

NOTTINGHAM QUARTERLY

1

SPRING 1978

PRICE 60p

Alan Sillitoe: Nottingham Castle

Ray Gosling: Green apple days

John Lucas on Stanley Middleton

Interviews

Neville Dilkes Richard Eyre

Eating out vegetarian

Profiles: Wally Brown, Wayne Evans, Dave Turner

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Spring 1978

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Green apple days

RAY GOSLING

WHEN I CAME MY ENTRANCE WAS DIRTY and at night in clouds of steam and grit in the eye on trains that ran from Oxford to York, Marylebone to Manchester. I slept so many times I missed Nottingham asleep through the canyons of Victoria to be woken at Sheffield Victoria and have to find another draughty, rattling train back. Steam trains romantic? Tell that to the handkerchiefs in the dawn and stopping train, in the fog through the coalmines and ashfields to the pit heaps of Hucknall. Arguing with the guard. Refusing to pay the excess.

"I'm making an involuntary journey."

"All you have sunshine is a platform ticket. Name. Address?"

"7 Stratford Square, Shakespeare Street."

It was a little room. Bare boards. Sheets as thick as a split sheet of Kleenex. Cold water tap and concierge below Ma Marriott banging with her poker on the ceiling.

"I know you got somebody in that room. I can hear you. I can have you out in the morning. I'll see Mr Carter."

Never let her in. Never tell and her legs were bad. Mr Carter the agent at Dickens and Berry liked me. I was young-looking but versed in the arts of charming people off perches. If they couldn't fly and fell on to a banana skin or into a nettled bed that made a colourful day.

"Pay the rent next week." It was less than a pound: 12/6d I think when I left. "Promise Mr Carter when I get this cheque tomorrow ...". Smile. No Social. Never had the Social. Smile at Mrs Marriott a box of chocolates in the afternoon. "I seen Mr Carter." Chocolates before rent. Flaunt and dare. It was easy to get by, if you gave it your attention, with charm and wit, and the lust of a country boy for life in a foreign town with no parents to be seen fretting: no relations to bump into - no life but what you make it.

I came to Nottingham to escape my family: with no shame: a hippy in need of a bolt-hole before the word hippy was used on the streets.

On the corner of Stratford Square was a small hotel with rooms to let and a lounge of horse hair sofas that stayed open late.

Floosies and American servicemen: the last vestige smooching to Nat King Cole.

The trade union movement made a great gesture of solidarity with revolutionary art and was helping Arnold Wesker promote Centre 42. They played the Nottingham Captain at the Co-op Hall. It was the first time I'd heard of the Pentrich Revolt

and the miners' union donated a big lump of coal which stood in the foyer at Broad Street.

I once went to that most famous of Nottingham ancient working-class venerations - the Cosmopolitan Debating Society - as an invited, advertised speaker.

Trades Council man George Cutts rang the bell:

"Silence, order, speaker will speak for twenty minutes. Then will there be another bell. Tea. Biscuit. Questions through the chair - if you please through the chair. A third bell then will ring for the speaker's right to reply for four minutes. No longer: is that clear Ray."

Stop watch, on your marks, bang - I didn't know what to say. My subject was anarchy with a silly literary title I wished I hadn't chosen. I stood there and smiled. I croaked my throat. It didn't work like it worked in Dickens and Berry rent office. They don't appreciate smiling at the Cosmopolitan Debating Society. They come on their Sundays to hear a speaker speak, food for thought and a chance to argue back. A working man's House of Commons. They tore me to shreds before I began. I never began. Procedure was abandoned. I was so bad and I ruined their day.

There was a society: a Nottingham Bohemia, upstairs in Yates's Carol the seamstress helping Janet become the Mary Quant on town: Donald Chaffin the painter; Day Parsons the Gene Vincent of Bulwell and not only in the pubs. There was the Midland Group Art Gallery. The Playhouse opened: I did a demonstration against its opening night: I have forgotten why. And the centre point was the genteel Kardomah on a Saturday morning upstairs on Market Street. You could look out a really middle-class scene. Coffee and gateaux. People would be pointed at: introductions made. Who to avoid. The last of the mulattoes: the first prince of black power - Courtenay Tulloch, if I close my eyes, I can hear you laughing at me, Courtenay the hustler, where did you go after Michael X left you?

Would you remember HH who had been famous since Forest won the cup in 1959? HH was partying Burns Street way and the police came and he tipped the contents of his piss pot on the copper's nut singing We won, we won the cup.

Since then he lived off the legend, his reputation for a decade was assured.

Oh where are the piss pots? Vonnie gave me one at a Satra dance, and I have it tied with its ribbon. She called it a guzzunder. It has a dead plant in it. The world has changed.

Who introduced me to these things? I cannot remember. It does not matter.

I remember Miss Josie ... Miss Josie would let us into the kitchen which was hot and bubbled the most delicious crispy chicken, rice and beans I have ever tasted in my life. I can remember its taste as I write. The can of long life was exorbitantly expensive: a rip off: the entrance to the cellar where you'd stand in a silent line mmnn mmnn unsmiling, being cool, smoking grass to the music which thumped - when that Rastafarian Emperor Haille Selassie was always going to visit Jamaica to take his children home - any day. Oh Enoch - before you started Chalky smiled. Was it Chalky who applied for a job with the National Trust at a stately

home whose gardens he cultivated with cannabis. Maybe that wasn't Chalky. Maybe I shouldn't tell too much. Those days are not so long ago.

"It's a raid," trying to escape in the trees of The Chase. Rugby tackled. Looking in the folds of your underpants down at the police station. Never found nothing on me. Glad or sad? Police move quickly. Up, down, out of the force. It's a county force today - and where is Mr Aston? People tell he runs some lush tourist hotel in one of the nicer islands - Barbados? - with Miss Josie - ? I'd like to think so.

And where am I - and me? -

Here is the winter - it's not so bronchitic as when trolley buses ran. I'd be dead if it was. I wouldn't bring back the old times but prohibition tomorrow wouldn't worry me. Freedom is in people's courage, not in laws.

I came to like Nottingham because there were enough people to believe that. Not just drifting people, but poor people, working people, old, young, and independent-minded people.

When I stood as a loony in a local election nice people wrote to me, and said we'll help from The Park.

We painted public objects, after reading an article in Anarchy magazine, things like electricity and telephone junction boxes that stand on pavements we painted in pastel shades one night and wrote on the old Union Road wall "Life without dead times".

I think that was the Parisian slogan - from Christian and Cordley and Sue from the art college, and me egged on by Uncle Bob Gregory. Bob was a merchant, who got thrown out of the Labour Party for being my agent on a later adventure in which we attacked the High School whose Trust owned land in St Ann's.

Bob was a trader. I went in the Thurland the other day at 11 o'clock and there were some traders. They're a breed - Nottingham traders - rascal minds and stupid pork pie faces. Very provincial and not at all stupid. "I bought a warehouse full of clothes pegs ..."

Good old Bob he ran away with a beautiful, long-legged rich revolutionary girl from the upper echelons to foment in Latin America following the wakes for Che Guevara, and eventually returned with world interests and the lordship of a grange in Oxfordshire.

Good old capitalist-socialist Bob.

It is only my sour grapes I seem to have missed out on the rich revolutionary bit. I'd have liked to have travelled the world. I done what I could - when I got round to it. It is little more than get by - but it wasn't a competition. If it was nobody told me.

There's companions to mourn who are dead:

for many the frustrations of freedom have tipped the balance of their minds:

others are no longer easy to be with.

Failures, cop-outs, a few have become too successful.

I have regrets: aches I can't/won't express not yet/if ever. On the dark side of the 1960s I remember as if I had been to war, but on sunny days I remember what larks we had - they were my green apple days.

INTERVIEW

Richard Eyre

Pat Silburn talks to the outgoing Artistic Director of Nottingham Playhouse

P.S. Do you remember much about your first job in the professional theatre, Richard?

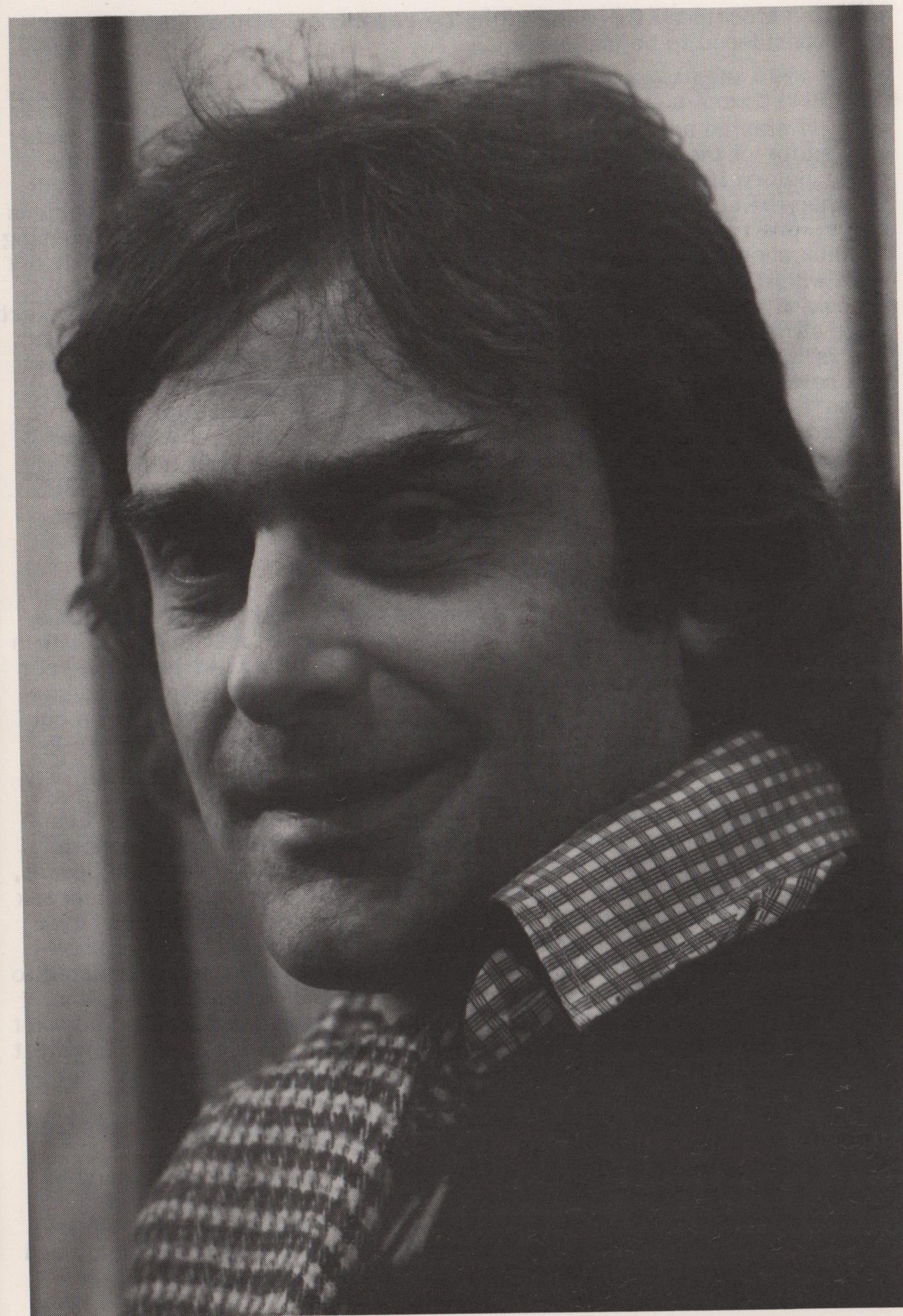
R.E. Yes. I started at Hornchurch. I was an actor, and my first line was "You know me by my habit", and I was confronted by an array of professional actors miming obscene gestures as a result of this line. I was bewildered and a bit alarmed because I had always imagined that professionals acted in a "proper" manner! But I couldn't blame them, because actors have a really good nose for atmosphere and it was a really appalling production. "The Art of Coarse Acting" could have been scripted from the behaviour on that production.

P.S. Had you wanted to act, then, when you left Cambridge?

R.E. No, I hadn't. I wanted to write more than anything, but didn't know if I wanted to be a journalist or write for the theatre. I didn't particularly want to be a director. The only directing I'd done at university was a film called "Pale Legs I Love Thee". I suppose at its best it was a homage to Buster Keaton - that's to say complete plagiarism. At its worst it was a string of feeble visual jokes - though I've seen many of them turn up since in Monty Python, so I suppose it could be said to have been slightly ahead of its time. It featured Graeme Garden and Eric Idle, I remember - they were at Cambridge at the same time as me. They were good but the film was garbage really.

P.S. Then where do you see your education in theatre as really beginning?

R.E. Well, I don't know, you see. I'm not sure where my education is at all. That's to say, I came from a background where books were read, if at all, purely as a convention. Certainly there was no music and no theatre and absolutely no interest in, or sense of belonging to, a middle-class culture. It's an odd thing when you try to explain to people who believe that you are obviously middle-class, and have had all the cultural benefits, that you're incredibly ignorant. Also I think it's something to do with being brought up in Devon and Dorset, which is the nearest thing still to the eighteenth century - the squirearchy there still exists. You can live down there and not come into contact with any contemporary art and thought at all - less so now, perhaps, but certainly when I grew up in that feudal squirearchy which is what my dad belonged to. So I was really completely ignorant. I went to a boarding school at seven and a half - you know, the kind of school that tries to see you remain as ignorant as possible - and then a shockingly bad public school in Dorset where they enshrined ignorance as high ambition. But I eventually got



expelled from there for manifesting my resentment of the place in ways they considered to be unpleasant.

P.S. Oh - what were they? What did you do?

R.E. I started a magazine which was about schoolboy subversion, and I was editor of the school magazine in the year that it was torn from the press before it was printed. I mean literally - the plates were all made up when the office was stormed by the staff, and the editorial and various parts were re-written by an approved committee. It's very embarrassing to think about it, because it was all so trivial and uselessly directed, but now, when I come into contact with lack of privilege, the more aware I become of what passed for privilege in my childhood, and how they protect their own, these people - and the more angry I become with the fact that this is what I was given and subjected to. One was subjected completely to a relentless period of propaganda, and it's very pernicious and it doesn't become better with time. I haven't become more mellow. I started this by saying my education in theatre was zero. I went to the theatre twice on school trips, and there were a few annual trips with my dad to the Crazy Gang, where we'd sit on the front row where all we could see were the Tiller girls' fannies. So that, I suppose, was my strongest formative experience in theatre.

P.S. But at Cambridge did you do very much?

R.E. Well, I got there like a complete hayseed - and that's not a piece of self-dramatisation. I got into Cambridge on science subjects, but then I decided to switch to English, having done an English "A" level the year I was thrown out of school. But I really had read virtually nothing, so when I went to university - apart from the fact I'd never really been out of Dorset - it was absolutely overwhelming, and I didn't know where I was in so many directions. I was absolutely bewildered by it, and particularly the sense of massive ignorance has never left me and of not having any kind of cultural background. I suppose that that's why I can empathise with anyone from a working-class background who's gone to Oxbridge or an equivalent situation. It was like coming out of the desert, and suddenly people were having conversations that I couldn't even break into because I didn't speak a word of the language. I don't know if I worked very hard, but I certainly read a lot and acquired a lot of knowledge very quickly, and I think I borrowed a lot of attitudes and trusted to instinct, but the first year was pretty monumental. In the second year, I suppose I had got more comfortable within the system, and really did what now I feel ashamed about. I think I played the Cambridge system for all it was worth, and it was a kind of neo-professionalism - fiercely competitive and showy. I think that's one of the dangerous things about those places - they are such closed worlds. You know, the pride and swagger is pretty obnoxious, and the way those colleges are run. Of course, there are some good people there. Kingsley Amis was my tutor, and he felt, I think, completely disorientated there - he hated that sort of eighteenth century Age of Reason stink about the place. He was a professional novelist, and he made you see that books were for reading, and that making connections between what you saw and what you read was crucially important.

P.S. But had you consciously rejected that world whilst you were still there?

R.E. No - not until the end of it, really. It was only in the third year that I began to see it was like a film set, and that if you looked behind the walls it was just bits of scaffolding holding them up.

P.S. When you came to the Nottingham Playhouse as Artistic Director, you were really pretty young, weren't you? You were, what, thirty? Did you feel conscious that you were taking on a big job? It's after all no mean task running a theatre of this size.

R.E. Yes - but I'd more or less run a theatre in Edinburgh which was a very large theatre. So I don't think I was intimidated by the size, because I'd been used to doing plays in large theatres. Taking on the responsibility for eighty or ninety people, though, was and still is pretty daunting.

P.S. What about the work? How do you feel about that?

R.E. I feel very good about some things. There are very few things which I've done in bad faith, and I feel pleased about that. There are very few things which I've done out of expediency or despair or lack of inventiveness - very few things. I'm not sure I want to remember them, but, thinking of them, they've never proved to be worth it. I think that the notion that you can operate a cynical process of "Oh this and that is good box office, I think it's rubbish but it'll bring them in" - I don't think that approach works, because I think an audience smells your dishonesty and the actors certainly do. It's very difficult for actors to work well if they know it's a rotten policy behind the work.

P.S. Have there been any plays that you've done when you know the work and the commitment have been good - but when the public and critical response has been disappointing?

R.E. Yes - Howard Brenton's "The Churchill Play", which I thought a considerable work and in some ways a visionary work. I suppose one day it will be regarded as a major piece of writing - it's a remarkable assemblage of images of the future and it's a vision that has to be taken very seriously. I was very disappointed by the public response to that. I think Stephen Lowe's "Touched" as well. I thought it had a quality of writing that was very rare - yet on the whole it was treated very condescendingly by the critics, I thought.

P.S. They were both new plays, of course, and I'm sure your time here as Artistic Director will be remembered for the number of really exciting new plays that you've commissioned. Yet, in terms of Box Office, there is always a risk in doing new plays, isn't there? Has there been pressure on you from the Board over this policy?

R.E. Well no, because you have a brief to come home within budget over the year. If you don't, then you're really in trouble, but you should have no problem with a board if the books balance, because there is nothing to talk about or argue about - and I must say that, whatever else I'd say about the Board here, they've been exemplary in that they've always been prepared, not without severe qualifications often, to back

new plays on the assumption that if you do lose money on them at the Box Office you'll make it up elsewhere. That seems to be a legitimate position to take - they've never interfered with the choice of plays.

P.S. What I'll also remember from the last five years are the companies, the casts you've had. Some very talented people have worked with you, haven't they?

R.E. Yes - a quite marvellous series of actors. I've sometimes been quite overwhelmed by it and felt the luck of finding these people and the joy of working with them has been quite incredible. I remember I felt this particularly when I was doing "The Cherry Orchard" - the version by Trevor Griffiths. I remember thinking there's not one person on that stage who isn't remarkably talented in a very individual way.

P.S. And now your new job in Television as Producer of "Play for Today". First of all, there is this distinction between producer and director which not everyone is clear about.

R.E. Well, the producer in TV is the person who commissions the play from the playwright, signs up the director, organises all the facilities - i.e., lighting, sound, costumes, the designer etc. He oils the wheels and carries editorial responsibility over the play.

P.S. It will be very different from the very close involvement you have with a play when you've been directing - so what do you see it offering you?

R.E. Well offering a change, I think, which is quite important. If I hadn't been offered this job, I just don't know that I could have gone on much longer here. I feel I could have, might have, run out of ideas, invention, getting companies together. I've always been haunted by the fear of being thought of as the one who stayed too long. I've seen it happen too many times - directors who cling to their jobs. And I do feel I've done so many shows. I must have done over sixty productions in the last ten years, and I just really want to be able to stand back from it for a while and just think about it.

P.S. That's not the only attraction of the job, though, is it?

R.E. Oh no, no. Of course not. I think a lot of people, who should know better, think that going into TV is an appalling option, but ... I mean, I like watching TV. Often I think watching telly is better than an evening spent in the theatre! When it's good it's terrific, and when you see a good play on telly it's quite as powerful as a play in the theatre. If you've seen any of Trevor Griffiths's plays on telly, they're magnificent and certainly stand with his theatre plays. And I'm no great Stoppard fan, but for me his telly play "Professional Foul" is by far the best play he's written. "Licking Hitler", by David Hare, is another example of really good work. At its best it's very very good, and has access to an audience of ... at the very least five million people. "Through the Night", by Trevor Griffiths, was seen by twelve million people, and you just can't regard that as an irrelevant consideration. If you're serious about doing work which affects people, then it is unarguably stupid not to see the size of audience as being crucial in that

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process. So I am very attracted by that, and fearful of it too. Another attraction of working in telly is that they have a very strong discipline to the process, because obviously they have to be careful of cost effectiveness and so on, but it does mean you're able to leave process aside and concentrate on content. So it seems to me that the thing to do is to go in and squeeze the facilities they have.

P.S. But what about the constraints? There must be problems in this area. Editorial constraints, for example.

R.E. Yes, well I think they are getting more severe. I think the Alistair Milne regime is a pretty dodgy one. I think he's not remotely interested in appeals based on the right of writers and artists to make important statements. There is a distinct lack of trust in the people who are appointed - the people who are employing me, for instance. Now what do you do when you're employed to do a series of plays by someone you assume is trusted by his controller, and then you find that your plays are withdrawn? This is happening and it's frightening. I mean - in whose name are they doing this? Who are they protecting? The arrogance of these people is just unbelievable. It's the same kind of arrogance as I have constantly encountered. It takes me back to school days. It's the people who assume that they're born to rule and to exercise judgement. They're disgusting people.

P.S. Is this a serious worry for you

R.E. Well it is a worry, but it's also an attraction. You want to have that sort of fight even if you know you won't win it. But it's a sad fight to have, to do a piece of work that you believe strongly in and then have it shelved. But I suppose I do anticipate having that sort of argument, because I do plan to make that sort of programme, exercising the same sort of freedom that I've had in the theatre. You know, I'm doing a play here now, "Deeds", that I very much doubt would be put on TV. Well, I know it wouldn't, because they would be terrified by the fear of libel, and they would say it was polemic - whereas here the Board has been generous and said, "Well we may not like it, but we defend your right to put it on." And that seems to me a proper trust.

ON VIEW

The Basford Beam Engine

PHILIP BROOMHEAD

(Philip Broomhead is Curator of the Nottingham Industrial Museum. This is the first of a series in which experts look at items on public view in the Nottingham area.)

IF YOU VISITED WOLLATON PARK in 1974 and walked through the courtyards of the eighteenth century Stable Block - on your way, we hope, to the Industrial Museum - you may well have wondered why they were building the glass box over the wall. An enquiry in the right quarter would have assured you that it was not a new greenhouse for the Parks Department or the first stage of Nottingham's bid to outdo the Crystal Palace - no, it was "to house the Basford beam engine"; all very mysterious. But, from the middle of 1975, visitors have been able to see for themselves what we have been doing out in the back-yard. And now, with the project practically completed and the engine regularly in steam, they can judge for themselves whether it has all been worthwhile.

We have to go back 120 years to see just what we have been busy preserving. The Basford engines were not the first to be used in connection with Nottingham's water supply. There had been waterworks with steam-operated pumps down by the Trent - until it became too polluted - and at the top of the Ropewalk. But the Basford (or Bagthorpe) Works were the first large-scale undertaking of the old Nottingham Waterworks Company. They were set up in 1858 at the junction of Hucknall Road and Haydn Road in the northern suburbs, with two identical engine houses designed by Nottingham architect T.C Hine in his characteristic Jacobean-cum-Flemish style. These overlooked a large ornamental pond providing cooling water for the engines, and the surrounding $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres were laid out with ornamental trees and shrubs, gravel walks and lawns - a park-like setting that many local people must remember as a delightful oasis amongst encroaching industrial development. It has all, alas, disappeared, though similar idyllic settings have been preserved at the Nottingham Water Department's Bestwood and Papplewick Pumping Stations outside the city boundaries.

One of the buildings at Basford housed the preserved engine and its mirror twin, and the other a single-cylinder engine installed in 1867 when the works were extended. Our engine and its companion were built by R.W. Hawthorn of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and were put into service upon completion of the works in 1858. They raised water from wells sunk 110 feet into the very porous Bunter Sandstone beds which underlie Nottingham. The base of the Sandstone rests on impervious Permian Marls, and a vast underground reservoir is thus formed easily capable of yielding the 2 million gallons a day that were pumped at Basford alone.

There were three wells at the works, all connected at the bottom by driftways from which 12-inch diameter boreholes were sunk a further



120 feet or so into the Lower Sandstone beds. There was a double well about $9\frac{1}{2}$ feet in diameter under our engine, its shaft housing the rising mains of the two engines. These were 16-inch diameter pipes in which a column of water was lifted in 5-foot stages with each engine stroke by means of a series of pitch pine "spear rods" connecting the pump rods at one end of the beam of the engine to a bucket pump at the bottom of the well. The water spilling out of the top of this pipe was delivered by ram pumps - also working from the beam - through an 18-inch diameter main to the reservoirs. These were the Belle Vue reservoir a mile away in Mapperley Road, and the high-level reservoir at the top of Woodborough Road.

The engine preserved at Wollaton is a 35 h.p. compound rotative beam engine with a jet condenser, and it is technically a most interesting and sophisticated machine. Though less ornate and much smaller than the James Watt and Company engines preserved at Papplewick Pumping Station, the Basford engine shares with them those characteristics typical of Victorian municipal engineering installations. It is obviously built to last, superbly finished and fit for its function, yet at the same time incorporating ornamental details such as the Roman Doric order of the valve chest. And then there was that almost "country house" setting and the atmosphere of a shrine to Water and Engineering that can still be savoured in the chapel-like engine house at Papplewick.

James Watt's main contributions to the development of the steam engine can all be seen in this one. In the separate condenser, jets of cold water are played into the steam exhausted from the cylinders, and thus their wasteful repeated heating and cooling is avoided. A centrifugal governor to control the engine's speed - to 12 strokes per minute - is geared to the crankshaft, and a "parallel motion" arrangement of rods and links at each end of the beam ensures truly vertical up-and-down movement of the piston and pump rods.

The complex valve gear which is such a prominent feature is necessary because of the "compounding" of the cylinders. Steam is first admitted to the smaller high pressure cylinder, where its expansion moves the piston up and down, and it then passes to the low pressure cylinder where further expansion can take place. Steam was originally supplied at a pressure of 40 pounds per square inch to the two engines by three Lancashire type boilers.

Early in the 1960s, the Water Department decided that it would be more economical to replace the engines with electric pumps. In situ preservation was not possible in the long term as the site was earmarked for the Department's new headquarters. The engines were therefore offered to the City Museums, who undertook to preserve them, and when they came out of service in 1965 they were "mothballed" for several years. In 1968, the decision was made to move one engine to the newly established Industrial Museum, and regretfully, but with the limited resources available inevitably, to scrap the other.

The following year, the Arkwright Society, a volunteer group of engineering enthusiasts recruited by the Museum, began the formidable task of dismantling the engine. One can get some idea of the magnitude of the problems facing them when one knows, for instance, that the 23-foot beam alone weighs 6 tons and that the flywheel, with a diameter

of 18 feet, weighs no less than 15 tons. Working within the narrow confines of the tailor-made house, and with a minimum of specialist handling equipment available, this dedicated band took on a difficult job but carried it out in fine style. Their efforts, under the direction first of Mr Dougal McIntyre, a retired steam engineer, who sadly did not live to see the completion of the project, and later of the present Chairman, Lieutenant Colonel Frank Tatham, a retired REME officer, are remembered and recorded with considerable gratitude. The parts were marked, cleaned and removed to storage and a few parts from the second engine were taken as spares.

Meanwhile, Nottingham architect Terry Bestwick was commissioned to design the building to house the engine in Wollaton Park. A replica of the original house was rejected as inappropriate, and instead a simple workmanlike glass and steel building was seen as a logical and elegant solution - effectively, a gigantic showcase inside which the visitor could climb about and view the exhibit at close quarters. The colours of the steelwork and glass were chosen to harmonise with the surrounding mellow brickwork, and the position and massing of the new structure - and the adjacent, lower Agricultural Gallery - were carefully planned to link old and new. Massive reinforced concrete works below ground level were needed to provide foundations for the engine itself and for the steel superstructure of the "glass box".

The re-erection of the engine had to be co-ordinated with work on the new building - for example, certain large elements had to be in place before the roof and glazing could be put in - and, within this tight schedule, the Arkwright Society worked alongside the Dorothea Restoration Engineers, a professional firm employed through the Industrial Restoration Agency of the Area Museum and Art Gallery Service for the Midlands. There were problems, but the final polish and the last lick of paint were applied in time to open the engine house to visitors for the Nottingham Festival in June 1975.

But for the finishing touch - the breathing of life into the engine - we had to wait almost two more years. Happily, the City Council were able to make funds available and, with generous contributions from members of the public and from the Area Service, who once more subsidised the professional engineers, and with the continuing help of the Arkwright volunteers, we now have the engine in steam once more. A second-hand oil-fired boiler was acquired at a knock-down price and, small though it looks, it has proved more than adequate to run the engine.

A few minor teething troubles were soon dealt with; the most embarrassing was when a brand new pressure reduction valve went on the blink during the first public steaming on Easter Monday 1977. The engine crew is formed by members of the Arkwright Society - now the Industrial section of the newly formed Friends of Nottingham Museums - together with museum staff, and we have had record attendances every time the engine has been working. A programme has been agreed for 1978, and we hope to be "in steam" on the last Sunday of each month throughout the year, as well as on the Easter, Spring and Summer Bank Holiday Mondays - from about 2.00 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. on all of these dates.

Stanley Middleton and the provincial novel

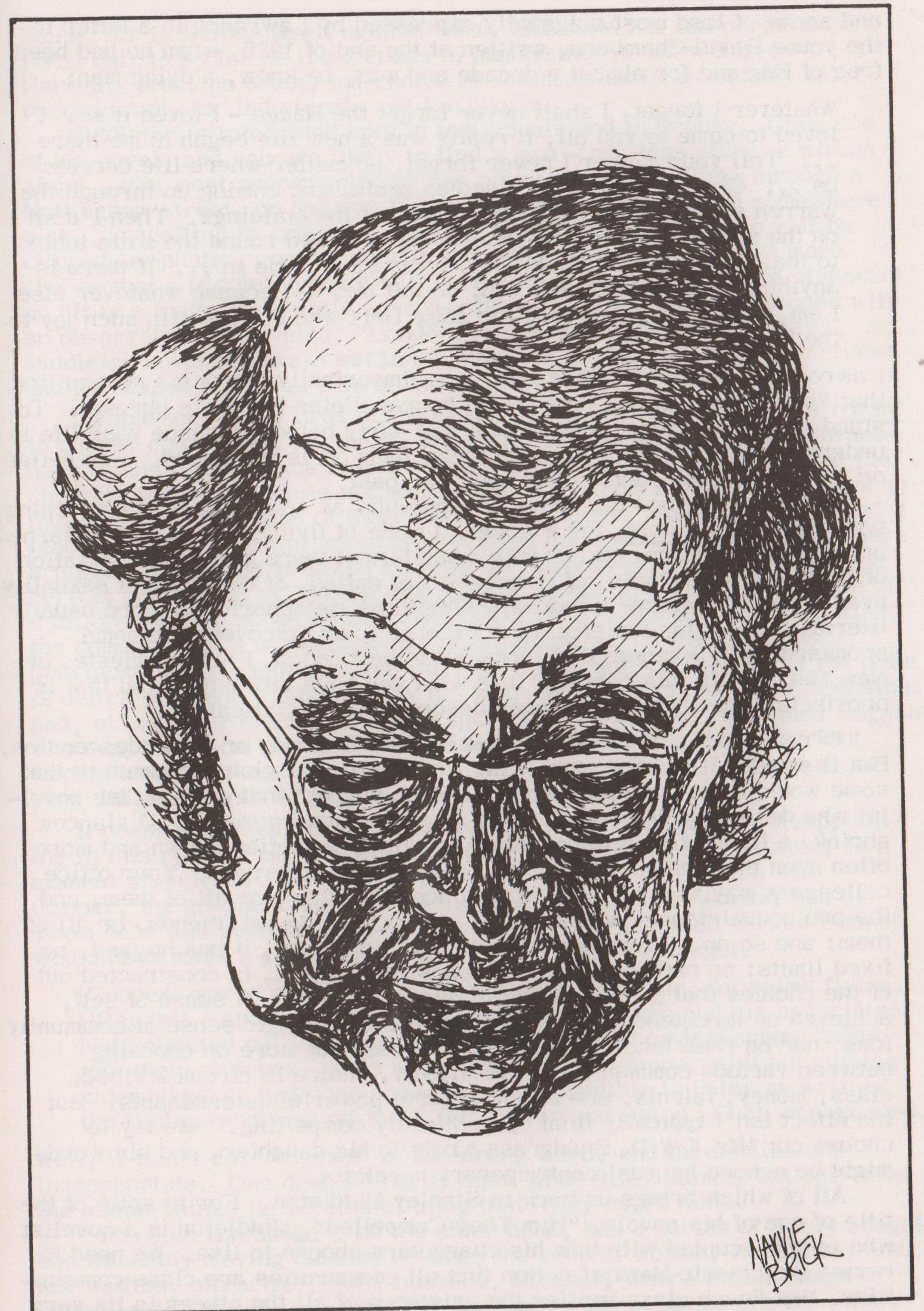
JOHN LUCAS

STANLEY MIDDLETON IS OFTEN called a provincial novelist. It is an odd, and perhaps double-edged, phrase. What can it mean? That he writes about Nottingham and the surrounding areas? That his fictions are a bit rough, don't somehow have the polish of - of who or what, exactly? For there isn't a phrase for the non-provincial novelist. We don't speak of the metropolitan novelist, for instance, or of the cosmopolitan novelist. (Clive James's *Metropolitan Critic* is a cardboard figure put up against cardboard opponents.) So that to be called a provincial novelist is perhaps to become a marked creature.

Or is it that when the phrase is attached to Mr Middleton the intention is to link him to that honourable line of nineteenth century novelists whose subject matter was drawn from provincial England (i.e. all that wasn't London)? George Eliot, Elizabeth Gaskell, Thomas Hardy, William Hale White: in their different ways, these four major novelists all write about provincial communities; and all of their fictions explore the ways in which community fractures, breaks down. Changing class-allegiances, economic forces, the social process, religious divisions, make for the history of community change, when change feels like loss, so that to be a provincial novelist is nearly always to write in the elegiac mode, or at the least to have an acute sense of time passing. And, of course, the nineteenth century experience is conditioned by a new sense of the past as forever lost. Nostalgia can become the key to this kind of provincialism. "The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there." It is a world of regression, of soft primitivism, of childhood idylls. As such it feeds only tiny and debilitated talents. The exception is the exceptional, as in Leo Walmsley's attractively innocent novels about the Yorkshire coast around Robin Hood's Bay.

The major provincial novelist of the first half of the twentieth century is, of course, Arnold Bennett, and his territory is the industrial Potteries. Because of this, he writes not so much about community as inter-connecting communities: of chapel, public house, social groups, and many different kinds of work, on all of which he is brilliant. But the brilliance is typically that of the acutely observant outsider, the man - or woman - who looks on, rather than the participant. Most of Bennett's protagonists already feel themselves spiritually, and often physically, isolated from the communities with which they come into contact. And in this they are different from the protagonists of most major nineteenth century provincial novels, for whom a sense of isolation develops during the course of the novel, and through whose consciousness of this we register the breakdown of a sense of community.

Bennett is an example of the cultural extremism which takes for granted the writer versus society, which in different ways develops out of nineteenth century notions of the artist as somehow able to unchain himself from the rock of history, and which leads to the kind of disillusion



and sense of loss most poignantly expressed by Lawrence in a letter to the young David Chambers, written at the end of 1928, when he had been free of England for almost a decade and was, he knew, a dying man:

Whatever I forget, I shall never forget the Hags - I loved it so. I loved to come to you all, it really was a new life began in me there ... Tell your mother I never forget, no matter where life carries us ... Oh, I'd love to be nineteen again, and coming up through the Warren and catching the first glimpse of the buildings. Then I'd sit on the sofa under the window, and we'd crowd round the little table to tea, in that tiny little kitchen I was so at home in ... If there is anything I can ever do for you, do tell me. - Because whatever else I am, I am somewhere still the same Bert who rushed with such joy to the Hags.

Lawrence's sense of loss comes, most importantly, from his recognition that "you cannot leave England" (to borrow Peter Porter's phrase). To stand at distance from those things that early helped to shape your life is understandable; to think you can throw them off is misguided. For better or for worse, you cannot deny your own past.

Behind or beyond the sense of community as confinement is a yearning, typically *fin de siècle*, for a world, a mode of living, which can be earned only by renunciation. It can take many forms: there may be renunciation of family, of friendship, of community, of nation, of religion, of sexuality even. And it requires a journey, sometimes metaphoric but more usually literal, a quest for the grail of art that is to be discovered in some promised land, whether that turns out to be London, Paris, Trieste, or New Mexico. In this context, it is what you have left behind you that is provincial; the term is no longer descriptive but critical.

"Provincial". It is usually now a form of abuse, or of condescension. But it shouldn't be, for even if the world isn't the global community that some would claim, it seems reasonable to suggest that any English novelist who deals with the social world is a provincial novelist. Distances shrink, a friend five hundred miles away may be better known and more often seen than the man next door, communities intersect. Your office colleagues may well not be your pub acquaintances, or all of them, and the pub acquaintances will probably not be your social friends, or all of them; and so on. Community is not something given, it has no past, no fixed limits; or rather, it has varieties of all these, is constructed out of the choices that go with living in cities or towns. A sense of self, achieved or threatened, no longer depends on a tragic sense of community loss, nor on resistance to community values, but more on choosing between various communities. Admittedly, choice is circumscribed: class, money, talents, are among several powerful determinants. But the effect isn't typically final or ruthlessly compelling. "We try to choose our life," W.D. Snodgrass wrote to his daughter, and his words might be echoed by most contemporary novelists.

All of which brings us back to Stanley Middleton. For in spite of the title of one of his novels, "Him They Compelled", Middleton is a novelist who is preoccupied with how his characters choose to live. We need to revise the classic Marxist notion that all communities are class communities, that "each class implies the existence of all the others in its very

being, for it defines itself against them, and survives and perpetuates itself only in so far as it succeeds in humiliating its adversaries". Partially true, no doubt, but choice of communities is an equally valid partial truth, for individuals and for groups.

Middleton is interested both in individuals and in groups. Open one of his novels and you are likely to find a man - or, less often, a woman - alone, or at most accompanied by one other person, walking through a Nottingham street, on the way to somewhere, and away from somewhere else. Travelling to crisis, to choice, to decision. The style will be clipped, emphatic, concerned with the particular. There is no more chance that a Middleton novel will open with some such absolute statement as "It is a truth universally acknowledged ..." than that it will open with an observation of the kind, "London. Michaelmas term lately over". A Middleton novel is always set in a particular place, at a particular time; and particular people are involved.

Involvement is the crux of the matter. Middleton's heroes don't want to choose commitment to others, to, as it often turns out, painful awareness of and interference in their lives. Nevertheless, they do make the choice: compulsion comes not so much directly from the others as from an individual's awareness of them and of their needs, wishes, lacks. And it leads to at least partial immersion in lives quite unlike one's own. There are some brilliantly realised moments in "Harris's Requiem" where the hero is confronted by, among other matters, the wrecked married life of a fellow-teacher about whom he has felt nothing much but mild irritation; the committee of a working-men's organisation about which he has previously known nothing, and which he finds, quite rightly - but the point is delicately made - affronted by his well-meant but obtuse condescension; and, at the other end of the social spectrum, by the rich, polished magnate who supports local musical enterprises. Middleton hardly puts a foot wrong in any of these encounters. Harris learns things of value about very different kinds of people, and we learn with him.

It doesn't always work out so well. A novel particularly disappointing in this respect is "A Man Made of Smoke". Here, for example, is a moment when Riley, the novel's protagonist, is in discussion with Cooper, the go-ahead director of the firm for which he works, and by whom he's just been promoted. It is a scene out of which Arnold Bennett would have made a great deal. Middleton misses the target.

(Cooper) moved expansively like a market huckster, fat palms flying. Riley felt a spasm of respect. This sweating man and his associates had collected millions together and had tricked or terrorised firms into their clutches. This man, this fourteen-stoner with his curling sidewhiskers, had done something as incredible to Riley as writing the Bible, or diving off the Eiffel Tower and living. Such men existed.

Well, it won't do. "Spasm" is the wrong word, and the similes are inappropriate. One doesn't really know what Riley thinks, but only what the author thinks is the kind of thing that Riley might think.

"The Just Exchange", on the other hand, has a series of finely caught and intensely moving clashes between the central woman, Henrietta, and her selfish, attractive, witty husband, Michael, where the language is never less than adequate and often becomes a great deal more than that.

And that is just as true of "A Serious Woman", my favourite Middleton novel.

These two novels are especially good because in them Middleton manages to show how difficult it can be for anyone to come by a real sense of another person, and how the breakthrough to that reality is an important triumph for the human spirit, a victory for imagination. The victories become less secure and fewer as the novels go on. For the fictions get progressively glummer, shades of the charnel house close about people. In "Cold Gradations", a novel much possessed by death, James Mansfield and his son, David, both of whom have experienced heart attacks, try to talk of their experiences. The older man speaks for both of them, and for their author, or so it feels, when he says that what he remembers from the seizure is "this weakness, this emptiness, this conviction I'd done nothing worthwhile ... I knew I was done for, and that I was nothing. I wasn't worth saving". And, for all his son's attempts to cheer him up, he repeats, "I'm nobody; I'm doing nothing. That's what it did for me."

Now it may seem unfair to accuse Middleton himself of being implicated in this kind of blank misery. For though his humanist position requires him to insist on the finality of death, there is also a sense in which he would want to say, with Pasternak, that we are "guests of existence". And so in all the novels one comes across what are clearly meant to be taken as epiphanic moments. These are not to be confused with the detailed relish for the thinginess of things that Mr Middleton frequently and convincingly displays; they are rather moments of unearned, gratuitous but transforming joy, ecstasy, overwhelming happiness.

Or are meant to be. The problem is that they don't convince. Take the moment in "Him They Compelled" where the hero, John Newton, suddenly recalls a girl he had known "wearing a great cartwheel of a hat, in shining straw. Marvellous."; or the incident in "Holiday" where we are asked to feel that when an old man quotes a couplet at the hero, Fisher, "Fisher knew joy then, a minute prod of delight"; or the scene in "Still Waters" where John Lindsay claims that when he had looked down from a hill on to the Victoria Centre, "it didn't spoil the sky. That had Poussin clouds, nimbus, are they? And patches of blue. And behind great swathes of Turner. I felt pleased."

Whichever one of those moments we choose, the difficulty is the same. We are asked to identify with, or believe in, the truth of an emotion which is flatly reported and in no sense made to come alive. I know that it is more difficult to do this kind of thing in prose than in poetry, and I imagine that most of us would naturally look to poets like Clare or Edward Thomas for the kind of transfiguring of the ordinary, or discovery of joy in the ordinary, that Middleton tries to capture on the occasions I have pointed to. Yet as Grassic Gibbon's great trilogy, "A Scots Quair", shows, it can be done in the humanist novel. And really it had better be. For the alternatives go straight to extremes that no sane person can contemplate with pleasure.

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The way they work

Changes in print

FRED BROAD

(This is the first of a series in which Fred Broad looks mainly at the technical side of how local firms work.)

JUST DOWN THE ROAD FROM DESA are two industrial mammoths, Player's and TI Raleigh. The printing trade makes an intriguing contrast. Setting up on your own is still traditional - learn the trade, get a lot of experience behind you, then start your own business. This is what Derek Chawner did eight years ago. Now Desa employs twenty people and prints everything from pamphlets to books. The firm will soon be moving to bigger premises.

Though small, Desa has always used advanced printing techniques, and it was about these that I talked to Stuart Power, the production manager. But first an obvious question: new technology has caused a lot of union trouble in Fleet Street and elsewhere - how does it affect a small printing firm?

"My own history is very pro-union," says Stuart firmly. "I know about confrontation - after the battle it's usually the chap on the shop floor who suffers. A lot of the damage is brought about by the lack of consultation and the lack of management."

The company is fully unionised. All employees are members of the National Graphical Association. Stuart himself is a former Father of the Chapel in an NGA shop. Management is drawn from shop-floor expertise - ex-machine minders, compositors etc. who know the business. So, far from causing strife, new technology has been the basis of the firm's success. From the beginning, all the printing has been done by photolithography, with the introduction nearly five years ago of computerised photo-typesetting. It sounds complicated, but the basic ideas are easy to grasp. The simplest way is to look at how the processes developed.

Most people are familiar with traditional letterpress printing, in which an image is transferred to paper by using raised moveable type ("moveable" because each letter can be moved separately and re-used). Modern letterpress printing is as dependent on this basic principle as was Caxton's first English press of 1476.

By contrast, lithography prints from a flat, not a raised, surface. The image is reproduced by a chemical process. The essential idea dates back to 1798, when Aloys Senefelder discovered that, if an image is drawn on to a limestone block (a "stone") with grease, then it is possible to "fix" this image to the surface of the stone with weak acid solutions. If ink is applied to the greased image, it will readily adhere. Senefelder also realised that limestone holds water naturally on its surface, and, since water and grease repel one another, it is possible



to wet the entire stone before applying ink, which then adheres only to the greased areas.

(The story, no doubt apocryphal, is that Senefelder discovered lithography by accident. He was asked by his mother to make a note of his laundry, and, being without pen or paper in his workshop, used the only materials to hand, which were a greasy acid resist and a polished block of limestone!)

Though the process used at Desa is a good deal more sophisticated than this, the early lithographic presses could produce remarkably sensitive work. They were used extensively by artists (Degas and Toulouse-Lautrec are famous examples), who would draw their originals directly on to the stone with the image reversed. But the process was costly and cumbersome. Heavy limestone blocks had to be highly polished to achieve good results, and the process was unsuitable for printing text, since there was no method of transferring text to the stone other than by hand drawing.

Eventually, the stones were replaced by metal plates with similar chemical qualities. With thin flexible plates, it became possible to print from rotary presses rather than the flat presses used previously. If a second cylinder covered with a rubber blanket were added, the image could be transferred to this (or "offset") before being printed, which meant that the original image no longer had to be reversed. This process was known as "offset-lithography". It was used towards the end of the nineteenth century for printing on tin-plate, but was not used for printing on other material until this century.

At the same time, the application of photographic techniques to offset-litho was completely transforming the process, creating what is now known as photolitho-offset. It was discovered that the metal plates could be made photosensitive. Negatives could be photographed from black and white originals and the plate then exposed through the negative to give a positive image suitable for printing. The principle is exactly the same as for an ordinary photograph, but the "print" is made on to the plate instead of paper.

There was still the problem of producing text. Although text could now be photographed from an original copy produced by letterpress, this obviously reduced the advantage of using photo-litho. Typewritten copy could be used, but the quality was inferior. The problem was finally solved in the mid-sixties, when computer techniques were combined with electric typewriters. The IBM composer, a favourite of small offset printers, is, in fact, an electric typewriter which remembers text once it has been typed and retypes it in a justified format (i.e. with a straight right-hand edge).

Desa used IBM composing at first, but photography had something more to offer. It had been realised as early as the nineteen-twenties that text could be reproduced photographically by the use of master film containing a complete set of characters; but not until the computer arrived could a fast and reliable photosetter be constructed. Desa's current system of photosetting utilises punched tape, which is coded with information about the letters and the format, and operated from individual keyboards. These are not much more sophisticated in appearance than an ordinary typewriter, carrying "banks" of functional and code keys,

and can be used by competent typists who have a knowledgeable background in the printing industry. The punched tape is fed into the photosetter proper, and, since this is faster than the keyboard operator, one photosetter can take the work of several keyboards.

This kind of new technology has led to the setting up of many small print firms and in-plant print shops, since a relatively small capital outlay is needed for a simple offset-litho system. In general, however, small plants will be unable to generate enough work (or the capital required) to justify a photosetting system, so that firms like Desa with photosetting capacity are becoming increasingly important.

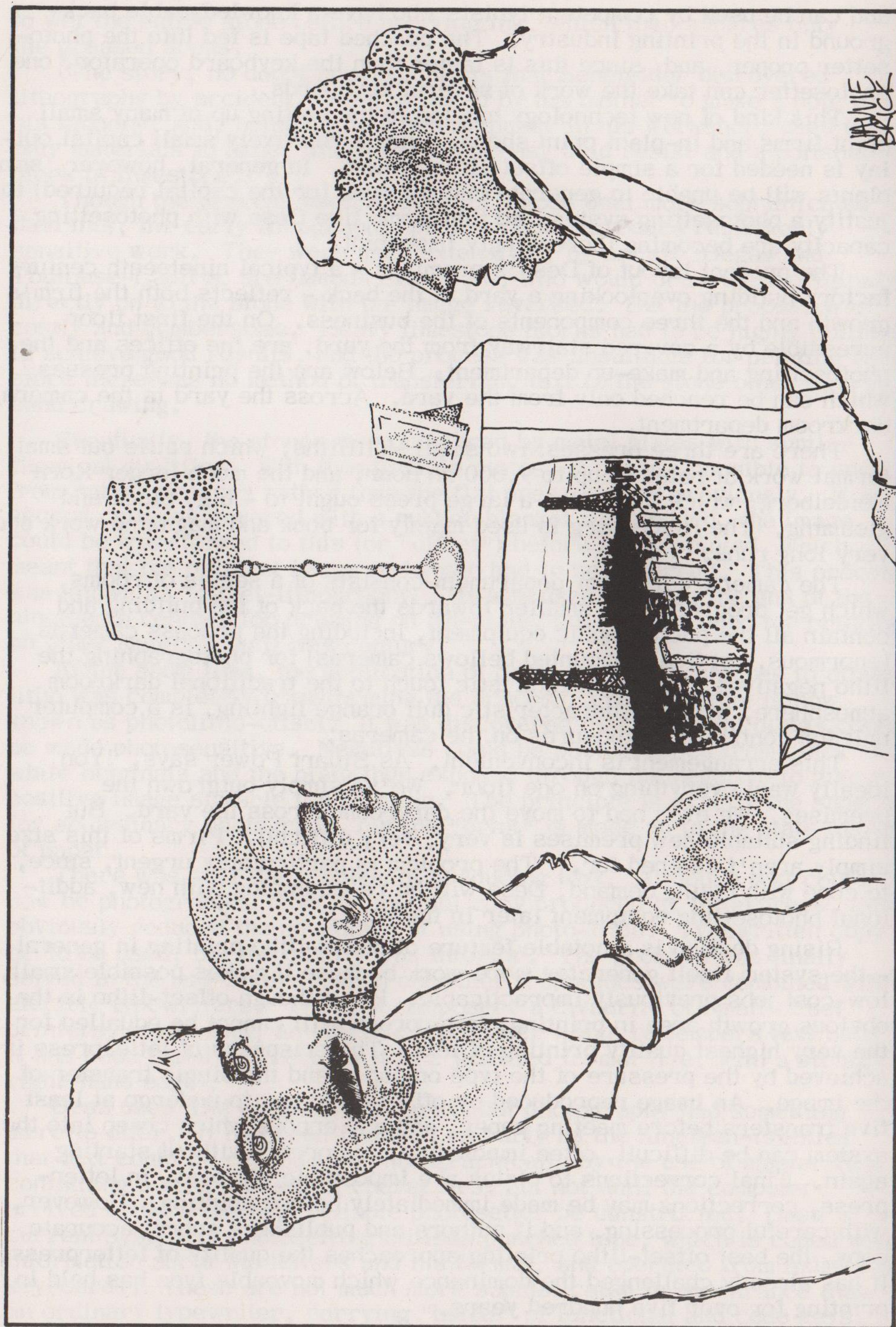
The present layout of Desa's premises - a typical nineteenth century factory building overlooking a yard at the back - reflects both the firm's growth and the three components of the business. On the first floor, accessible by a covered stairway from the yard, are the offices and the photosetting and make-up department. Below are the printing presses, which can be reached only from the yard. Across the yard is the camera/darkroom department.

There are three presses: two small Multiliths, which rattle out small format work at rates of up to 9,000 an hour, and the much larger Kora Heidelberg, which looks like a large press ought to - big, black and gleaming. The Heidelberg is used mainly for book and magazine work and very long runs.

The camera/darkroom department consists of a series of rooms, which get progressively smaller towards the back of the building and contain all the photographic equipment, including the process cameras (enormous, vertically mounted bellows cameras) for photographing the litho negatives. Adding a futuristic touch to the traditional darkroom atmosphere, with its characteristic dull orange lighting, is a computer unit for controlling exposures on the cameras.

This arrangement is inconvenient. As Stuart Power says, "You ideally want everything on one floor. We've simply outgrown the premises. We even had to move the darkroom across the yard. But finding suitable new premises is very, very difficult. Firms of this size simply aren't catered for." The problem is particularly urgent, since, to cope with rising demand, Desa will be re-equipping with new, additional photosetting equipment later in the year.

Rising demand is a notable feature of offset-litho printing in general - the system itself generates more work because it makes possible small, low-cost jobs previously impracticable. But although offset-litho is the obvious growth area in printing, letterpress still cannot be equalled for the very highest quality printing of text. The crispness of letterpress is achieved by the pressure of the type on paper and the single transfer of the image. An image reproduced by offset-litho has to undergo at least five transfers before meeting paper, and any errors which creep into the system can be difficult, often impossible, to correct without starting again. Final corrections to plates are impossible whereas, in letterpress, corrections may be made immediately before printing. However, with careful processing, and if authors and publishers submit accurate copy, the best offset-litho printing approaches the quality of letterpress. It has already challenged the dominance which moveable type has held in printing for over five hundred years.



The storytellers

FRANCES McNEIL

EACH EVENING THE TWO MIDDLE-AGED children came home to the aged mother. The son from his job as stock clerk in the parts department of the motor firm, the daughter from the insurance office. Proud of them was the mother. Sick rarely were Marjorie and Alan and punctual always.

A dog and three cats they had, named after their individual ways and habits. Privet Leaf, Leonard Pig and Song 'n' Dance. Simple it was and a stranger would soon see the logic of their names. Privet Leaf chased privet leaves, or indeed anything else that moved. Leonard Pig overate. Song 'n' Dance was lively and noisy. The cats were good company; a source of amusement and conversation.

Some evenings mother, Marjorie and Alan watched television or listened to the radio. Other times they read or talked, or had a game of cards. Close they were and close they had always been. Together years ago the three had watched their father, her husband, die. A sudden death terrible in its unexpectedness and pain. Shocked they were and scarred to the core but in this house of polished furniture, of dull colours, of well-ironed antimacassars, a coal fire and pictures with the brown paper backing come loose, in this house of familiarity, of gentle sights and sounds the three healed, but in the process blended one into the other so that one would take up talking where another left off. Outsiders were welcome. And even those whose brief hope it was to break into the charmed circle were tolerated, fed, amused.

In the chair mother nodded off. Hands folded peacefully in her flowering apron. Her jaw sagged. Marjorie looked at her and so did Alan. Is that how she would look when she died. What would they do without her? How changed this house would be. Hollow. Cold. Empty. Some things did not bear thinking about. When she died the spell would be broken. Perhaps. And they, Marjorie and Alan, would they stay together? And if they did what kind of life would it be without the web that mother cast. They had an awareness each of the other's failures that meant without her, despite the gentle colours, the polished furniture, the comforting fire of this house, their life together would have a keener edge to it. Mother swept away the sense of failure in a welter of words.

"You're both conscientious," she'd say, "that's your trouble. They don't give you a better job if you're good at the one you've got." "Friends, why visit them if they don't visit you?"

Once the three made an effort at French from records. Mother could not get it at all. From her total ignorance she thought their lesser failure a sign of ability. Marjorie even went to a class supposed to be beginners but they all had an inkling. She was too tired after a day's work anyway, and let it go.

"You give up too soon," said mother.

These tiny disappointments lurked spiderlike in the nooks and crannies of the house and together with the memory of that death sometimes spun a

web of gloom. Tonight was such a time. Marjorie dried the last pot and sat down. Mother no longer slept. Alan broke the silence for the cobwebs of gloom must be dispersed. He addressed the cat. It was a kind of game the three had evolved, an amusement peculiar to themselves.

"Once upon a time, Song 'n' Dance, before you were born, a cat named Alexander lived in this house."

"Alexander the intrepid warrior," said Marjorie.

"A cat among cats," said mother her eyes wide open now.

"Alexander was a brave and fearless cat, battlescarred but never weary. He patrolled his territory which encompassed the length and breadth of this street."

"Each night he visited every garden, every yard."

"Cats fled before him."

"Dogs fled before him."

"Humans cursed his wails and hurled missiles from high and low. Missiles he shrugged off with disdain. Residents only were allowed to pass freely. Alexander kept sentry duty on the front wall. Leonard Pig, then a kitten, was posted at the back. The late Korky Kat Esquire was designated to wander the bushes and report intruders. Under Alexander's command the street was freed from hostile forces. One day Alexander saw a cat in the yard opposite - a stray cat come onto his territory. He headed across towards the cat but on his way saw a car, a big flash car on its way to another place via this street. He knew it was a stray car out of its boundaries. He got very angry. Hurling himself at the car with his killer instincts working overtime."

"Poor Alexander," said mother. "Knocked down."

"Alexander," said Alan. "Killed in the course of action."

"Bravery above and beyond the call of duty."

"Alexander was how cats used to be," said mother.

Crunch the dog listened attentively, looking from one to the other of them.

"Crunch has looked at his watch," said Marjorie. "He knows it's time for his walk."

Crunch stood up and wagged his tail.

"Why did you say that," said Alan. "I'm not ready to take him yet."

"Well," said mother, "he's ready to go. Aren't you Crunch?"

Crunch walked towards her and wagged his tail. He was a big dog. Too powerful for the mother to walk. Marjorie walked him at morning and Alan at night.

"Would you like to take yourself tonight Crunch?"

"No," said mother, "he wouldn't."

Reluctantly Alan put on his coat.

"What Crunch needs," said Marjorie, "is a really long walk."

"He gets long walks Saturday and Sunday," said Alan, suspecting plans for his legs.

"I mean a really long walk. Two, three, four hours. In the country."

Alan thought about it as he walked the usual route. Yes Crunch did need a change. Same old routine day in and day out. Same times. Same places. Crunch raced towards an old newspaper that stirred in the gutter. He tossed it with his head. Finding nothing he ran to the low wall that encircled the church and sniffed intently.

"Crunch!"

But Crunch was following up a scent and did not hear. A proper change would be best. A caravan by the sea perhaps. Long walks on the cliffs, on the sands. Near a town or village so you could go in of a morning once or twice and watch everyone else starting work for the day. Yes Crunch would like that. Walking at a time when he was normally cooped up. That would be freedom.

Alan was out longer than usual and when he arrived back he had come to a decision. The following Saturday was his free Saturday, his one in four. He would take the bus to the country and he and Crunch would go for a long walk. He might have his lunch in a country pub, or perhaps eat sandwiches out in the open. He announced his decision as he took his place in front of the fire and the rest of the evening was taken up with a discussion of places he might go. It was not a fruitful discussion as none of them had been much outside the town, except on holidays by the sea and the occasional mystery tour or dim-remembered school coach trip. Still there were one or two ideas and it was decided that Marjorie would go in her lunch hour to the bus station and find out times and destinations. And mother insisted that both should go.

Mother had a permanent worry these days. One of them might strike out alone after her death, then each would suffer the world alone. For the truth was that in the end you could only rely on your own. When it came to the crunch there would be just the two of them.

"You can sit together on the bus," mother said. "Then Crunch can sit at your feet and no stranger will be able to sit next to you and disturb or complain." That clinched it.

At eight o'clock they set off. They turned to wave to mother and the cats who watched them go. Although they did not know the countryside they knew the country code and were quite prepared to get off the bus and then close gates after them, pocket their sandwich wrappings and save their non-returnable ginger ale bottles until they came to a litter-bin. This was understood. They were relieved that Crunch behaved as though bus travel was an everyday occurrence. Surprised that they did not alight at the edge of a vast stretch of green and rocky land but in a market town with stalls already set and shoppers about their business. Marjorie remembered to ask about buses back and then they set about finding a hilly place to walk.

They backtracked along the bus route, back to the outskirts of the town as others were travelling in to do their shopping. It pleased them both to be free from that kind of care today. Free to travel in the opposite direction, to grassy slopes. They did not even mind the light rain.

"There," said Alan, "look down there and you can see it."

Marjorie looked and there between buildings on their right she saw the vast expanse of moorland stretching into the horizon.

"There it is Crunch."

"Don't get him excited," said Alan.

"Why not? You're excited. Look at you bounce along the pavement."

At the foot of the slopes Marjorie let Crunch off the lead. He looked at them puzzled. What was expected? What direction should he take? Then as Marjorie and Alan walked up the track he ran ahead of them.

Raced to a rock. Chased a bird, circled back to them and away again. The hill grew steep. Occasionally they put Crunch on the lead. That was when sheep grazed nearby. There was no mention of sheep in the country code but Marjorie and Alan knew the dangers - and the penalties of allowing dogs too near sheep. But Crunch did not express overmuch interest in them, until four or five mistaking them for shepherds and sheepdog grouped themselves together expectantly. Alan and Marjorie smiled. Crunch sensed the sheep's docility and anticipating a great game tugged at the lead, whined, and leapt towards them in spite of tightening choker. But as they gained higher ground the sheep became fewer and then there were none. Alan took off the lead and Crunch raced on as before.

They had walked for about two hours when they halted and in the shelter of a steep rock sat on a flat stone to eat and rest. Crunch shared their sandwiches then went off to drink in a stream that trickled down the hillside, widening and narrowing by turn. He splashed in it, tentatively at first then boldly up into the wider and deeper part. Marjorie took out the apples which they ate slowly and after discussion threw away the cores, because cores they decided would rot and fertilize the ground. But the papers and bottles went back into Marjorie's bag.

"Crunch!" called Marjorie.

Alan whistled.

They heard a distant bark. Not needing to exchange looks they hurried alongside the stream and round its bend.

"Well," said Marjorie with a sigh of relief, "no sheep."

"Look over there."

By a boulder was a small flock of sheep, ten or eleven close to the rock. No Crunch. And then they saw him, at the bottom of the bank. He barked again as he grew angry with a sheep that could not or would not join the rest. To its rear water prevented it, to its fore, right and left, Crunch prevented it. Playfully encircling it. Now barking, now leaping.

"Crunch!"

"Here boy!"

Crunch did not respond but the leaps grew more menacing and growls mingled with barks as though he suspected treacherous intent on the part of this sheep which would not play the game. The sheep made standing-still steps and glanced right and left with a stiff movement of its head that made Marjorie fear for its throat.

The water that separated them from the two animals was deep and wide at this part and Alan ran downstream. Marjorie kicked off her shoes, dropped the bag, and careless of her stockings waded in.

But for a barely perceptible movement of its body, more a shudder than a sway, the sheep no longer moved. Crunch's advances now had an intensity that Marjorie had not seen before. Teeth barred, his jaws snapped within a fraction of the sheep's throat. Marjorie reached the bank. On his rebound she caught him collar and tail and with all her weight threw him to the ground and held him there. The sheep ran towards the rest. Recovering her breath, Marjorie dragged Crunch along the bank as he struggled to free himself. Then Alan slipped the chain over his head. Together they crossed at the stepping stones, Marjorie leaving a smudge of blood on every other stone, Crunch panting his way through the water.

Afterwards they could not remember the descent. They only knew that on the bus mild surprise intruded on their shock, surprise at the speed of their retreat. Crunch slept throughout the homeward journey.

Mother had expected them to be out a bit longer. But how well they looked! Colour in their cheeks. And Crunch's nose, so wet and shiny. When they told her what had happened she said, "At least you were together. Who would have stood by you?"

They were tired that night.

"Weary. Weary," said Marjorie aloud as she came down the stairs.

"Weary to the bones."

Nothing ever turned out right somehow. Alan went off to the pictures but came back because the queue was too long.

They sat in front of the television. Marjorie cast on a cardigan sleeve. Mother closed her eyes. Alan watched the television with little interest, then said:

"One day Mr Crunch looked in the pantry. He saw a distinct lack of livers and lamb chops and knowing the family's fondness for mixed grill he made a secret and solemn resolve."

Marjorie looked up expectantly from her knitting. Mother opened her eyes. Alan continued.

"Mr Crunch resolved that he would journey into the country and replenish the family's larder."

"Yes," thought the mother, "they will stay together now," and she closed her eyes again.

Song 'n' Dance jumped up beside Alan to listen and Privet Leaf knocked Marjorie's ball of wool clear across the room.



People in music (1)

Neville Dilkes

Peter Palmer interviews the Musical Director of the English Sinfonia

Peter Palmer. Your own musical career has been chiefly bound up with the orchestra you created, the English Sinfonia. What would you say have been the greatest rewards of conducting the Sinfonia?

Neville Dilkes. As you say, my musical career has been chiefly bound up with the English Sinfonia. My satisfaction over the years is that we have developed a style of playing which I believe is essentially our own and an esprit de corps unique in the orchestral world. Further, the orchestra is recognised far beyond the boundaries of its provincial base. The very nature of the orchestra, employing as it does free-lance players, means a constant flow of musicians, so that over the years I have come to know almost every player in the profession. Only the best musicians can afford to free-lance and be certain of work, so it has meant that I have been privileged to work with some of our best talent. On the other hand, a hard core of devoted players have been with me since the earliest days, and it is their loyalty and devotion which helps to characterise the orchestra. It has been said that anyone can conduct a "good" orchestra, and this is true if it is an isolated occasion and the players are proud enough of the tradition to want things to go well, but to work continuously with a "crack" band is the real test, and it has been a considerable reward to me to know that I continue to get good performances and that our playing together gets still better. Conductor/orchestra relationship has changed over the years, and it is not difficult to understand the rise of the conductor-showman. Radio and recordings make interpretations immediately available, and the standard of musicianship in the ranks is so high that orchestras are less in need of training, either technically or musically, than ever before. Consequently, it is more of a challenge for the modern conductor to display originality, and, regrettably, because audiences don't always recognise this, many performances become stereotyped copies.

P.P. The history of the Sinfonia has been one of gradual expansion. Has it developed entirely as you would have wished? Do you envisage its remaining the symphony/chamber orchestra that it is at present?

N.D. The English Sinfonia has certainly shown a history of gradual expansion, in fact exactly what I envisaged in 1961, but I must add that my own thoughts changed along the line, and I think were it not for the healthy increase in local interest my early aims would have undergone modification. As it is, the enthusiasm of the region should make it possible for the orchestra to go permanent, and I would think it inevitable that its future development will tend towards symphonic rather than chamber repertoire in order to satisfy local needs. It was always my

wish to maintain, for the want of a better description, "London standards" in spite of the orchestra's provinciality, but I sometimes have my doubts for the future as each year the organisation becomes more difficult to fund and the horizons don't seem so wide. An orchestra is a living thing, and the world in which it lives is larger than the East Midlands, but, with vision and unstinting support from those in a position to give it, the future need not be black.

P.P. For my personal taste, today's concert programmes in general concentrate too exclusively on the nineteenth century repertoire. Would you agree there is an imbalance?

N.D. Today's concert programmes, of course, reflect what I have just said, and at times I do feel guilty of churning out already well-played repertoire. I remember in past years a Composer-in-Association with the Orchestra, and also a series of Player/Dilkes concerts at Nottingham Playhouse featuring "Second" Performances, but I must say two things in our defence: (i) our audiences have never been better; and (ii) much of the popular repertoire (which is still first-rate music) is first-time stuff for me, and I believe audiences are hearing fresh interpretations at the same time as I build up my own repertoire of orchestral music.

P.P. The English Sinfonia is one of the few orchestras to have challenged successfully London's dominance of the musical scene. What further steps might be taken to promote music-making on a professional level in the regions?

N.D. It is true that the English Sinfonia is one of the few orchestras to have challenged London's dominance of the musical scene. What I think is even more impressive is that we've done it for so long. Many new organisations, known as "mushroom orchestras" in the profession, spring up overnight and have a very short life. The Sinfonia, founded in 1961, is now seventeen years old. Each year has been better than the previous one, and we're still going strong. However, I think the region could benefit more from music-making on a professional level, and, apart from the Sinfonia becoming permanent, I would like to see the establishment of a music college, more frequent visits by, or the establishment of, an opera company using the Sinfonia, and not least a new environment for the performance of symphonic, operatic and chamber music.

P.P. Nowadays, sponsorship by local authorities and by industry has replaced the aristocratic patronage of the past. Is that altogether a good thing for music, or not? And how does our English system compare with systems abroad?

N.D. I have always felt that the Arts Council of Great Britain, until recently without parallel anywhere else in the world, was the best means of distributing subsidy. By no means perfect, and to some people biased towards London, it is theoretically non-political and can survey the music world nationally and internationally. I am sure the best of British art in all its forms will continue to be supported at this level, but I do sometimes fear for more localised ventures where a narrower vision can mean a lowering of standards. On the other hand, as we see in Germany, there are different levels, and it is incumbent on society to see that all are

catered for. We have a geographical problem in Britain, with worthy things tending to centre on London, but I think it is up to the regions to recognise their own worth and allow people with vision to lead the way.

P.P. Whom do you remember as the greatest, or most inspiring, artists with whom you have worked?

N.D. Of course there are great and inspiring artists with whom I work, but I could hardly list them. What is more important is that audiences should understand that this not only applies to soloists but to orchestral players as well. I still have the highest regard for all professional orchestral musicians, and never cease to wonder at that extra sense they have which allows them to play in harmony and balance so instinctively. There is never a concert where I do not feel a special affinity with sections of the orchestra whose style of playing, sheer musicality and rhythmic sense are a constant inspiration.

P.P. What have been your most alarming experiences as a conductor? And the most amusing?

N.D. Alarming and amusing experiences abound in this profession, but perhaps the most notable occur when on tour. Concerts in England are naturally not without their moments, particularly as living with musicians is always a stimulating experience, but here our work is more routine and predictable. Tight schedules, lack of rehearsal, or interrupted rehearsals are always alarming, and it goes without saying that transporting bodies and instruments around airports and long coach



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journeys must take its toll in alarming episodes like, for example, landing in Valencia with just enough time to make the first concert of a tour through a traffic jam. There was an amusing experience when I was guest conducting the Radio Orchestra in Dublin. The Radio chauffeur insisted on driving me to each rehearsal and back to my hotel just round the corner, but didn't turn up for the concert, which, being broadcast, had to start on time. On second thoughts, that may sound alarming too, but, knowing the Irish, I thought it funny.

P.P. The character of a concert is determined not least by the hall in which it takes place, and also by the particular audience. Do any concert halls and audiences hold special memories for you?

N.D. Concert halls and audiences do obviously have a profound effect on a performing musician, but in my case I think perhaps the hall more than the audience. The audience is the life blood flowing through the hall, and I find it a little frustrating that there are many potential friends out there that I shall never get to know. Most musicians will tell you that they don't always agree with the extent of the applause, that a bad performance can be received well, whilst a good one by our standards may be received coolly, but I think this is hardly the point. The audience knows what it wants and real success is achieved when we both know we've played well (although, of course, we still think we could have done better). Historic halls have a great effect on me personally, and it is never without a great feeling of pride that I walk on to a platform that I know has received many of the great names of the past.

P.P. If you could now be granted one particular wish as a conductor - however unlikely - what would it be? Or is it the musician's fate that fulfilment seems eternally elusive?

N.D. I can't think the elusiveness of fulfilment is any different in music from other professions. Acceptance of this idea would be mental suicide, and the first requirement of a conductor is to keep his head and stay in control. Growing older enables me to see the other person's point of view (sometimes sixty of them), and I think I see things in a truer perspective. Fulfilment, success and similar factors must be balanced with the art of living, and, if I have any wish at all, it would be to continue living creatively with some sparks of originality of thought, and to maintain a spontaneity and zest for life. But, as these are all factors of youth, I may not be that lucky.

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**EAST
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ARTSPOST**

Wally Brown

Cliff Lee on the leader of the Nottingham Jazz Orchestra

THERE USED TO BE A STORY told in Nottingham jazz circles that, while the local Jazz Orchestra was playing one of its normal Sunday sessions at the Old General Hotel, a member of the audience who had been quietly leaning on the bar having a drink suddenly appeared in front of the NJO and began to conduct the orchestra from the score. Well, the truth isn't quite so dramatic, although the advent of Wally Brown as leader of the NJO is one of the surprise developments in Nottingham jazz.

Let Wally tell his version of the story.

"I'd been going to hear the NJO for a year or two, and I knew three or four members of the band because they had played for me in pit bands for musical shows. One night two of them came up to me at the time shortly after Fred Tagg had finished leading the band and said, 'How about doing something with us?' I told them they must be joking, but they insisted. 'You're just what we need at the moment,' they said, and about a fortnight later I walked in on it.

"I was landed with a large bundle of fourth trumpet parts, because Fred had played fourth trumpet with the band for several years, and all he needed to remind him of what was supposed to be happening in the band was his own part. But I had to write a lead part so that I know at any moment who's supposed to be doing what. So far I've done about eighty of those. Fortunately, a lot of the newer stuff we're getting includes a lead part, or even a full score in some cases, which makes it a lot easier. I was reasonably familiar with some of the pad from listening to the band, but I don't like depending on my ear. I want to see it in front of me."

Wally admits that his transformation from listener to leader took him by surprise at first, but he quickly developed an idea of the kind of progress he hoped to make with the NJO, whilst retaining the solo strengths of individual members of the band.

"They had some really good jazz people there, so what I think I mainly wanted to do was tighten the other side up - the ensemble playing. You've got to have just as much discipline in a jazz orchestra as in any other kind of music."

We recalled the fertile period when Gerry Smith ran the NJO, one of its most successful phases.

"It really needs someone like Gerry to devote himself to the Orchestra, writing material for it. There's a danger of reaching stagnation point when musicians have been playing the same numbers for four or five years. On the other hand, I'm not too happy about having to produce something new all the time. It's the one thing I have against jazz. There's got to be something of value in a number to make it worth



repeating. It worries me that last month's music is old hat in the field of popular music."

Referring to the large number of original scores left by Gerry Smith, he told a story about Gerry's last visit to Nottingham. Whilst glancing through the pad, he picked up one score and asked Wally, "Did I write that? I can't remember that one." Wally points out that there are at least three numbers of Gerry's that the NJO will never be able to play because the lead alto parts are missing - they're all in Gerry's head, if he can still remember them! But the residue of original compositions available to them makes the NJO unique among rehearsal bands, and considerably enriched.

Wally admits to having been brought up on a mixed diet of the Methodist Hymn Book and Gilbert and Sullivan. His mother, now seventy-six and still leading five choirs, introduced him to music even before he could read, and he was playing violin at four. By the age of twelve, he was a founder-member of the Nottingham Junior Harmonic Orchestra, and he vividly recalls the first rehearsal of the Orchestra. He had progressed to rehearsing choirs at seventeen, although the next few years of army service and university found him less active in music than before.

It was whilst he was a student that he began to frequent jazz clubs, marking the beginning of a new direction which didn't flower into participation until he became leader of the NJO. For several years, he was too busy carving a career as lecturer at the Regional College of Technology, now Trent Polytechnic, to immerse himself in music, although he did continue a twenty-one year association with the Nottingham Harmonic Choir during this time.

One of the most significant developments in his musical career was purely fortuitous. For a time, he had been mainly engaged in choral work, whilst also producing occasional stage plays. Someone asked him to rehearse the chorus for a production of "Trial by Jury", and he eventually found himself taking over the lead role. This automatically led him into more involvement in musical shows, and he eventually found himself increasingly in demand as musical director. "It came as second nature," is how Wally describes his entry into one of the most demanding aspects of music.

Obviously, leading a sixteen-piece jazz orchestra is a totally different experience from his more familiar tasks of choirmaster and musical director, although not everything is strange.

"While there are tremendous differences, there are also similarities," he claims. "For example, there's the need for discipline. The music has to be played right. Then it's mainly a matter of setting the tempo right and ensuring that the musicians cue in where they should. A few numbers require a more conventional technique, especially in ballads where there are breaks and pauses. Many of the musicians aren't used to conventional conducting technique, while others seem to forget it once they play in a jazz orchestra."

With the introduction of an issue which touched upon the musicians themselves, it seemed appropriate, in the light of his knowledge of a wide range of music and musicians, to test Wally's feelings about the thorny question of whether or not jazz playing inhibits the "correct" development of a player.

"I think it's true that somebody learning an instrument needs to develop a different kind of tone and embouchure for orchestral playing, especially for ensemble work. An intelligent musician can benefit from both orchestral and jazz playing, but young players may not have enough ability to master different styles.

"Jazz is strongest in the area of the fulfilment of the individual," he added. "In any other form of music the musician is subservient to the score; quite rightly, he has to interpret it faithfully. The scope for individualism comes from a feeling of having done this well. In jazz, the individuality can be a bit dangerous. I don't like it too much. Although it's a marvellous idea in principle, it may give free rein to musicians who aren't prepared to accept discipline. As soon as music becomes 'free', it becomes utterly dull, boring and uninteresting. The great thing about music is appreciating form, and the great jazz musicians are those who respect this form, but whose music is undoubtedly their own."

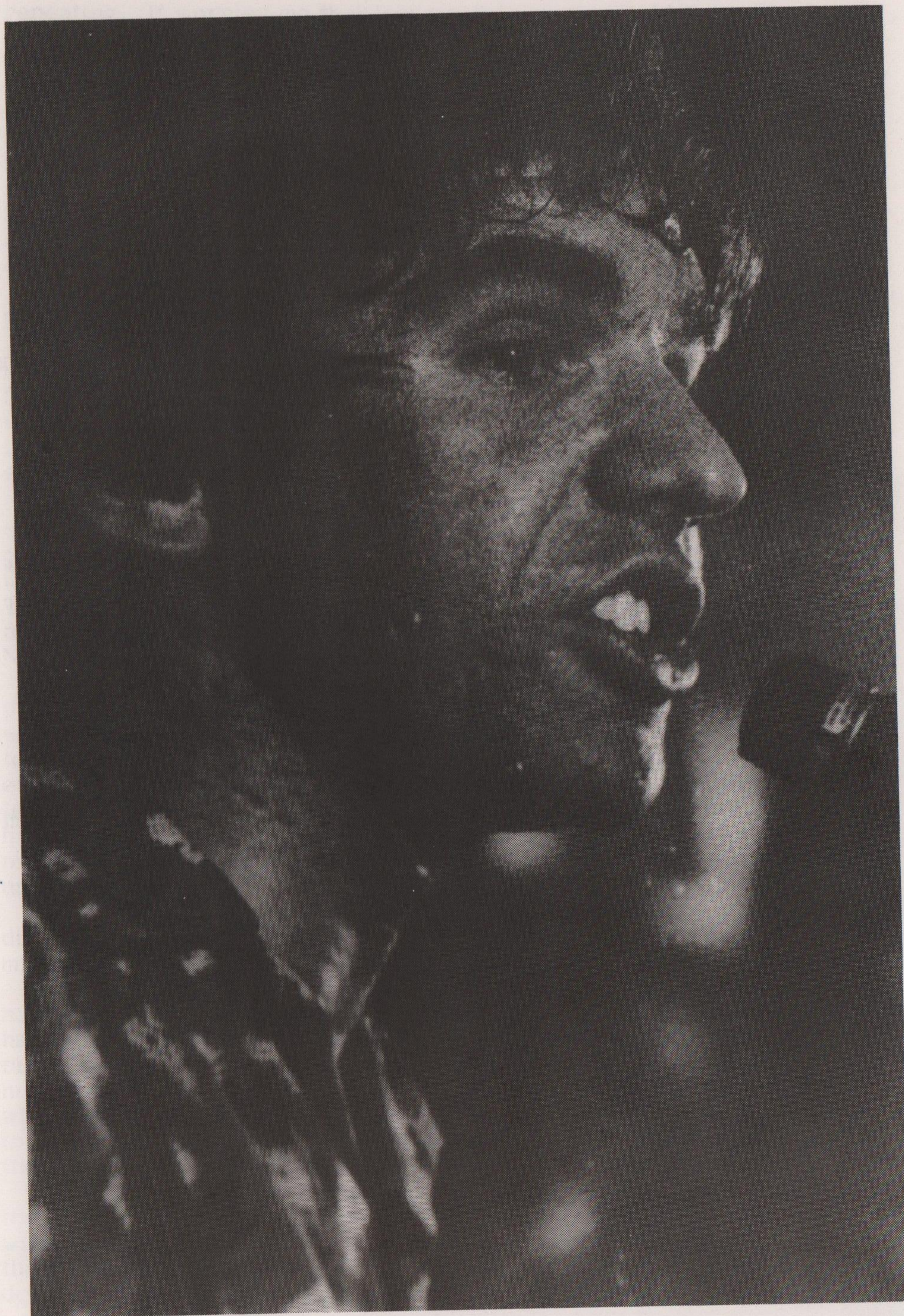
By now, he knows all about temperament.

"Sometimes there's a great rapport, at other times there's a fair amount of internal tension in the band," he observed. "There's nothing you can do about it. You just have to take it into account. I must admit that I've never heard the NJO play better than when they came second in the Musicians Union Rehearsal Band Competition for the Midlands. I was delighted for them. The acoustics were superb, and I believe that it's possibly the first time they've really heard themselves properly. Their performance was all the more remarkable because they were slightly despondent after having heard the eventual winners, the Midlands Youth Jazz Orchestra, before they went on. But the general effect of this was to encourage an attitude of 'Let's get in there and show them.'

"The problem is - what's next? How can we capitalise on that performance? There's no doubt that it could be a very good band, although really it's a group of sixteen individuals with sixteen different opinions. If I were to do a really good job with the NJO, really give them a lift, it would need complete dedication. I've got several ideas in my head, if I could only devote myself to developing them, but I'm loath to give up other things."

But there's one aim that Wally hopes to fulfil. Next year, he would like to see the NJO in first place in the MU competition.

"When they want to, they can really pull the stops out," he asserts, and the indications are that he'll be demanding nothing less than a safe repository for the winners' trophy at the Old General Hotel in 1978, after he's taken them to victory.



People in music (3)

Wayne Evans

Trevor Dann on the leader of Nottingham rock band Gaffa

WAYNE EVANS HAS HIS BREAKFAST in bed at eleven o'clock.

"I get up in my pyjamas and read the Sun for a bit, have about fifteen cups of tea and then pack my little bag with that night's stage-gear. If the gig's a long way away I get my Mam to pack me some sandwiches and then I wait for the van to pick me up. It's always an hour late so I sit there switching my digital watch off and on and chewing my fingernails."

Gaffa are on the road. Five Nottingham musicians "freezing to death" in the back of an old van to carry their message to the unconverted. All over Britain, thousands of rock bands are involved in the same heart-breaking process of flogging up and down motorways to play to a handful of punters in the back room of a pub, and all in pursuit of the rock dream. But Wayne Evans and Gaffa are different.

"We're not a rock band," he insists. "I'd call us a Modern Glance Band. We're for listening to and looking at rather than throwing bottles at. We're more civilised than a rock band."

Like all Wayne's statements of musical philosophy - and that is not too grand a word, because thousands of local Gaffa fans would agree with the description of him as the Nottingham Dylan - it is tongue-in-cheek. The songs he writes for the band are marked with the same charming self-deprecation, but underneath this veneer of jovial public-bar bonhomie there is a fierce and competitive dedication driving the band forward.

"What can a poor boy do, except sing for a rock 'n' roll band?" said Mick Jagger.

"You write songs because you have to," says Wayne Evans. "I don't write them to fulfil a publishing contract 'cause I ain't got one. When I don't have to write them, I'll stop."

As soon as Wayne was old enough to listen to the radio at his home on the Ainsley Estate, he was determined to be a performer. As far as he is concerned, a rock musician has no choice about his destiny.

"I just drifted into playing at school. I hated football and fiddling about with motorbikes, but playing was fun. So I got in a skiffle group doing 'When the Saints Go Marching In'. Then I found I hadn't got much of an ear for picking other people's stuff up, so I started writing my own. I always wanted to make a living from a band and Gaffa's the fruit of all those long years."

Rock music offers the ultimate in financial rewards. It is the 1970s' answer to boxing, but it also demands a great sacrifice. Very few of the fresh-faced kids setting out to abuse their eardrums and stomachs on the road in a band will eventually reach superstar status. There are no Arts Council grants for guitar players, and even Gaffa are forced to settle for as little as £15 for a gig on occasions. Yet music has to be the

ambitious rock 'n' roller's whole life - more than a hobby, more than a career, it is a vocation.

"It's physically wearing. I know that. But I've got nothing else to do. It proves I exist and I don't see why I shouldn't get paid for doing what I'm best at."

The strength of Wayne Evans's songs, though, is that he doesn't have a juvenile axe to grind like so many of his contemporaries. He avoids the clichés both of Woodstock idealism and New Wave nihilism. Precisely because life in a rock band takes up so much time, far too many songwriters end up merely writing about their own predicament, or treading the well-worn lyrical paths of the rock 'n' roll tradition. But Gaffa songs are drawn out of everyday working-class situations.

"I don't want to sloganise," says Wayne. "That's been done to death. I want to humanise."

It was partly to show that he was concerned with the realities of life that Wayne chose to call his band Gaffa.

"At the time bands were calling themselves Poncey Pete and the Purple Butterflies and such-like. We wanted people to know we were working-class and proud of it."

So there are no metaphysical ramblings from Gaffa on stage and no naive pleas to be taken seriously. Wayne's message is delivered through a series of carefully observed vignettes designed "to show people that being ordinary is O.K. What I'm trying to do, I suppose, is make myself obsolete. I sing pieces of cinema, if you like. There's none of this 'come on we can change the world' stuff. I'm ordinary and I say so."

Wayne writes about characters and individuals not generations. "Radford Lad", for instance, is a story which could have jumped out of a Sillitoe novel about what Wayne calls "one of them daft lads with short hair who you find working in woodyards". On analysis, the song turns out to be a comment on apprenticeships:

"Poor boy apprentice told he's got it made
You'll always have a bob or two if you can learn a trade."

Wayne sees it as a "con" because new machines will always force characters like the Radford Lad back on the streets, but the respectful and affectionate description of the song's hero, and the wit of Wayne's delivery of it, transcend the content of the piece and produce a telling portrait of life in one of Nottingham's poorer districts.

Melodies are a secondary consideration for Gaffa. If a line is too long or too short, then a couple of bars are added or taken away with no respect for musical structures. The task of Clive Smith, Brendon Kidulis, John Maslen and Mick Barratt behind Wayne is to point him in the right direction and let the lyrics speak for themselves with a minimum of fussiness. It makes for a sparse and raw sound on stage with few instrumental solos, but the songs become more positive and direct, and, because Wayne is such a compulsive and energetic performer out front, their message is unavoidable. A sample of "Normal Service Will Never Be Resumed", from Gaffa's locally produced EP on the Cleverley Brothers label, will serve as an example of Wayne's anarchic approach to songwriting.

"I'll never forget the day
When normal service wasn't resumed
As soon as possible

"It was a Rediffusion
Announcement that brought me the terrible news
That normal service would NEVER be resumed

"At first I didn't realise
Just what this bad news meant
Then it dawned I wouldn't know the whereabouts
Of cheap gaudy furniture and quick-drying cement

"I hardly noticed the knock at the door
Of the neighbour who's not my friend
He wanted to know if it was just his set
And would Sandy ever walk again"

As always, the hero of the number is being forced to come to terms with reality. He has spent his life cocooned in the fantasy world of television, unaware of his domestic surroundings, so when the set fails he can only act out one of the violent episodes he has seen in a crime thriller, attacking his children with the electric drill he bought because of the adverts, and his wife with the indoor aerial:

"I noticed a woman in the room
Must admit I'd seen her somewhere before
Younger and happier
While not wanting to seem impertinent
And having nothing else to do
I started to talk
She nagged me to put up shelves
Take the dog out for a walk
In other words we seemed to have
Nothing in common
So I hit her with the indoor aerial
I saved her from herself"

With eight years in the rock business behind him, Wayne Evans will admit to having very little to show for his efforts. He still lives at home, travels in the group van or by bus, and has to save up to buy new strings for his bass. There are now two Gaffa EPs available, and the first is being distributed nationally by a London company, but there is still, in Wayne's words, "a long hard road to travel". As well as writing songs and singing them, he has also got to learn to be a business man.

"My ambition," he says, "is to turn our raw ethnic material into a viable paying proposition. I'm not being idealistic. It is a business, but if we can find business people whose motivations are as strong as ours I believe it can be done."

Wayne is aware, however, that this means moving away from their base in Nottingham. He knows that the hard core Gaffa freaks who pack the Imperial on St James's Street every Tuesday night will lament their heroes' departure, but the band need to reach a wider public, although,

ironically, what has made them into the Nottingham band is their biggest stumbling block on the road to national recognition.

"Everything I do relates to Nottingham, but now we're out there trying to talk to people who don't think of us as local lads made good. We're trying for a more cosmopolitan feel."

The Nottingham roots, however, will stay. Wayne is adamant that no amount of business pressure will cause the band to compromise and lose its identity.

"I know you've got to be malleable or else you get snapped, but I don't want to end up licking my own bum. If they start trying to do that to me, I'll tell them to bollocks and go back to working at Boots."

At twenty-four, Wayne Evans is the leader of Nottingham's top rock band. Thousands of local kids are envious of his position, but he has been face to face since he left school with the inner disillusionment of the outwardly glamorous rock scene.

"I'll keep it up till I have to stop, though," he insists. "I don't want to be working in a supermarket when I'm thirty-four thinking, 'If only I'd kept at it three more months I'd be in Barbados by now.'"

But Wayne's commitment is such that, watching his extrovert act on stage or talking to him for just a few minutes, it is hard not to be carried away by his enthusiasm into believing that success really is just around the corner and, even if time and debt do catch up with him eventually, there is no doubt that in ten years' time Wayne Evans will be playing and singing something somewhere. As he says in the mock commercial for Gaffa at the end of "Normal Service":

"Supply and demand is the name of the game
If you don't demand
We'll supply all the same".

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Dave Turner

Al Atkinson on one of folk music's individualists

CO-OP THEATRE, BROAD STREET, October 12th. Tromping Dave Turner, Troubadour of this Parish, is starting his opening set of an evening of Poetry and Folksong featuring Roger McGough and Brian Patten. A nice contrast, the Liverpool Poets and our own minstrel of the Meadows. The audience, I presume, is mainly here for the poetry - I only recognise a few faces from the folk scene. The majority of folk followers are probably kept away by the dual trauma of the entrance fee and the absence of alcohol on the premises. So - the audience is polite but maybe a bit indifferent to Dave at first acquaintance.

Well, let's face it, he looks a bit taggy - likes to be billed as Festering Dave Turner these days, and you can believe it. His aversion to soap and water is a local legend, and he seems physically to be sliding into a disreputable middle-age. In his lumberjack coat, hunched like Quasimodo over his box, Dave is getting stuck into "The Perils of Percy Pilliwig" for the n thousandth time. The song starts underground in Radford Pit (where Dave himself was a miner) and in a few verses, by way of a repertoire of grimaces, gargoyle faces and wrestling matches with his guitar - ay up! we're in Africa (stupid).

The audience catches on gradually - picking up the throwaway jokes, enjoying the music (for Dave is a fluent and versatile guitarist, besides all the fooling). And, as Tromping Dave sets about unrolling Life's Rich and Moth-eaten Tapestry, the laughs come more readily and more universally. Percy Pilliwig returns from Africa to Radford Pit, carefully avoiding the Walanga - people's heads implode from excessive nose-picking - ghost herds rage across the Western skies suffering from Athlete's Foot and diarrhoea (and he only had a five-gallon hat) - dustbins are gang-banged by Daleks - elephants are sand-papered down into greyhounds - in other words, a typical Turner parlour entertainment.

And the audience loved it - those who have seen Dave perform for ten or fifteen years as much as the ones who are catching his act for the first time. The second spot is even better, the audience more receptive, Dave warming to the job, going into his whole range of impersonations and take-offs, contorting voice and features to become successively Idi Amin, a Gestapo officer, Bob Dylan, a Dalek, Tarzan, Bert Weedon and Professor Scheissvogel, but mostly, and most alarmingly, Tromping Dave Turner.

Afterwards, over a bevvy in the Bobs, Dave is talking to Brian Patten - maybe comparing gigs. This was the first time Dave had played on a poetry-reading bill. I asked him if he saw similarities between what the poets were doing and his own show. To me there seemed a fair bit of common ground between his act and Roger McGough's - the throwaways, the surreal settings, the gestures and punch-lines. Dave



couldn't see it - didn't know how they could get up and verbalise great chunks of themselves in front of an audience, although, in a far more oblique way, this is what he does himself.

Dave Turner started as a singer in the immediate post-skiffle days, getting into folk music via the records of Hank Williams, Jesse Fuller, and his idol, Rambling Jack Elliot (hence Tromping Dave). According to Dave, he first learned to play the guitar in Borstal, playing along to pop records. His first public performances in Nottingham were with Sunny Ford, playing round the few early folk clubs, which were replacing the coffee bars as venues for folk-singing. He remembers his first solo spot as comprising one Jack Elliot number, one Jesse Fuller, and "a funny one". The funny one went down best.

From the start, Dave found audiences reacted favourably to humorous songs, and he gradually evolved an act featuring largely his own "decompositions", plus some other comic songs and straight blues numbers. In those early days of the Nottingham Folk Revival, there was a great feeling of spontaneity, of people getting together and making the whole thing up as they went along. There was a great diversity of talent around, and nobody thought of making demarcations between folk songs of different origins. So, in the course of an evening, you could listen to talking blues (Roger Norman), Al O'Donnell's Irish ballads, calypsos by Hope Howard and John Webster, Woody Guthrie songs from Sunny Ford, and Spike Woods' unique and visionary dramas. Dave's contribution was macabre, surreal epics about teenage cremations, rampaging gangs of Teds, and satires like "Ban the Bow", his CND protest song.

After working down the pit, Dave drifted into being a professional on the folk circuit - this before the days of folk agencies, contracts, tours etc. His first offer was £15 for a gig in Cardiff, which seemed a fortune when most booking fees were in the range of expenses, beer money and a couple of quid. In the mid-sixties, folk-singing was hardly a way of getting rich quickly. Most clubs were small-time affairs in the top rooms of pubs, charging the equivalent of a couple of pints for admission. Bumming a lift to the booking and a night dossing on someone's floor were the norm for performing artists, and a double-figure fee was by no means guaranteed for an hour's singing in a cramped, smoky room to an audience gradually succumbing to alcoholic collapse, and with additional hazards such as constantly ringing tills and jukeboxes downstairs booming through during the quiet songs. At this time, Dave also featured as singer, bottleneck guitarist and harmonica player with the local rhythm and blues band, Junco Partners, affectionately remembered by many who were young blades about town in the mid-sixties.

After Junco Partners folded, Dave made a trip to Denmark, Germany and Holland, busking in the streets to pay his way, returning to Nottingham in mid '68. By the late sixties, the folk scene had become much more organised, and Dave found more gigs came his way by working through an agent. He started getting work around the colleges, either on the folk club circuit or as a back-up artist to rock groups. In this capacity, he played the Marquee in London, supporting such groups as Hawkwind and Spirit. He has also tried working-men's clubs, doing spots between the sessions of Bingo ("Can't you play anything to dance to?"), and a song of his was a winner in a TV song-writing contest.

There were even negotiations towards bringing out an LP, but mainly it's the folk circuit that brings in the money.

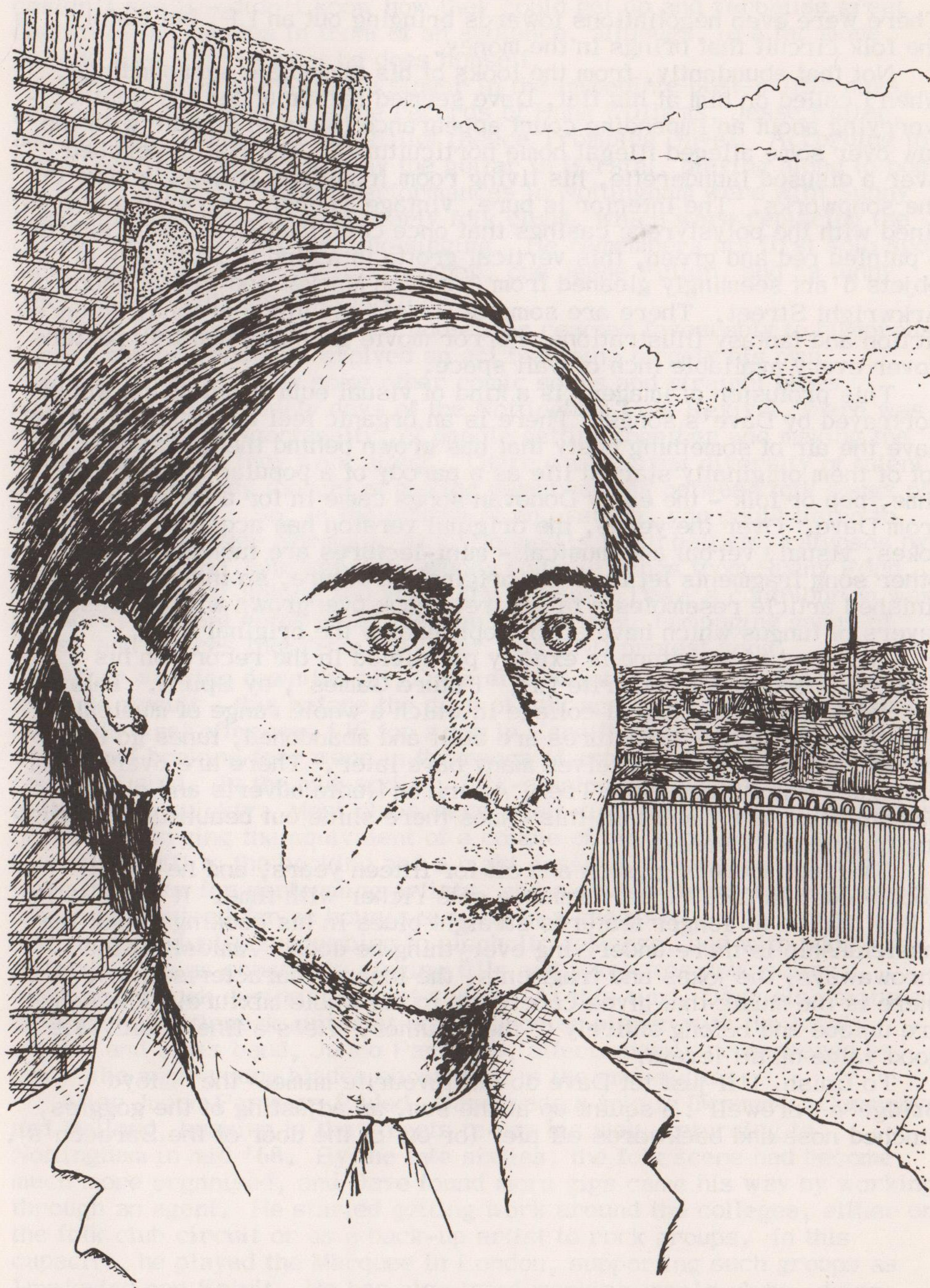
Not that abundantly, from the looks of his immediate surroundings. When I called on him at his flat, Dave seemed rather under the weather - worrying about an impending court appearance (he is in dispute with the law over some alleged illegal home horticulture). The flat is perched over a disused launderette, his living room ironically framing a view of the soapworks. The interior is pure, vintage Turner. An entire wall is lined with the polystyrene casings that once contained motorcycle spares - painted red and green, this vertical grotto is a kind of reliquary of objets d'art seemingly gleaned from Sneinton Market and the tat shops of Arkwright Street. There are some of Dave's paintings around; science-fiction and fantasy illustrations, horror movie graphics and folk posters cover every available inch of wall space.

This profusion of imagery is a kind of visual equivalent of the world portrayed by Dave's songs. There is an organic feel to his songs - they have the air of something nasty that has grown behind the gas stove. A lot of them originally started life as a parody of a popular song of the time, pop or folk - the early Donovan songs came in for a lot of stick from Dave. Over the years, the original version has acquired layers of jokes, visual, verbal and musical - mini-lectures are tacked on, and other song fragments let in to the original structure, so that the over-all finished article resembles a fallen tree trunk overgrown with successive layers of fungus which have all but obliterated the original form.

This sort of structure is exactly paralleled in the record on his stereo - his current favourite LP, "Future Games", by Spirit. This record is a kind of musical collage in which a whole range of musical styles is employed - structures are built and abandoned, tunes go underground and reassert themselves many bars later. There are overlays of dialogue, mainly from Star Trek, American Radio adverts and old movie soundtracks, and amidst all this chaos there shine out beautiful, tantalising fragments of songs.

I've seen Dave's gigs on and off for fifteen years, and he's still good value; in fact the performance gets richer with time. It's a pity in a way that he no longer features straight blues in his bookings - but the musicianship is there underlying everything he does. Amidst all the throwaways, the jokes and fragments, the insane characterisations, there is the music that gives coherence to the whole mixture. The songs are unique and belong entirely to their author. He's a fine comic. He's good value on all levels.

To finish, I'll just let Dave do his favourite mime - the "Lloyd Bridge's Farewell": a squint up at the sun, an adjusting of the goggles, pinched nose and backwards off pier (or out of the door of the Saracen's).



ALAN SILLITOE

Nottingham Castle

Glistening patches of floodwater:
Distorted shekels among fresh grass
Seen from the Castle top:
Binoculars ring the distance like a gun.
The aging heart constricts
A twist of paper
With life's writing packed on it
In blood-red script.
A parchment one year less than fifty old
Constructs a shield of seven-times-seven.

Rooftops flowing left and right
In shining slate, churches lurch
And chimneys lift; towers, and modern
Blocks block visions. The 'Robin Hoods'
Paraded on this scoured parapet
Practised azimuths on far-off points.
Eyes water at the southern hills
A halfday's march away:
"They'd have to swim the bloody Trent,
God-damn their gold-fish eyes!"

The rush of musket balls,
And breaking glass: the mob
Did far more damage than a foreign army,
Set the rafters sparking, and painted
Pillars with the soot of anarchy.
Nottingham Lambs came up from
Lanes and twitchells, while the Trent
(Sly and turbulent) inky-rippled
Through the night: nobody's enemy,
Not even the fires' — to put them out.

Finally, the Council got it:
A fine museum artfully protected
By Captain Albert Ball V.C.
Who thrust into a cloud-heap above Loos
Hoping for his forty-second kill,
But ended up a concrete man (with
an angel looking over him) on the lawn
Of Nottingham's squat castle,
Guarding tunnels in the rock below
By which young Mortimer once reached his Queen.

Memory stands behind me
On that terrace, and (like many suicides)
Thinks to take a flying leap into
A never-waking sleep. Forty years ago
I stood agog at that same view,
But no big push came hard enough.
A good long gaze was all I wanted:
Sailing-barges drifted by
Before my time, and took me with them,
A whole fleet ferreting my soul.

I leave my ghost near that black wall,
Mesmerised at never having fallen;
While town clocks toll off slices of the night,
Every quarter-hour maddeningly
Dead and buried in the dark,
A lopped-off dream-life stifled beyond return.
My footprints live here, and my eyes,
The hills that sleep dive with me,
Through more clock-hammers,
Flattening minutes that won't walk again.

Following close, I cannot rest:
Another brain shot down in sleep.
Rich Master Robin Hood robs me,
Who am not so rich, to time,

And gives it to the poor:
Death with its sonic boom
Breaks the windows of my empty room.

Building the ideal home

ROBERT CULLEN

THE POLITICAL BEAM ENGINE has just passed its Tory local government high, and the effects of this upward swing have been felt even in the bureaucratic corridors of the City Council. The council house building programme has been slashed, quite rightly in my view, because of the social and economic problems created by the vast public sector housing machine. There can be little doubt that owning one's own home is healthy and likely to provide a more sound basis for a housing policy than any other yet devised. There is also little doubt that the subsidy system has fallen into disrepute, has been badly managed and has helped create a (to use an awful expression) "divisive society".

Nor has it improved housing design. When you think of the checks and counter checks by teams of experts working on public housing schemes, and the rubbish which is churned out, by and large, it is clear that increased legislation cannot produce the goods. In fact, the more legislation, the more monotonous and ugly the result (just look at building in the Eastern bloc, if you don't agree). On the other hand, the private enterprise system of spec. building by Wimpey etc. has not produced beautiful, livable streets, squares and towns as the spec. builders of Bath, Cheltenham, London and the Park used to do. The important thing is to make cities and suburbs desirable places to live, which would stem the constant flow of the more mobile and affluent members of society to the periphery of our conurbations. A careful investigation into density reveals that we have already urbanised far more land than we need, if only it had been put to proper use.

We all have images of bad housing - slabs, faceless repetitive elevations, brutal materials, notably concrete, and insensitive design. To discover and decide what is good is much more difficult. Will time improve the buildings? Do people really enjoy living in them? Are they expensive to run? Is there both visual and acoustic privacy between dwellings? Are there condensation problems? And so on. What is good in town planning terms is even more elusive. Put negatively, what is wrong in new development is the absence of squares, village greens, parks, spaces and avenues which should give structure, form and identity to our urban areas.

What new central area parks have been created in Nottingham since the war? What new squares or streets have been built which are memorable and now provide the nucleus or fulcrum of a new social group? What buildings within housing areas provide points of identity and add special character or charm to an area, again encouraging the building of social groups? It is not a matter of money. It is the complete absence of architecture and town planning, largely created by the separation of the professions of architect and town planner, and the assumption of many of their original responsibilities by highway engineers, estate surveyors, lighting engineers, the Building Regulation Inspectorate etc., etc. At a

more mundane level, it is the complete absence of common sense and public criticism in the building of our towns and cities.

It is easy to identify villages and parts of historic towns we love and enjoy. We go there on holiday, buy picture postcards and take photographs, and sometimes sketch and paint or write about these places; so why can't our new estates be equally pleasant places? The standard red herring drawn across our paths by the people primarily responsible is that of density: "There are just too many people on this little island, you know." But go to Clifton, where the density is lower than most historic towns and villages, and the result is still monotonous and inhuman.

What are the chances of improvement? Unfortunately, until individuals can control or influence what is happening, it is unlikely that more legislation will help. As I have suggested, it will simply increase the weight of bureaucracy. That is why I welcome the current challenging of established precepts, and the growing criticism of inhuman systemised architecture. Combined with a stable birth-rate and an emphasis away from growth-at-all-costs, this is the first step in what will be a very long climb towards the quality of housing and environment which is achievable in our society today. The more empty flats in Balloon Wood and Old Basford the better!

What can you and I do to improve the situation? Work through amenity groups and residents' associations, yes. But this tends to be a negative holding process rather than a creative one. The only way to really get what you want is to commission your own building, which is difficult but not impossible, particularly if small groups share resources. This is what I did myself in order to house four families, including my own, sharing the purchase price of the land, which was beyond the means of any single individual.

Unfortunately, although in itself difficult, this is still not enough if the building is to be beautiful and convenient. You need a good architect, and you have to know enough about architecture to be able to select the right architect. It is with considerable trepidation, therefore, that I am using my own work to demonstrate what is possible. What follows is based on an article written in August 1976 for "Architecture East Midlands". (The scheme was given an RIBA award in 1976.)

The site was found by Chris Millard (like myself, an ex-editor of "Architecture East Midlands"), and the development was made possible by the financial co-operation of Chris, myself and Trevor Pargeter, a quantity surveyor, now with Architects Design Group (my practice).

The houses nearly didn't get built at all because of the single-pitch roofs and the small, cottage-style windows. The Parish Council didn't like them, and the county planners called the architect in - to play the mucking-about-with-elevations game. Fortunately, the County Planning Officer was friendly and against aesthetic control. He liked the scheme and was trying desperately to get some examples of well-designed housing built.

In terms of stock answers to planning development control, the scheme had a few things going for it: natural clay pantiles, hand-made red brick, the traditional design of the windows, no spec. barge boards etc. The character is in sympathy with eighteenth and nineteenth century Nottinghamshire villages, possibly because I like them and have learnt a



lot from studying them. It resulted, however, in a far too austere solution for the suburban inhabitants of the village. They call the houses the cowsheds, which is a real back-handed compliment, and the barracks, which does hurt a bit.

Providing for the motor car usually finishes off most layouts. The scheme includes a private "lane" to four double garages and six off-street parking spaces. To save the three houses and Chris Millard's farmhouse, which was part of the overall scheme, the garages have been half buried and placed obliquely to Church Street, so they do not dominate the houses, the street, or the nearby church.

I believe you can get more out of life by sharing and co-operation than by carrying the nineteenth century cult of the individual to its ultimate. This attitude makes a number of things possible, apart from the finance in the first place - sharing lawn mowers, climbing frame, cycle runs, swimming pool, and just having someone around. The houses, conversely, have an unusually high degree of privacy with walled gardens and internal flexibility of use. The two L-shaped houses and the square houses (see plan) are prototypes for use in larger groups of housing, and can be handed, extended, reduced and juggled to produce considerable flexibility in layout. Experiments have been pursued with private housing as part of a constant development process, in the hope that one day we shall get a client who wants to build some decent housing.

In every substantial family house it should be possible to shut off one section for a visitor, a granny, or a teenager who wants more independence. In one of the L-shaped houses, Keith Riley has his mother-in-law living in, and is still surviving (Keith's mother-in-law says that this should read she is still surviving). In my own house, I can listen to records, my young daughter can watch telly, and my older daughter can do her homework, each in complete acoustic privacy.

One final note of optimism. Lambley is a very interesting and pleasant place to live, and has recently been designated a conservation area. New development has been more sympathetic. The planners and the local authority have carried out a tree-planting scheme in co-operation with the parish council, and the villagers have planted the trees themselves. I really do believe that there is a greater public understanding of what has gone wrong, and that there is beginning to be a demand for higher standards. Make sure that you are not the spec. builders' or the housing managers' most recent sucker!

Urban spring

TONY BIRD

SPRING IS A PARTICULARLY good time to see some interesting activity among even the most commonplace city creatures. As early as February, many of our familiar city birds are already marking out and defending territories which will provide a nest site and supply of food for their young in the coming months.

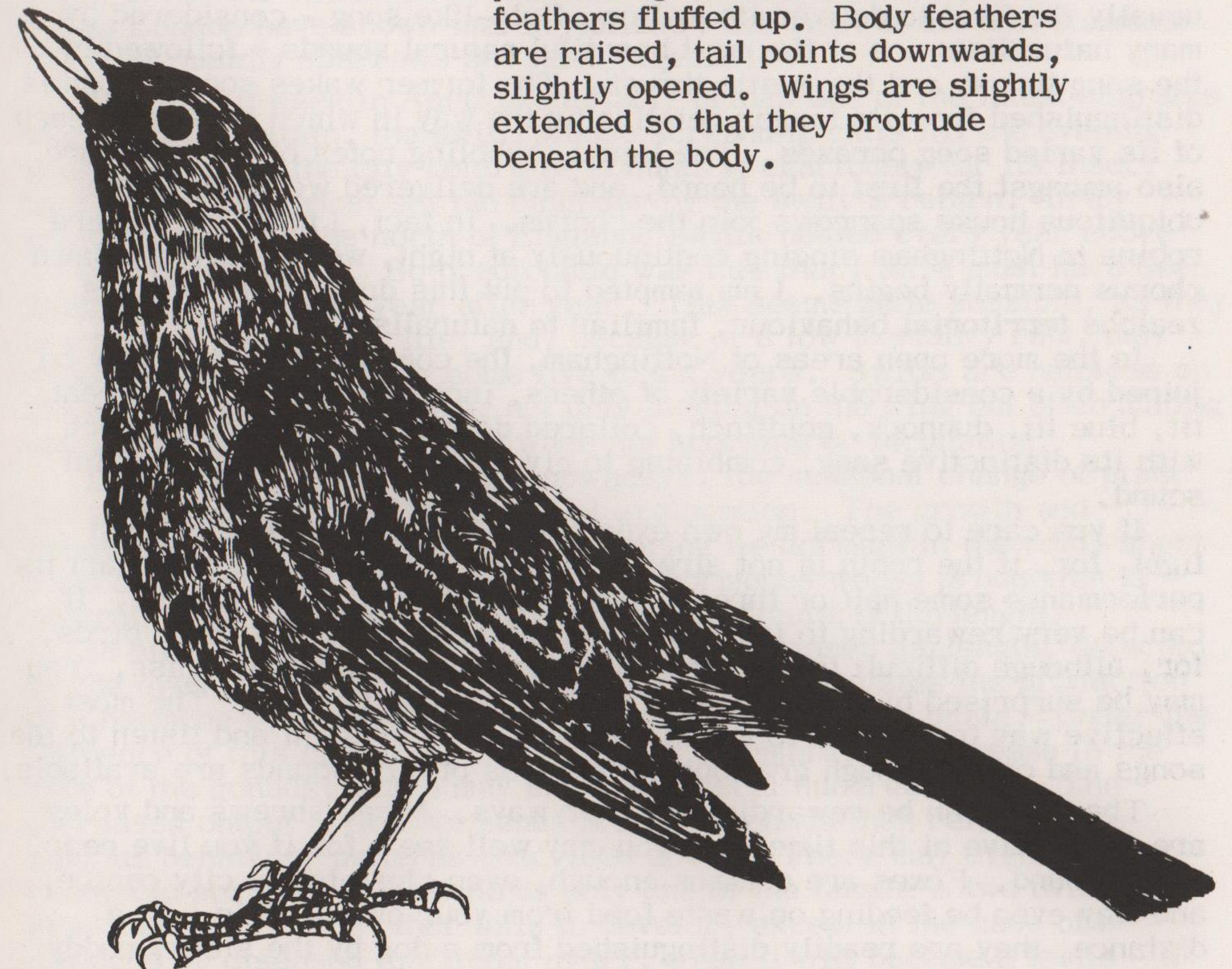
To do this, they need to be conspicuous in sight and sound - a glimpse of the robin's red breast or the brilliant crocus yellow of the male blackbird's beak is usually enough to deter trespass by another male of the same species. But, in the event of conflict, the bird also has a vocabulary of stylised gestures to drive off the intruder. These signals are highly effective, and physical attacks leading to injury are rare. Even so, they can be alarming to the birds concerned, which have been known to die from ruptured blood vessels!

Courtship too revolves around specific gestures and rituals, such as the feeding ritual. Many postures adopted in courtship resemble the aggressive and submissive postures used in territorial defence. Often the male's aggressive posturing may produce completely opposite responses in paired and unpaired females. Nevertheless, with patience, it is possible to interpret some of the gestures and rituals which characterise reproductive behaviour. Whilst there will be differences from species to species, generally speaking an aggressive bird tries to make itself larger and more conspicuous by, for instance, displaying its distinctive markings to fullest effect, puffing out the feathers and pointing the beak upwards. The opposite reflects submission - sleek feathers pressed close to the body and a crouched appearance.

The male blackbird in aggressive mood stretches up his neck and points his partly opened beak upwards, raises his neck and body feathers, and points his slightly opened tail feathers downwards. If his head is then lowered to horizontal, with his tail down further and his rump feathers fluffed, then his aggression is heightening. A submissive bird commonly crouches horizontally near the ground, or stands more or less horizontally, but with head up, beak horizontal and head feathers fluffed; otherwise, he may hop with sleeked plumage and tail held almost vertically.

Although aggression and courtship use visual signs, sound signals are important as well. Bird songs are complex rhythmic arrangements of notes, uttered usually by the male, which serve to defend territory and attract a mate, and characterise species, sex and even the bird as an individual. In addition, birds utter short groups of notes, often harsh-sounding. These are known as calls, and communicate more specific information, such as anxiety. Such calls are easy to identify as you walk through the garden.

In spring, birds spend a lot of time in song, moving from perch to perch advertising territorial boundaries. Thus, if you follow the



Blackbird in aggressive posture. Notice beak held above the horizontal and slightly open, head feathers pressed against the skin but neck feathers fluffed up. Body feathers are raised, tail points downwards, slightly opened. Wings are slightly extended so that they protrude beneath the body.

movements of robins, thrushes, blackbirds or tits, their territories should become apparent. Often these have natural boundaries such as hedges or walls - limitations probably imposed by the availability of song posts. If you are lucky enough to have a big garden, you may experiment by placing a large mirror in various places and noting whether the bird postures aggressively or retreats from its own reflection. The closer the bird is to the centre of its own territory, the more aggressive and determined it will be.

Although house sparrows and starlings nest in loose colonies, and so do not defend large individual feeding territories, they do have songs. The song of the house sparrow is little more than a collection of calls,

whilst the starling utters a series of high-pitched sliding whistles. The starling is famous as an imitator of other birds, as well as dogs, cats, chickens and even inanimate objects, incorporating such sounds into its song.

During spring, birds will sing actively throughout the day, although periods at dawn and dusk are religiously set aside for this sole purpose. The dawn chorus in spring should not be missed. The blackbird is usually the first to deliver its mellow, flute-like song - considered by many naturalists one of the most beautiful natural sounds - followed by the song thrush and the mistle thrush. The former wakes sooner, and is distinguished from its larger relative by the way in which it repeats each of its varied song phrases. The liquid, bubbling notes of the robin are also amongst the first to be heard, and are delivered well before the ubiquitous house sparrows join the chorus. In fact, I have often heard robins in Nottingham singing continuously at night, well before the dawn chorus normally begins. I am tempted to put this down to the robin's zealous territorial behaviour, familiar to naturalists.

In the more open areas of Nottingham, the commoner species may be joined by a considerable variety of others, including greenfinch, great tit, blue tit, dunnock, goldfinch, collared dove and wood pigeon, each with its distinctive song, combining to give a remarkable and beautiful sound.

If you care to repeat my own experience, then get up before first light, for, if the robin is not already singing, the blackbird may start its performance some half or threequarters of an hour before sunrise. It can be very rewarding to learn the characteristic songs of these birds, for, although difficult to see, they are easy to hear and recognise. You may be surprised by the number of species in your vicinity. The most effective way to learn is to watch species known by sight and listen to the songs and calls, though gramophone records of bird sounds are available.

The dawn can be rewarding in other ways. Mice, shrews and voles are still active at this time, and you may well see a fox if you live near open ground. Foxes are common enough, even close to the city centre, and may even be feeding on waste food from your own dustbin. At a distance, they are readily distinguished from a dog by the sleek, ruddy appearance, bushy tail and purposeful, bouncing gait. They leave evidence of recent haunts by their own peculiar musty smell, which also pervades food remains and droppings. These droppings are long and twisted with tapered ends, whilst the tracks of the fox differ from those of a dog in having a much tighter formation of toes around a smaller pad. On soft ground, hair traces may be seen between the toes.

Whilst foxes undoubtedly scavenge in urban areas, they are by nature predators and share this distinction with kestrels and tawny owls. Kestrels may be seen by day hovering over playing-fields and open areas in search of food, but the nocturnal tawny owl is more often recognised by its song. This is a melancholy hoot, which is a far cry from the "tu-whit tu-who" of the literature. However, the explanation for this misconception may lie in the fact that the tawny owl has a call sounding like "kuwit" or "kwik", which is sometimes uttered by a mate in response to the "hooo-oo" song - though the two sounds are never uttered consecutively by the same bird. By day, tawny owls may sometimes be

located by the clattering sound of parties of small birds mobbing the predator on its roost.

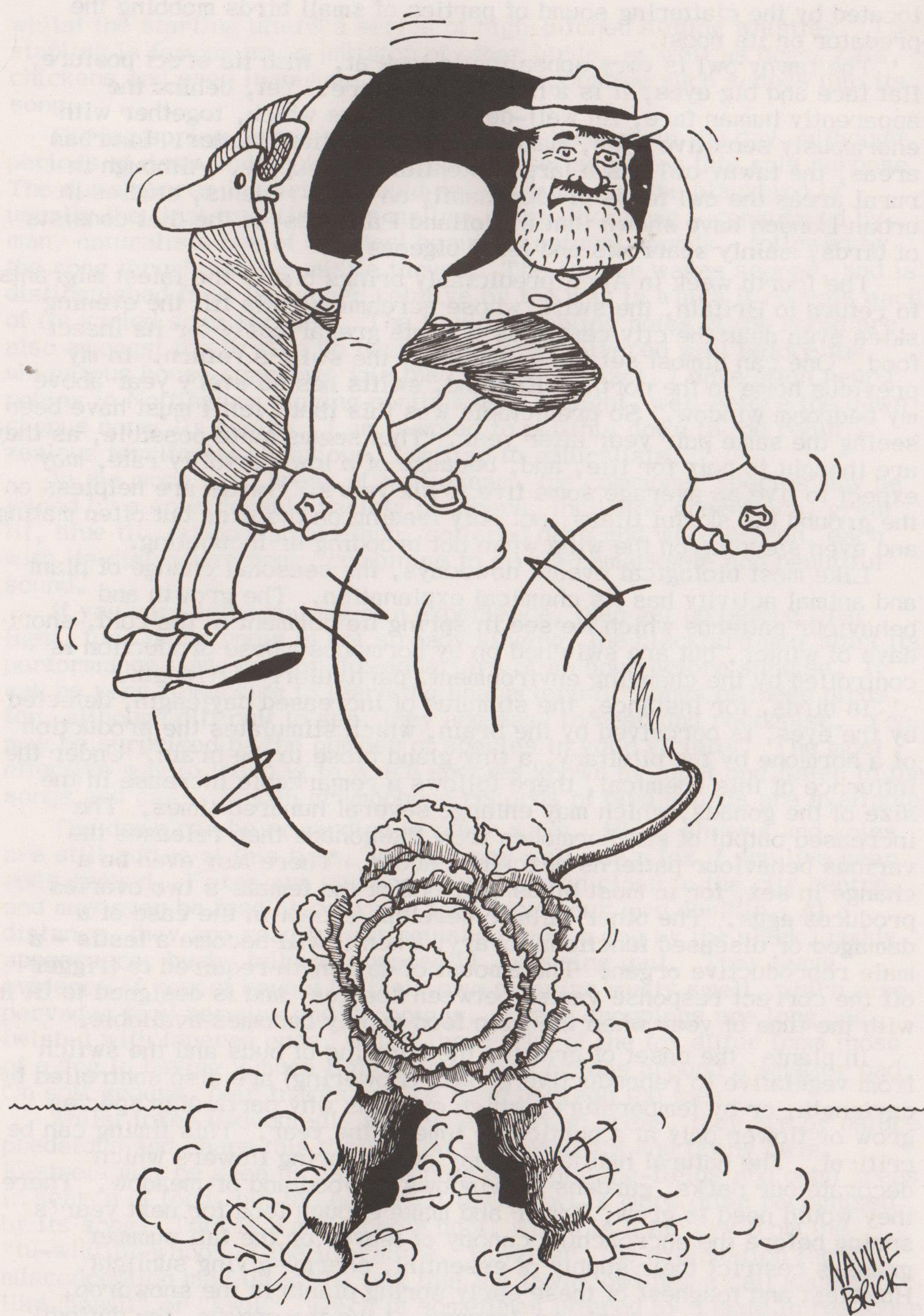
The tawny owl is very appealing to look at. With its erect posture, flat face and big eyes, it is a human caricature. Yet, behind the apparently human face, lie well-developed ears which, together with enormously sensitive eyes, make the owl a brilliant hunter. In urban areas, the tawny owl has a large potential food supply. Although in rural areas the owl feeds predominantly on small rodents, studies in urban London have shown that in Holland Park most of the diet consists of birds, mainly sparrows and feral pigeons.

The fourth week in April predictably brings one of the latest migrants to return to Britain, the swift, whose screaming calls fill the evening skies even near the city centre as it hunts gregariously for its insect food. One can almost set the calendar by the swift's return. In my previous home in the north of England, swifts nested every year above my bedroom window. So predictable was this that I felt I must have been seeing the same pair year after year. This seems quite possible, as they are thought to pair for life, and, because of a low mortality rate, may expect to live on average some five to six years. Swifts are helpless on the ground but skilful fliers, not only feeding on the wing but often mating and even sleeping on the wing when not brooding or incubating.

Like most biological events nowadays, the seasonal change of plant and animal activity has its chemical explanation. The growth and behaviour patterns which we see in spring lie dormant in the cold, short days of winter, but are switched on by hormones whose production is controlled by the changing environment, particularly daylength.

In birds, for instance, the stimulus of increased daylength, detected by the eyes, is perceived by the brain, which stimulates the production of a hormone by the pituitary, a tiny gland close to the brain. Under the influence of this chemical, there follows a remarkable increase in the size of the gonads, which may enlarge several hundred times. The increased output of sex hormones from the gonads then releases the various behaviour patterns described above. There may even be a change in sex, for in most birds only one of the female's two ovaries produces eggs. The other fails to develop, except in the case of a damaged or diseased functional ovary, when it will become a testis - a male reproductive organ! The amount of daylength required to trigger off the correct response varies between species, and is designed to fit in with the time of year when the main food supply becomes available.

In plants, the onset of growth, the bursting of buds and the switch from vegetative to reproductive growth (flowering) are also controlled by daylength, or by temperature, which explains why particular species grow or flower only at a particular time of the year. This timing can be critical. The natural habitat of many of the spring flowers which decorate our parks, gardens or windows is woodland or meadow. There they would need to grow, flower and make enough food for next year's spring before the encroaching canopy of leaves or the tall summer grasses restrict their supply of essential, energy-giving sunlight. Humblest and toughest of these early spring plants is the snowdrop, which may be seen as early as January. Like the crocus, the daffodil and the violet, it must emerge early or perish.



By courtesy of D.C. Thomson & Co., Ltd., publishers of The DANDY.

Eating out vegetarian

PETE JAMES

ONCE, TO BE A VEGETARIAN was to be awkward: to produce a pained expression on the face of anyone rash enough to invite you "over for a meal". Worse, it meant classification - beside the flat-earthers or the literal believers in Genesis - in those most condescending of categories, the "cranks" or the "beard-and-sandals brigade".

But now things are changing, as more and more people reduce or end completely their consumption of animal products. In the USA, a worried National Livestock and Meat Board has warned the industry "not to let record production/consumption figures hide a trend away from eating meat". Where America leads, Britain is sure to follow.

Of course, people choose to be vegetarian for many different reasons. In the USA, the motive has come partly from the wallet, with the soaring costs of heart attacks leading to an almost obsessive concern with cholesterol intake. The result has been a dramatic fall in the number of deaths from cardiac disease in the last two years.

For others, vegetarianism is a response to the impending food crisis. They emphasise the fact that eating food direct is ten times more efficient than eating it via animals. As a large proportion of our animal feedstuffs (especially protein) is imported from the Third World, our craving for meat and dairy products causes their malnutrition. In Peru, for example, millions of tons of high protein fishmeal are exported as cattle feed, while a substantial proportion of the population goes hungry.

Finally, there are the more traditional reasons, such as a preference for pure or "whole" to processed foods, or an abhorrence of the cruelty to animals which factory farming produces. A more detailed case for being vegetarian is to be found in Peter Singer's book "Animal Liberation" (Paladin), or John Wynne-Taylor's "Food for a Future" (Abacus).

With increased acceptance, and a swelling of the ranks, much of the "missionary zeal" which so offended non-vegetarians has, fortunately, disappeared. Even more promising are the signs that vegetarianism and "wholefood" are starting to break out of their middle-class confines. There is no better place to prove this than Nottingham, which is fortunate in having two wholefood shops: "Ourobouros" on Mansfield Road, and "Down to Earth" in Hockley. In both, a steady stream of old-age pensioners, postmen, bus conductors, housewives (to name just the ones I've spotted) and many other ordinary people pop in for products which range from staples such as wholemeal bread, nuts and dried fruit to more exotic products such as mineral-rich seaweed or the tasty and highly nutritious "miso" (a Japanese favourite, made from fermented soya beans).

Parallel to this has been the growth of eating facilities, some wholly vegetarian, others partly so, but having in common the fact that they

serve many non-vegetarian customers, often attracted by the low cost of meatless meals.

One of the first vegetarian restaurants to be opened outside London was the "Lettuce Leaf" in Friargate, Derby, founded twelve years ago and still the only waitress-service vegetarian restaurant in England. Good food has overcome the initial suspicion of the locals and drawn visitors such as Yehudi Menuhin from far away. The highpoint of the "Lettuce Leaf" is the array of cakes, scones, biscuits etc., all deliciously nutty from the wholemeal flour used in their baking. On my most recent visit, the vegetable soup (18p) was a mite bland, but was more than compensated for by a fresh, sharp cheese, walnut and pine-apple salad (75p), a tasty and filling quiche (32p) and a rich, chocolately slice of cake (25p), with coffee (17p) to follow.

In Nottingham, the only completely vegetarian eating-house is the recently opened "Maxine's Salad Table", 56 Upper Parliament Street, open only at lunchtime. Although a bit spartan in decoration - some of the seats leave a marked ridge on the bum - service is good and the food is nicely presented on Portmeirion pottery. I began with onion soup (30p) which was, alas, highly over-seasoned and left a pronounced afterburn in the mouth. The next course was much better, with a choice of two tasty quiches - leek or French onion - and a delicious Vegetable Mornay, notable for not being overcooked as these kinds of dishes so often are. Only the nut and potato roast could be criticised, mainly on the grounds that an already substantial dish was made over-heavy by an unnecessary (white) pastry base. All these main courses were 65p, with half-portions for 35p.

One of the best features of "Maxine's" is the large number of fresh and appetising salads (25p), a couple of which with a jacket potato (15p) make an adequate meal in themselves. I took an unusual coleslaw, apple and pear salad, which turned out to be appetisingly bittersweet in taste.

For dessert, I tried a slice of pie (25p) whose combination of short, wholemeal pastry and copious apricot filling made me ready for second helpings. With a cup of Cona coffee (perhaps slightly on the weak side), my three-course meal cost £1.60 and offered very good value for money.

Although a little more expensive than "Maxine's" at lunchtime, the "Soup Kitchen", on Forman Street, scores by being an intimate little restaurant which is also open on Friday and Saturday evenings. A vegetarian course is usually on the menu or, if not, the staff take a personal interest in their customers and are always willing to rustle something up. On my last visit, I began with peperonata (45p), which was a bit soggy and over-spiced, while my companion tried the ratatouille (45p), which she found delicious, just the right combination of a strong tomatoey undertaste, with the smoothness of aubergines and the sweetness of courgettes, onions and peppers. Our choice of main course was Stilton Quiche (£1.00), a delicious creation, to which the mellowness of the Stilton added a new dimension. With salad and a carafe of drinkable red wine, followed by fruit crumble and coffee, the bill came to about £6.50 for two.

Vegetarian eating organised on a very different basis is to be found at the International Community Centre, 61b Mansfield Road. Here, on Friday lunchtimes and evenings, a group of people serve food which is

simple and cheap. Their menu usually begins with soup: spicy onion (15p) when I visited, both tasty and filling. For the main course, a choice is offered of chapati with grilled cheese or rice pasty. I took the latter, which came with several unusual (and nutritious) accompaniments such as bulgur (cracked wheat) and smooth, slightly sweet aduki beans. Even with a wholemeal cake and coffee/apple juice, the bill only just reaches £1.00.

The one area where vegetarians aren't catered for is the "big splurge" or celebration meal. However, any restaurant worth its salt should be prepared, with notice, to lay on a vegetarian meal - indeed, it could be said that this ability to respond to individual wishes is precisely what distinguishes a good restaurant from a mere "food factory". One such is "Doctor's Orders", a newish (non-vegetarian) restaurant at 152 High Road, Beeston, whose owner restricts the numbers so as to be able to do all the cooking himself, and uses only the freshest of ingredients. Other restaurants in Nottingham are no doubt equally accommodating - and will become more so as the number of vegetarians grows. And, of course, there are always Chinese, Indian or Italian restaurants to fall back on.

It seems, then, that vegetarians in Nottingham can eat out and, without too much personal inconvenience, be true to their beliefs. In fact, with the growth of their numbers and the likelihood of at least one new whole-food restaurant opening soon, they can look forward to an even wider range of choice in the future. And that, both for vegetarians and the many meat-eaters who often share their dishes, can only be good news.



ABOVE: Sir Alfred Munnings: Under Starter's Orders, Newmarket. Cries of 'No, No, Sir'

BELOW: Paul Waplington: Lace Factory, Levers Machine Shop, Nottingham



Towards another picture

LYNDA MORRIS

THERE ARE MANY MYTHS surrounding the practice and appreciation of contemporary art, most of which lead to the conclusion that the public is totally apathetic to modern art. We are told that fewer than twenty artists in this country earn their living from the sale of their work. Eighty per cent of what is sold is bought by the state. The state also indirectly supports artists through art education. Two thousand young painters and sculptors graduate every year from the forty-odd art colleges in this country. There has been a crisis in art education for at least fifteen years, and the latest contribution from David Hockney has criticised the lack of formal education, particularly life drawing. It is all very well, he says, turning out well-intentioned young people who want to solve the world's problems through street performances and eight feet by ten feet coloured patterns, but they can't even draw.

After the scandals of the last year - Carl Andre and the bricks at the Tate Gallery; a women's liberation artist, Mary Kelly, and her display of nappies at the ICA; and Fyfe Robertson and his ridicule of Bob Law's blank canvases at the Hayward - it has become apparent that the public is not so much apathetic as indignant. And I would suggest they are not so indignant about art as they are about the misuse of public money.

The last thirty years have seen a massive increase in public patronage of the visual arts, but the change in patron has had no influence on the audience for whom the artist makes his work. When the Medici princes took over from the Church in Renaissance Italy as the main patrons of art, both the subject and the conception of the artist's work changed. Out went the Madonna and in came the nude Venus. There has been little attempt by artists to understand the idea of art held by their new patrons, the so-called "public". Artists have continued to look towards private patrons, a handful of collectors spread across the western world, with a passionate belief in internationalism and modernism. Artists and art administrators are living an increasing fantasy, supporting and encouraging a view of recent art history that responds to the idealism of a handful of immensely wealthy and powerful individuals who have the privilege of owning private art collections, whilst the money comes from public funds. The public feels cheated and incensed because public funds are being used to support a sector of private investment where vast fortunes can be made, whereas the public finds little pleasure or interest in an object which means to the collector, and often the administrator, a two hundred per cent increase in less than ten years on the original investment.

But the public does like art, not one kind of art, but many different kinds. There are actually many hundreds of artists in this country who earn their living from painting, much to the ridicule of what is called the serious professional world of art. Artists are completely divided into watertight compartments: there are the official portrait painters, who

paint the Queen, lord mayors and important businessmen; there are the painters who are popular in Boots reproductions, whose pictures hang on millions of sitting-room walls; there are the amateur painters all over the country, who find their work is popular enough with a local audience for them to give up their jobs and paint full-time. But these artists are not recognised by professional art bodies. Their work is not collected for the national art galleries, they are not shown by state-subsidised galleries, they are not invited to teach in the art colleges, they are not considered by critics and historians to be a worthy subject of monographs and articles.

The only occasion their work is shown by a status-conferring institution is at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, when the public flocks to see the Exhibition and buy paintings.

The Royal Academy represents the taste of the public, but it is also a traditional institution that belongs to the upper reaches of the British class system. The opening of the Summer Exhibition is one of the events of the social calendar. Although the paintings represent the consensus taste of the public, the subjects of the painting largely support the myth of a traditional and aristocratic society - the hunting and shooting scenes in an idyllic countryside, careful flower arrangements, Spanish galleons sailing the seven seas, and society portraits. It is these paintings that hang on the sitting-room walls of people who live in an inner city and only ever see the countryside from the motorway. The public are divorced from the realities of their existence by these paintings, and they are unlikely ever to experience a kind of art that attempts to portray the values of the world they live in.

It was with the intention of commenting on the difference between these divisions in the practice of art and the consistent picture presented by the official art bodies in this country that Andrew Brighton and I began to organise "Towards Another Picture" for the Midland Group. We accepted that there are many diverse kinds of art produced in this country, and that diversity reflects social differences. The unified picture of art supported by the official art institutions denies many sectors of our society the recognition of their contribution to our culture as a whole. We selected sixty paintings and sculptures from diverse sources, from distinguished West End galleries, from the reproductions trade, from official portraiture and military commissions, from the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, from the Arts Council collection, from local Nottingham painters and retired miners.

We selected a painting by Paul Waplington, a self-trained Nottingham painter who lives in Gedling and still works part-time as a lace draughtsman, and then went to Chatsworth House to arrange the loan of a portrait of the Duchess of Devonshire by Lucien Freud from the Duke of Devonshire. Andrew went off to see the Rt. Hon. Edward Heath to arrange the loan of a pastel drawing by Norman Cornish of men playing dominoes in a pub. I contacted Lady Chichester to borrow the painting of Sir Francis in Gypsy Moth sailing round the Horn. We went up to Ashington near Newcastle to arrange the loan of a painting by the Ashington Group, and discovered a treasure trove of mining pictures by Oliver Kilbourn, a 72-year-old retired miner. A brigadier at the War Office helped us locate an action-packed war picture by Terence Cuneo, and we visited

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Lucien Amaral, a South American artist who has lived in London since the thirties, painting solely for trade unions and the Communist Party, and found the painting of Lazarus. We visited David Shepherd, the man who loves giants, in a converted Tudor farmhouse in the stockbroker belt and arranged the loan of one of his favourite railway engine paintings, and then arranged to meet Gustav Metzger, an anarchist artist who destroys his art, at the Africa centre in London - and were instructed to make a display of the nude pages in the Sun and Mirror. We visited John Walker, one of Britain's foremost colour field painters, at the converted chapel he uses as a studio in Kew, and discussed his recent appointment as fellow in painting at Oxford University.

We were happy that we could defend every painting selected as being a good example of its kind. In the unifying atmosphere of the exhibition at Nottingham Castle, the social context where we had found the different paintings became rather blurred. We hung the exhibition according to the subject of the painting, not according to the theory of art history. In this way, we asked visitors to try and understand what it is that moves other members of their own society to admire a particular painting. This is part of knowing what kind of people we have been and what kind of people we are.

The aims were straightforward: to make the professional art world aware that what it called art was a relatively small, very biased view of the art produced by our society; and to offer a criticism of the form of censorship which governs the formation of our national collections of contemporary art. The exceptionally wide national coverage given to the exhibition suggests that we have done something to extend the areas of art which must be considered in future surveys of post-war British art. By calling for diversity rather than modernist development, we hope we have indicated a means of looking at recent art which can interest and stimulate both the public and the professional audience, and perhaps eventually lead to a proper use of public patronage for the visual arts.

As exhibitions organiser at the Midland Group, working with Andrew Brighton on this exhibition has given me a theoretical basis on which to develop the programme at the new gallery in the Lace Market. A public gallery is not just one that spends rate-payers' money, but one that looks for a diverse public audience.

There were 25,000 visitors to "Towards Another Picture", but that is only about half the audience that turns out regularly every Saturday to watch a football match.

(The exhibition "Towards Another Picture" was held at Nottingham Castle from 9th December 1977 to 25th January 1978. An anthology of artists' writings was also published under the same title, edited by Andrew Brighton and Lynda Morris. It is available, price £3.00 (30p p.& p.), from the Midland Group, 24-32 Carlton Street, Nottingham NG1 1NN.)

The future of the inner city

ALAN GRAHAM

"THE INNER PARTS OF OUR CITIES ought not to be left to decay. It would mean leaving large numbers of people to face a future of declining job opportunities, a squalid environment, deteriorating housing and declining public services. But without effective action, that could be the future for those who live in the inner areas, bringing with it mounting social bitterness and an increasing sense of alienation." (Government White Paper: "A Policy for the Inner Cities". June 1977)

This grim warning accompanies the Government's latest initiatives for tackling the problems of the inner city. Although it represents a renewal of the commitment to arrest the decline of these areas, it would be very wrong to see the problems of the inner city as new issues. Their presentation and definition may have changed, but official concern for the older urban areas has existed for over a decade, and has been reflected in a whole series of Government reports, poverty experiments and studies of "deprived areas".

In 1966, the Plowden Report introduced the idea of concentrating on small, isolated areas of "special" deprivation, mainly in the older cities: "Positive discrimination," the Report said, "... should favour schools in neighbourhoods where children are most severely handicapped by home conditions." Publication of the Report saw the designation of Educational Priority Areas, which were supposed to receive more capital investment, teachers, grants for equipment and supplements to teachers' pay.

The next initiative, in 1968, was the Urban Programme, designed to help "areas of severe social deprivation in a number of our cities and towns". Urban Aid grants formed the major part of this programme, given to specific projects for up to five years on a basis of 75% from central Government and 25% from local authorities. A wide range of projects has been financed through Urban Aid, including nursery education, day nurseries, children's homes, neighbourhood advice centres, play projects, language classes for immigrants, and community centres, but the total money available has remained at about £4 million a year.

In 1969, the Home Office initiated its own "action-research" programme under the title of the National Community Development Project, and by October 1972 twelve local projects were established, each with its own action research team. The brief for each project was to identify local needs, encourage the better co-ordination of services provided by Government and local authority agencies, and foster the involvement of the community in overcoming neighbourhood problems. As with all Government initiatives for tackling poverty, the familiar theme of concentrating on small pockets of deprivation was evident in the project's brief. By defining problems of urban poverty in terms of special "deprived areas", a limit is set to the scale of the problem. The attraction to governments concerned with limiting public spending is obvious.

The area-based approach was also reinforced by prevailing

explanations of poverty in terms of a "culture of poverty", which saw inner city problems as having their origins in the characteristics of the local community, not in any process of industrial decline or change in the city economy. Inner city residents were poor because there was something about their attitudes and values which prevented them from taking advantage of the opportunities available to them. The answer was seen to lie in the better co-ordination of services to those inner city residents in most need, and the encouragement of participation and self-help in the community.

Thus the failure of successive governments to tackle inner city problems in the last decade has been presented as a technical or administrative failure. This is reflected in the continuing emphasis on management technique and administrative arrangements - "area management", "neighbourhood planning", "special partnership arrangements", "a unified approach" to inner city problems, all culled from the latest Government White Paper. The implication is that, so long as the right approach or methods are adopted, the problems of inner city poverty can be overcome. The central question of what extra resources need to be invested in the inner city areas and how these resources can be made available is neatly sidestepped.

One common theme linking virtually all the reports, studies, projects and poverty programmes of the last decade is the need to increase public investment in the inner areas - investment in new housing, in the improvement of older retained houses, in new schools and nursery facilities, and in industry to create new jobs. But, increasingly, the emphasis has been on diverting existing resources from New Towns to inner areas, or on establishing "priorities" between inner areas. Conspicuously lacking from the Government's latest White Paper, "A Policy for the Inner Cities", is any major commitment to increase public spending on inner areas. The only specific promise is to increase the Urban Programme from £30 million a year to £125 million a year by 1979/80. This must be seen in comparison with the Rate Support Grant - the main source of Government help to local authorities - which currently provides over £6,000 million a year. In addition, the Government has announced special partnership schemes to tackle inner city problems in Liverpool, Birmingham, Manchester/Salford, Lambeth and the Docklands area of London, and it can be safely assumed that the lion's share of extra money will go into these areas.

The only new feature to emerge in the White Paper is a concern to strengthen the economic base of the inner city, reflected in proposals for new legislation to increase the power of local councils to assist industry in the inner city. It is ironic that the only new thinking on the inner city to emerge from a Labour Government should be for more grants to private industry - a reflection of the commitment to restoring private profits at the cost of neglecting other social needs.

In Nottingham, little thought had been given specifically to the problems of "the inner city" as distinct from the city as a whole. The first official recognition of the concept of the inner city was in response to a Government invitation for the City Council's comments on the issues raised by the Inner Area Studies of Birmingham, Lambeth and Liverpool. A report to the Council's Policy and Resources Committee in February

1977 highlighted some of the problems of Nottingham's inner areas.

For example, between 1961 and 1975, the inner city population declined from 140,300 to 108,900, with by and large the younger, more skilled workers moving out, leaving the old and the poor behind. Similarly, the period 1964-1975 saw a loss of 18,000 jobs in manufacturing industry in Nottingham, mainly from the inner areas. A quarter of firms lost were moved as a result of clearance and redevelopment schemes. Nottingham had already been designated a housing stress area, and major parts of the inner city containing over 5,000 houses are expected to be demolished by 1981, with a further 9,400 houses included in the Council's present five-year improvement programme. The report also identified 234 acres of vacant and derelict inner city land, pointing out that the majority was in public ownership. But although the report was a useful summary of what was wrong with Nottingham's inner city, it was largely silent about why and how these areas had declined. However, this catalogue of inner city problems, interspersed with suitably dramatic photos, was sent to Peter Shore in a bid to secure for Nottingham a share of any inner city money that was available.

It would be a mistake, of course, to think that the city's politicians had not been active in the past in tackling the problems of the inner city. During the last decade, vast schemes to bulldoze and rebuild St Ann's and the Meadows have been vigorously pursued by politicians of both major parties. But these schemes were seen in terms of tackling the nineteenth century legacy of slum housing, not as a strategy to combat poverty or reverse the economic decline of the inner city. However, this single-minded pursuit of the renewal and improvement of the housing stock did represent a big advance in the living conditions of many thousands of inner city residents, once the period of disruption and upheaval involved in clearance and redevelopment had been overcome. Not only did new houses get built, but redevelopment brought investment in new schools, new health centres and new open spaces, though only at the end of the process. Thus the massive clearance schemes of the last decade also concentrated public investment in the inner city areas.

Recently, the emphasis has changed to gradual renewal, in line with Government thinking and cutbacks in public spending. However, the District Plan for Basford, Forest Fields and Radford (May 1976) still echoed the Government's aim to "transform the run-down residential areas of our towns and cities", but this time by a "careful mixture and phasing of redevelopment and rehabilitation which will result in gradual and continuous renewal over the years rather than massive bulldozing and rebuilding". Nor was renewal seen solely as physical renewal of the housing stock, for the Plan recognised that "there are areas and social groups which have been deprived of resources and services in the past", and spoke of the need to "contribute to an irreversible shift of resources in the direction of these localities, classes and groups". The strategy for these areas was seen as a way of reinforcing and extending the policy of positive discrimination in favour of the underprivileged: "In allocating local authority resources and services a strong case exists for priority to be given to the needs of residents in Basford, Forest Fields and Radford."

Any chance of the City Council actually living up to this promise was



dealt a severe blow in April 1977, when the Government rejected the City Council's bid for special partnership arrangements with central Government to tackle the city's inner areas. Instead, in July, the Council was offered a paltry £500,000 to spend on inner city projects by March 1979. It was instructive that the schemes put forward by the controlling Conservative group for spending this money all involved aid to private industry in the inner city - for example, £110,000 on infrastructure costs in preparing difficult inner city industrial sites, and £250,000 for providing small industrial units and car-parking for factories in the Gamble Street area in Radford. There were no schemes to meet residents' social needs, such as community facilities or additional playspace. It is only the aid for private industry which Conservative councils are likely to find to their liking in the latest Government inner city package.

The second major blow to Nottingham's inner city residents last year was the decision of the City Council in April 1977 virtually to abandon its council house building programme, and to release housing sites (including inner city sites) to private developers and Housing Associations. Handovers of new council houses are expected to fall from 2,500 in 1977/78 to 350 in 1979/80, and council investment in house-building is expected to fall from £27 million in 1977/78 to £2.7 million in 1979/80. This dramatic change by the controlling Conservative group reflects a determination to halt further municipalisation of the city's housing stock (the end result of previous clearance and redevelopment schemes), and to cut down the Council's housing debt (rapidly approaching £175 million) and the contribution to council housing from the rates.

The main results so far have been to increase the number of vacant/derelict sites in the inner city, and restrict the choice and speed of rehousing for residents in clearance areas. Government cutbacks in finance to Housing Associations have limited the extent to which these can act as substitute for the City Council in providing working-class housing for rent. New housing provided by private developers is likely to be beyond the price range of many inner city residents, and this change of policy clearly represents a decision to build for higher income groups.

Where does this leave the inner city areas of Nottingham in 1978? Pressure from the IMF and other financial and business interests to limit public spending, and the economic orthodoxy pursued by a weak Labour Government, make the outlook bleak. A large part of the answer to the problems of the inner city lies in finding additional resources for public investment in new houses, schools, and industrial development to provide jobs and a secure economic base. In the light of the £27 million invested in council housing alone during 1977/78, the £500,000 provided for Nottingham under the latest Government inner city package looks the negligible sum it really is. What is also needed is a genuine political commitment locally to tackle the inner areas. Recent policy changes by the majority Conservative group suggest different preoccupations and priorities. Few Conservative votes lie in Hyson Green and Radford, and the lack of commitment to the inner city among local politicians speaks volumes for the chances of any dramatic improvement in the lives of residents in 1978.



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TOM PAULIN

Monumental mason

Working beside a cemetery,
Chiselling dates and names
On cheap slabs of marble
In the lighted shop window,
His meek power makes us nervous.

With his back to the street,
He cuts them in, these loves
The dead can't care about.
In his washed-out overalls
He is less a person

Than a function. People
Have grown used to him
As he sits intently
Gilding the incised letters,
A mason, displayed.

*Doris, Beloved Wife
And Mother, or Agnes
RIP, their names are
Public, but we forget them,
Glimpsing a tenderness*

On bald stone, some dead letters;
Or, when the traffic lulls,
Hearing from next door
The undertaker's tap, tap,
Answer his vigilant chinking.

(Published in "A State of Justice": Faber 1977)

JOAN DOWNAR

The old man remembers

It's different now, said the old man.
The children have shoes, and food and books.
Do you remember that Spring, my dear?
We were married then. I suppose you could say
I was down on my luck, but a job turned up
and when I was free on a Sunday we went
on our bicycles into the dales, had a sixpenny
tea — don't laugh — yes, fags and beer
were cheaper then. We got out of the way
of the church, and I couldn't go back.
This is our house. The children come
when they can, but I don't go out.
I'm afraid of the ice and the muggers. I watch
the box and look after my wife. She's
ill, paralysis, won't get well.
Like her mother before her. In the end
it all comes back to yourself, your own
suffering's always there, whatever
the weather outside. It's no different now.

St Ann's Estate

Strung out like bacilli
on the gentle slopes, the new
houses glint and run
confusedly alike
yet different, as I squint
at them in the evening sun.

Under them runs a well
their mediaeval mates
enshrined with burbled
"Mother of Mary" as the hell
of hunger, rot, inclined
to the fires of that other world.

One hell she eased, no doubt.
Our terrace liturgies
seem trivial. Water, sweet
from the tap's no comfort now,
and fear is more than the wall
cracked by the passing juggernaut.

Notes on contributors

AL ATKINSON teaches print-making in a local art college. He has been involved in the local folksong revival as a singer for more years than he cares to remember.

DR TONY BIRD is Head of the Biology Department at High Pavement College.

FRED BROAD has been a community worker and a lecturer in Politics and Sociology. He now works as a printer.

ROBERT CULLEN is a partner in Architects Design Group, Chairman of the Working Party on the Structure Plan for the Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Amenities Society, Vice-Chairman of the Nottingham Civic Society, and joint author of "Nottingham Now".

TREVOR DANN produces BBC Radio Nottingham's tea-time rock shows and also works for the station in the Arts and Features fields. He wrote the successful "Fosse Way", which grew out of an historical series, and compiled the BBC Radio Nottingham Tenth Anniversary souvenir book. Before joining the BBC in 1974, he studied at Nottingham High School and Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge.

JOAN DOWNAR is a librarian turned teacher. She now works in a Nottingham comprehensive school. Her poems have been published in "New Poetry", "Meridian", "Encounter" and the "New Statesman". She appears in "Arts Council New Poetry Anthologies 2 & 3", and in "Contemporary Women Poets" and "Poetry in the Seventies", published by Rondo Press. A slim volume, "River People", was published by Mandeville Press in 1976.

RAY GOSLING is Chairman of the St Ann's Tenants & Residents Association, reviews books for "New Society" and "The Times", and is an occasional journalist and broadcaster. He is at present completing a travel book from his radio and television work entitled: "The South Coast and Other Great British Resorts".

ALAN GRAHAM is a professional town planner.

MADGE HALES lives in West Bridgford. She has published two collections of poetry (Chatto & Windus) and a pamphlet (Nottingham University). Her poetry has also appeared in "Poetry Now" and "New Poetry", and in "The Times Literary Supplement", "Encounter", "The Observer", "The Listener" etc. She has also written short stories and satire for BBC Radio 3.

PETE JAMES is research assistant at the Institute of Planning Studies, Nottingham University. He is a vegetarian.

CLIFF LEE taught for a number of years in schools in Nottingham and at the Trent Polytechnic, and is now an Open University tutor. He played clarinet with Mick Gill and has led his own band. He is jazz columnist of the "Evening Post" and a regular contributor to "Melody Maker".

PROFESSOR JOHN LUCAS is Head of the Department of English and Drama at Loughborough University of Technology. He is the author of "Literature of Change" (Harvester Press,

November 1977) and "The 1930s Book" (to be published in the spring).

FRANCES McNEIL comes from Leeds, lives in Ossett and teaches at Bradford College. Her work has appeared in "Voices" and "Fireweed", and she has written for radio. Her first television play can be seen this summer.

LYNDA MORRIS is Exhibitions Organiser at the Midland Group. She contributes reviews to "The Listener", "Studio International" and "Art Monthly", and was one of the young critics selected by the "Sunday Times" last year. Previously, she taught at the Slade School of Fine Art and Ravensbourne College of Art, and worked for the ICA and the Nigel Greenwood Gallery.

NAVVIE BRICK works as a labourer.

PETER PALMER is a freelance translator whose work has been broadcast on BBC Radio 3. Since 1971, he has been a reviewer for the "Evening Post", "Classical Music Weekly" etc. He directed the English Sinfonia's "Carmen" (to be revived in May 1979), and is librettist of a schools musical by David Machell. He is Administrator and producer for the Nottingham Music Theatre, and Music Organiser of the Festival Fringe Committee.

TOM PAULIN was born in Leeds in 1949, grew up in Belfast, and was educated at the universities of Hull and Oxford. His first volume of poetry, "A State of Justice" (Faber 1977), was a Poetry Book Society Choice. He has lived in Nottingham for over five years and lectures in English at the university.

NIGEL PERT works as a freelance photographer. He is interested in the development of photography as an art form.

PAT SILBURN is Literary Adviser at Nottingham Playhouse and worked as script editor of "Deeds". She was producer/presenter of the BBC Radio Nottingham series "Plays at the Playhouse".

ALAN SILLITOE's most recent novel is "The Widower's Son", published by W.H. Allen in 1976.

The editors

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