). His descendant, the Society's President, who owns Thoroton's notebooks, added much to the Lecture by his presence and his own contributions. The Society could not have been named after a more appropriate man of Nottinghamshire. Its Centenary Year could not have been launched in a better way than by this Lecture.

**John Fox****SATURDAY 8 FEBRUARY****'NOTTINGHAM: 100 YEARS A CITY' -****Professor John Beckett****Chairman: Mr Geoffrey Oldfield**

The news in June 1897 that Nottingham was to be given a charter to style itself 'city' in place of 'borough' seems to have taken the Council by surprise. Their lukewarm reception reflected the Council's attitude in the lack of further progress for the next quarter of a century in bringing Nottingham up to date in its municipal services. Attempts to extend its boundaries in 1920 were thwarted by the Minister of Health but this provided the spur for the Council, in the following 20 years, to improve the city's housing, schools, sewage disposal and roads. It also acquired Wollaton Hall

and Park, Newstead Abbey, and land outside the city for development of new suburbs, erected a new Council House, widened Trent Bridge, and assisted in the transfer of University College to Highfields. After 1945 further progress was made which transformed the city's physical appearance by clearing the remaining obsolete housing, building or permitting high rise properties, creating new highways and attempting to solve the problems associated with the vast increase of motor traffic, as well as new bus stations and shopping malls, and cultural improvements including the Playhouse and Concert Hall. Professor Beckett illustrated his talk with numerous slides showing these changes, and concluded by asking whether the city had missed opportunities which would have added even more lustre to its title of 'Queen of the Midlands'.

**Geoffrey Oldfield****SATURDAY 8 MARCH****THE MAURICE BARLEY LECTURE: 'A FUTURE FOR ARCHITECTURE?'****Mr Bob Cullen****Chairman: Mr Ken Brand**

Bob Cullen, a long-time friend of Maurice Barley, was an appropriate choice for what was an exceptionally well attended meeting. He started by comparing one of the Nottingham Civic Society's failures, the loss of the excellent Player's No.2 factory with its replacements, a motley collection of sheds on the Castle Retail Park. Thereafter he ranged, literally, world wide, showing and describing examples of good and bad architectural practice. As might be expected from a speaker never reluctant to provoke and stimulate controversy the lecture was enlivened with pithy comment and wry observation. Bob also quoted from a diverse collection of brief definitions of 'the quintessence of architecture' he had gleaned from fellow professionals and enthusiasts.

'Architecture is the absolute mother of the arts' - Piers Gough

'Architecture is the making of places responsive to our spiritual and material needs and desires' - Julian Marsh

'The creative re-use of land and buildings' - Derek Latham

'Appropriateness. Architecture blends the requirements of the client and community with design innovation' - Julian Owen

'Architecture is creativity, creative listening, thinking, responding, learning' - Allan Mulcahy.

Bob was adamant that planners were not architects and that townscape harmony was often more important than individual buildings. He lambasted the wholesale proliferation of the 'little boxes' in which most of us live, though unfortunately overlooking the economic constraints most of us have. It was an entertaining roller-coaster of an afternoon, a veritable architectural Cook's tour, with Nottingham figuring prominently enough on the itinerary.

**Ken Brand**

## Lectures: Autumn 1997

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As usual, lectures will take place at 3 p.m. on Saturdays in the YMCA on Shakespeare Street, unless development there necessitates a change of venue, in which case changes will be publicized as widely as possible.

**11 October: '100 Years of Archaeology in Nottinghamshire'**  
*by Mr Jeffrey May, University of Nottingham*  
Chairman: Dr Carol Allen

In 1897 archaeology was very much a pastime for gentlemen of means. Today archaeologists both professional and amateur rely on advanced science and technology to help them find, date and record their discoveries. Mr May will show us the progress which has been made and some of the county's interesting discoveries during the past 100 years.

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**8 November: Nottingham History Lecture:**  
**'The Politics of Parkland in Nottinghamshire'**  
*by Mr Ben Cowell, University of Nottingham*  
Chairman: Professor J.V. Beckett

The laying out of landscape parks was a highly controversial activity in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Where parks were enclosed from former commons and wastes, and where they were managed in the interests of social exclusion and privacy, they were symbolic of the power and authority of the ruling landed elite. Mr Cowell will discuss the political significance of park design, maintenance and control in later Georgian Nottinghamshire, focusing particularly on the Dukeries parks of the county, such as those in the vicinity of Nottingham; examine the different policies of access that were practised on these properties; and suggest ways in which the political symbolism of estate landscapes was open to conflict and contestation at the park borders.

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**6 December: 'A Lighter Look at the Thoroton Society in Retrospect'**  
*by Mr Neville Hoskins, Vice President of the Society*  
Chairman: Mr Geoffrey Oldfield

Some of the less formal activities of the Society will be recalled as well as events of Centenary Year - you may see yourself!

Seasonal bonus - tea and mince pies.

## Congratulations

The Society offers its congratulations to Ken Brand on becoming Nottingham's Citizen of Honour for 1997.

Mr Brand, who is well known for his work for the Nottingham Civic Society, and is a member of the Council of the Thoroton Society, was one of 26 people shortlisted for the honour as a result of his contribution to local history, conservation, buildings, and the environment in Nottingham.

The award took place as part of the Lord Mayor of Nottingham's inauguration ceremony at the Albert Hall on 12 May 1997, and it seemed particularly appropriate that someone as strongly connected with local history as Ken Brand should be honoured in the city's centenary year.

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### WALTER HILTON: MYSTIC, AUTHOR AND CANON OF THURGARTON PRIORY

Those who came to the 600th celebration of Walter Hilton's death at Thurgarton St. Peter's last year will be interested to know that there will be a Walter Hilton memorial service again this year at 11 a.m. on Sunday 29 June. The 1509 Society will again be with us, singing music for the medieval mass. Everyone interested in Walter Hilton and Thurgarton Priory is very welcome to join us for this service. Following the enormous interest shown in Hilton in 1996, and thanks to the generosity of sponsors of our weekend, work is in hand to provide a fitting memorial to Walter Hilton to be erected in St. Peter's.

Barbara Cast

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## Transactions

Congratulations to Adrian Henstock on becoming the Society's longest ever serving editor. Thanks also to both Adrian and Carol Allen for making sure volume 100 appeared on time, and to all those members who helped in the distribution.

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The views expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editor, the Society, nor of its Council.

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## Revision of the *Oxford English Dictionary*: You may be able to help

Work is now in progress on a complete revision of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, and one of the most important aspects of this is the improvement of the range of the quotation evidence which illustrates the history and development of words. Often the existing quotation evidence can be antedated or postdated, or new evidence of the changing use of a word can be found.

The editors are concerned that a great deal of the research which has been and is being done on manuscript sources such as wills, inventories, accounts, letters and diaries, and which is subsequently published, is not being brought to their attention. The period of greatest interest to us is that from c.1500-1900, but earlier and later evidence will also be welcome. A team of researchers has started work recently on extracting material from some sources of this kind, with very encouraging results.

If you are aware of any sources which you think might provide useful material, please contact the **Call for Research Materials, Oxford English Dictionary, Oxford University Press, Great Clarendon St., Oxford OX2 6DP** either by letter or fax on 01865 267810, or by email to [oad3@oup.co.uk](mailto:oad3@oup.co.uk).

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## CALL FOR HELP!

Any member who can help with administration during 1997 when we have many events to organize is asked to get in touch with Neville Hoskins (0115 978 1816).

The Society needs volunteers to help distribute copies of *Transactions* which were not collected at the A.G.M. If you live in any of the following areas and are willing to help out, your assistance would be much appreciated:

NG3, NG5, NG8, NG9, NG11

Please contact David Bagley on (0115) 965 2511.

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*As you will see elsewhere in this Newsletter, the Society has lost several long-standing members by death recently. Sadly this is also a reminder of our own mortality, and should you be making or revising a will do consider a legacy to the Thoroton Society. Our Treasurer, Keith Goodman (tel. 0115 972 6590) can always give advice on matters of this nature.*

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Contributions to future Newsletters are welcome. For the Winter edition please send any items to The Editor, Mr. Neville Hoskins, 12 Forest Road East, Nottingham, NG1 4HH (tel. 0115 978 1816).

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## OBITUARIES

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**MR HUGH McDOWALL LAWSON**, a long-time member and for many years a member of Council, died in March. Hugh Lawson was for forty years deputy City Engineer and Surveyor in Nottingham, and then for three years Director of Leisure Services. Professionally he was responsible for much of Nottingham's post-war development; after retirement he was a founder member and chairman of the Friends of Nottingham Museums.

**MR FRANK ADAMSON**, who died on Easter Monday, aged 83, was a stalwart member of the Society for many years, and a familiar figure at lectures and excursions. He left school at 14 to work at Ericssons Telephones, later Plesseys, retiring as a senior manager. Frank spent his whole life in Beeston, well known in his younger days as a hockey player and later, umpire. His hobbies included gardening, photography and travel, he was an avid reader and developed an encyclopedic knowledge of a wide array of subjects including history, archaeology and architecture, for many years he was a member of the committee of the Beeston branch of the WEA. Renowned for his sense of humour, he will be sadly missed.

It is also sad to record the death of **MR ROBIN STONE** aged 91, a stalwart of Burton Joyce Local History Society, best known for his pioneering development of Stoke Bardolph Sewage Works and Farms.

**MR H. BROOKE**, though not a member of the Society, was known to many as Southwell Minster Librarian for the last nine years, and with his wife attended Society luncheons. He will be remembered as one who after a working life travelling the world as an engineer settled into the library scene, and with unfailing courtesy assisted members in their researches.

Other recent deaths include:

**R.W. COX; MISS E.M. GRAY; MR SNOWDEN HOUSLEY; and MRS DOROTHY WILDGOOSE** who, with her late husband Harry, was a keen and active member of the Peveril Archaeological Group in the 1950s and then of the Thoroton Society.

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If you learn of the death of a member, please let the Treasurer, Keith Goodman (tel. 0115 972 6590) know: this could often avoid embarrassment later.

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### **TRENT AND PEAK ARGHAEOLOGICAL TRUST:**

#### **OPEN EVENING - WEDNESDAY 2 JULY 1997**

Trent and Peak Archaeological Trust extends a warm welcome to all to join them at their Open Evening on Wednesday 2 July at 7.30 p.m.. A series of short illustrated talks on recent archaeological work by the Trust in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire will be followed by a glass of wine. The venue is the Arts Centre, University of Nottingham.

## BOOK REVIEWS

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*Dorket Head, Nottinghamshire*, by J & C Turner, (Sherwood Archaeological Society, Mansfield, 1977) (38 pages including 9 figures, price £3; available from Mr R.D. Smith, 6 Robin Down Lane, Mansfield, Notts., NG18 4SW)

This short report provides the results of excavations undertaken by members of the Sherwood Archaeological Society at the site of Dorket Head (SK 596 485) between 1973-91. Ditches and banks of a defended site had been noted in the late 18th century and short sections of ditches were apparent on aerial photographs. Investigations were limited to those parts of the site which were accessible for a short period each autumn.

Excavations across the line of some ditches which could be located produced a quantity of late Iron Age pottery, and a few unstratified sherds of late Bronze Age pottery were also found. These ditches did not appear to form an enclosure but this may be due to the limitations presented by the current land use. Further excavations located the ditches of a probable rectangular enclosure approximately 390 x 240 m, with an entrance which the excavators suggest may be of Roman type but which exhibits unusual out-turned terminals.

The report includes an interesting pottery section by Sheila Elsdon, in which she dates most of the pottery to the late Iron Age. She comments on the surprising lack of identifiable Romano-British pottery on the site, especially as this usually has a better survival rate; and suggests that the site is more likely to represent late Iron Age occupation of the hill rather than a Roman fort.

A fascinating pit over 2 m deep was located in the eastern corner of the ditches of the rectangular enclosure. The pit contained stones placed in columns between which were found a number of animal bones. Two sherds of pottery possibly of late Bronze Age date were found in this pit, so this may be the location of an unusual Bronze Age deposit.

Carol Allen

*Archaeology in Law*, by John Pugh-Smith and Dr John Samuels (Sweet & Maxwell, November 1996, £55).

John Samuels, who is well known in Nottinghamshire archaeological circles and who was, until recently, a member of the Thoroton Society's Council, has co-authored this important study of the legal position in relation to archaeological finds. PPG16, 'Archaeology and Planning' was published in November 1990 and as a result archaeological remains were formally recognized by the planning system for the first time. Since then they have had to be taken into account from the beginning of the development control process. The book describes the legal protection applicable to each type of archaeological site, and discusses the importance of archaeology in each part of the planning system. The book, which includes a section on the organization of British archaeology, is aimed primarily at planning practitioners, local authorities, archaeological consultants, and members of societies with an interest in archaeology and conservation.

John Beckett

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### *FINAL NOTICE! - Centenary History of Nottingham*

*A Centenary History of Nottingham*, edited by Professor John Beckett, was published on 22 March, with the formal handing of a copy to Her Majesty the Queen during her visit to Nottingham. Many members of the Thoroton Society had subscribed to the book, and should by now have received their copy.

Professor Beckett, together with Ken Brand, has also written a sequel, or illustrated version of the book, which at 130 pages and with approximately 200 pictures (many of them in colour) is suitable for those with less stamina! The book will be published on 27 June; but if you would like the opportunity to subscribe at the pre-publication price of £9.99 (£12.99 in bookshops afterwards), please ring Janice Avery on (0115) 951 5929 and ask for a copy of the subscription leaflet. **This offer closes on 18 June 1997.**