



The Council for the Preservation of Rural England

Northamptonshire Branch

Patron : H.R.H. THE DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER

Associate organisation

The Peterborough Society



ANNUAL REPORT

The Annual Meeting was held on Saturday, 8th November, 1958, presided over by the President of the Branch, The Rt. Hon. the Earl Spencer, T.D., M.A., F.S.A., F.R.S.A., Her Majesty's Lieutenant for Northamptonshire, when the following Officers were elected :—

<i>President and Chairman</i>	The Rt. Hon. Earl Spencer, T.D., M.A. F.S.A., F.R.S.A.
<i>Vice-Presidents</i>	The Rt. Reverend The Lord Bishop of Peterborough. Sir Michael Culme-Seymour, Bart, J.P. Ewart Marlow, Esq., M.C., J.P., C.C. The Honourable Mrs. Hoare.
<i>Hon. Treasurer</i>	E. J. Hayward, Esq., F.S.A.A., F.I.M.T.A., Rushay, 48, Booth Lane South, Weston Favell, Northampton.

Cover picture :

Rockingham - an outstanding example of rural preservation

<i>Hon. Secretaries</i>	...	W. Carey Wilson, Esq., J.P., Woodford Rise, Woodford, Nr. Kettering. K. J. Allsop, Esq., Dip.Arch(Leics); A.R.I.B.A., Bank Chambers, High Street, Kettering.
<i>Hon. Auditor</i>	R. A. Palmer, Esq, M.A., F.C.A.
<i>Committee</i>	Messrs. M. Gregory, M.T.P.I., M.I. Mun.E. E. J. Storry, A.R.I.B.A., W. Cowper Barrons, F. Lawson, L.R.I.B.A., A. M. J. Ireson, F.R.S.A., R. Parkin and Mrs. M. M. Bartlett.

The principal speaker was Professor L. D. Stamp, C.B.E., D.Sc., D.Litt., LL.D., the subject of whose address was "Competition For Land". The meeting, which was well attended, closed with a vote of thanks to the Chairman and speaker, proposed by Ald. Ewart Marlow, M.C., J.P., C.C., Chairman of the Northamptonshire County Council.

During the past year a wide variety of problems affecting the amenities of the County have been constantly under review and, where possible, suitable action has been taken. Among these problems were :—

The Air Navigation Beacon (V.O.R.) site at Farthingstone the plans for which, on the suggestion of the Branch, have been altered and improved.

- 2 The preservation of the ancient windmill at Barnack—the sole remaining windmill in the Soke of Peterborough. A joint appeal has been launched by the Men of the Stones, the Peterborough Society, and the Northants Branch of C.P.R.E. This windmill was completed in the mid nineteenth century and represents one of the latest developments before the advent of steam for milling purposes. Donations for its complete restoration are still urgently needed.

The improvement in the designs of lamp standards and road signs.

- 4 The preservation—now happily assured—of the last remaining thatched cottage in the urban district of Kettering and of the notable group of buildings, known as Paine's Alms Houses, at Oundle.
- 5 The scheme for widening the main road through the village of Cranford.

In its efforts to encourage public opinion to demand higher architectural standards the Branch has endeavoured to promote a competition for the most suitable design for bungalows. It was hoped that this would attract many entrants and that it would arouse, amongst architects and public alike, a lively and healthy interest. Unfortunately, however, owing to various difficulties the Committee has been compelled to postpone the scheme.

It gives us particular pleasure to record our continued close association with the Peterborough Society, with whose members we held a very successful and extremely well attended joint outing to Oundle in May. We indeed owe a great debt of gratitude to the Headmaster, and Messrs. Hepburn and Caudwell of Oundle School, and also to Canon Cartwright, M.A., for all they so willingly did to make the visit so intensely interesting.

Early in July the Officers and Committee toured the Northamptonshire section of the London—Yorkshire motorway—thanks to the co-operation of the consulting engineers Sir Owen Williams and Partners—to learn at first hand the steps being taken to landscape this great new highway. The imaginative way in which it is proposed to do this greatly impressed the Committee, who desire to express their deep thanks to Sir Robert Marriott and to Mr. Clay (the Forestry Officer).

We cannot close this report without again recording our keen appreciation of the consistent support which the County Press has given to the work of the Branch. This support is, indeed, of the first importance as without it we cannot hope to create the lively and active public opinion which is absolutely essential if the Branch is to accomplish the many tasks which it has set itself.

To the people of Northamptonshire

Those who love what still remains of the beauty of this historic County—so rich in fine examples of the traditional ecclesiastical and domestic architecture of England—and who recognise the influence of that beauty on the well-being and happiness of all, are cordially invited to play their part in safeguarding it by becoming members of the County Branch of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England.

It is, unfortunately, not enough to profess a love of the countryside. We must also have an understanding of its people, of its history, and of the architecture in which that history is enshrined. For without this understanding the countryside will inevitably lose the very characteristics which endear it to us, and which are the basis of its unique loveliness. We shall continue to mutilate what we most wish to preserve, develop and enjoy.

A predominantly urban and industrial civilisation, however, is both the cause and the effect of this sorry state of affairs. It constantly destroys the very beauty for which, in its heart of hearts, it still hankers and yearns. So village after village, town after town, gradually lose their distinguishing regional characteristics to become unlovely and standardised outposts of 20th century urban civilisation; what, in a word, we call 'subtopia'.

It is therefore of prime importance that everyone who is "partial to that country which he has the happiness to call his own" should do everything possible to encourage, foster and develop a new and lively regional pride in it. And this can best be done, not so much by individual effort—important though this may be—but by acting collectively.

It is for this vital purpose that the County Branch of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England has been formed. Its task is urgent and its need great. Without delay we must help to form a strong and sound public opinion, which is determined not only to safeguard our most precious heritage but to pass it on the fairer for our efforts to preserve and develop it. Local patriotism could surely have no worthier, no nobler aim, than this. It is for *you* to help us, while there is yet time, to achieve it.

In parts of the Cotswolds, the West Riding of Yorkshire, and Westmorland (to name no others) we can clearly see how this can

be done. But, it may be said, these are predominantly rural areas unaffected by large scale industrial and housing developments. There is therefore, no comparison between their problem and ours. And, in one sense, this, of course, is true.

On the other hand, the very fact that great developments are taking place in Northamptonshire is surely an additional reason why the utmost care should be taken to ensure that these are wisely planned and are representative of modern architecture at its best, and that they in no way *unnecessarily* mar or conflict with the beauty which has come down to us from the past.

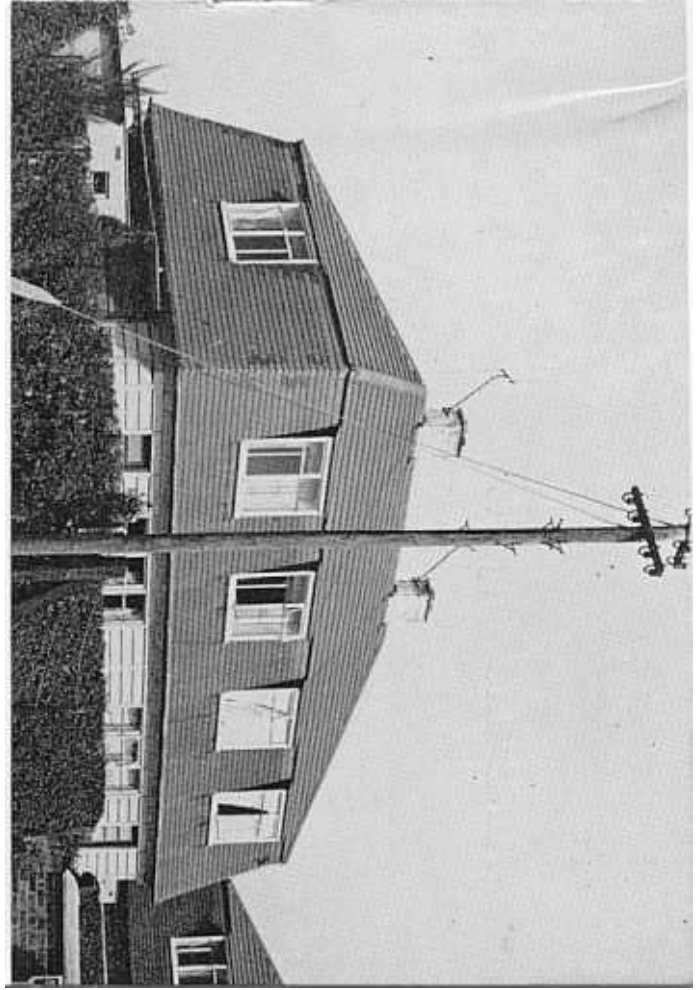
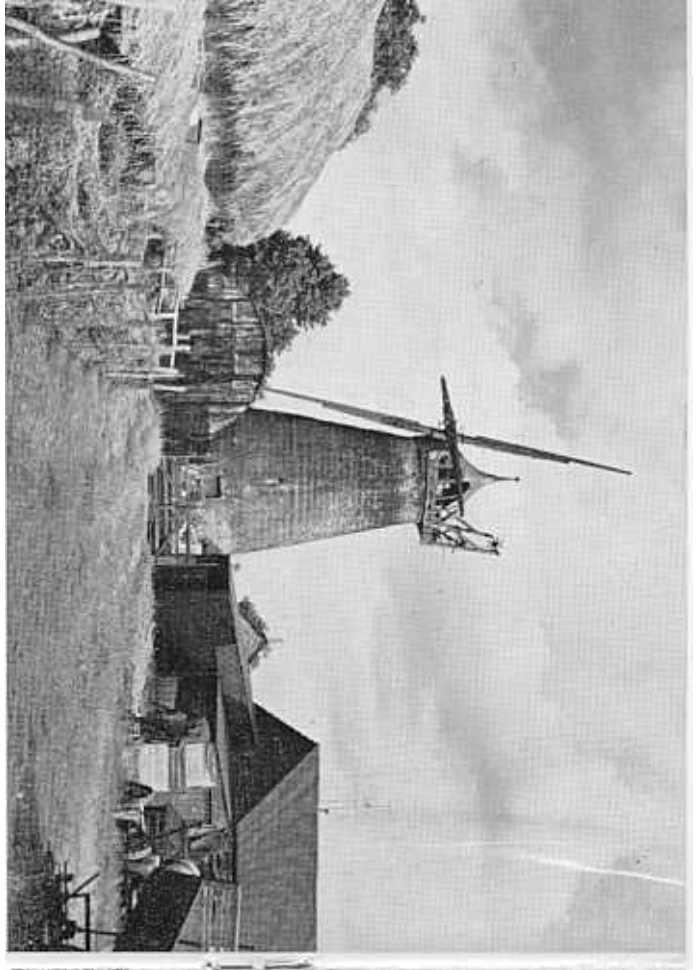
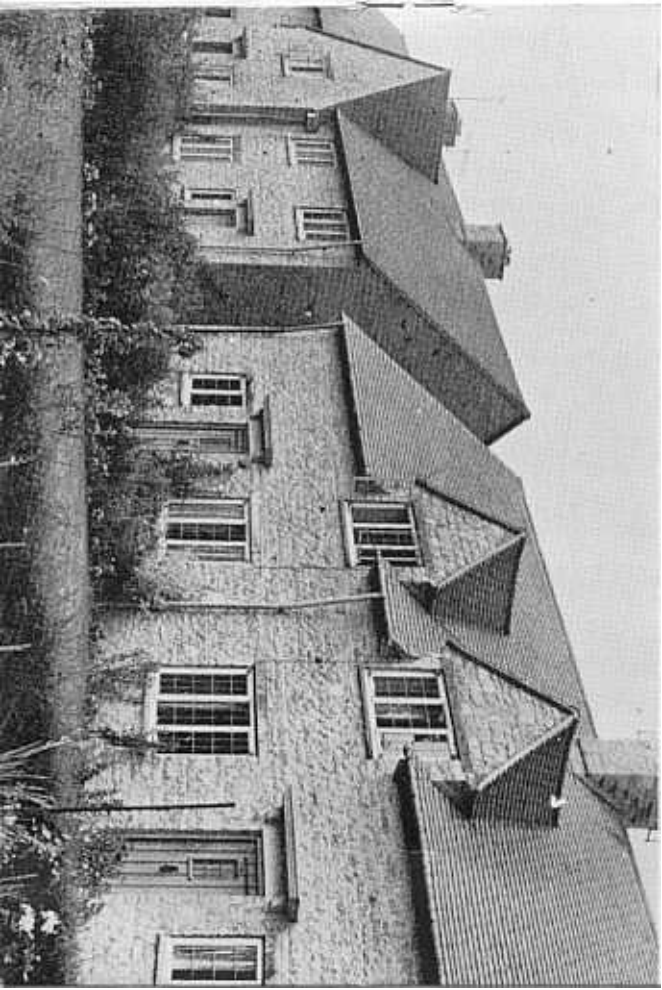
This, then, in short, is the policy of the Northamptonshire Branch of The Council for the Preservation of Rural England. And we cannot doubt but that it will commend itself to and win the active support of all who truly care for the County in which they live.

If you are already a member of the Branch, please ask a friend to fill in the enclosed membership form and return it to the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. E. J. Hayward, of 'Rushay', 48, Booth Lane, Weston Favell, Northampton.



The London - Yorkshire Motorway at Rothersthorpe

— a new element in the rural scene needing careful landscaping and tree planting



Aims and Objects

The Council for the Preservation of Rural England,—C.P.R.E. for short,—was founded 32 years ago. Its objects are :—

1. To organise concerted action to secure the protection of rural scenery and of the amenities of country towns and villages from disfigurement or injury.
2. To act either directly or through its members as a centre for furnishing or procuring advice and information upon any matters affecting the protection of such amenities.
3. To arouse, form and educate public opinion in order to ensure the promotion of these objects.

With this end in view it seeks to promote co-operation between local authorities, Town and Country Planning Committees, National and local Societies, Landowners and all other persons interested.

It is a body representative of many interests, and was formed with the support of, and to co-ordinate the efforts of, various National associations, institutions and societies, each of which is interested in preserving rural scenery and the amenities of Town and Country from some special danger, as well as the protection of artistic and historical features.

Its base has been gradually broadened and it now has 45 Constituent Bodies. In addition there are nearly 200 Affiliated Bodies, and a large number of Regional and County Branches functioning in association with headquarters. There is also a large Associate Membership.

Few people realise the extraordinary diversity of its work and of the work of its Constituent Bodies. The Council neither supercedes nor overrides any of these bodies which have combined to form it. On the contrary, its aim is to assist the whole of its constituent members by bringing to their aid in time of need the force and influence of every organisation interested from different points of view in the protection of landscape and amenities.

To attain this end the Council is composed of representatives appointed by the Associations and Institutions themselves. It acts as a clearing house in respect of the complaints which reach it direct, and where combined action is called for in connection with any serious threat of disfigurement the necessary steps are taken to secure such action.

CONSTRUCTIVE WORK. The C.P.R.E. has played, and is playing a leading part in problems of postwar reconstruction—such as rural housing, the right location of industry, the development and derequisitioning of land, the control of unsightly advertising, sewage disposal works, river pollution, coast preservation, amenities of rivers and streams, protection of buildings of historic and architectural interest, the provision of electricity and water supplies in rural areas, the examination of Parliamentary Bills from an amenity point of view, afforestation, the disposal of war-time camps and buildings—in fact, every conceivable aspect of rural preservation and development.

It aims at being a constructive force—not merely a negative one. It is part of its policy to promote suitable and harmonious development and to encourage the national enjoyment of rural areas by urban dwellers.

LEGISLATION. It has from time to time promoted or supported reasonable legislation to give better protection to rural scenery. Soon after it was founded, the Council addressed a memorandum to the then Prime Minister upon the need for amending existing and promoting new legislation to strengthen the hands of public and local authorities in checking abuses and guiding development. It followed this up by helping to formulate the clauses of the Rural Amenities Bill, which became the precursor of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1932, which is now, in its turn, superseded by the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947.

PUBLIC INQUIRIES. It has provided witnesses and evidence at innumerable Public Inquiries held by Ministers in connection with the proposed use of land for various kinds of development. Many local authorities invite the Council's assistance in this connection and considerable areas have been saved from undesirable development.

RURAL HOUSING AND ARCHITECTURAL ADVISORY PANELS. In co-operation with the Royal Institute of British Architects and the Institute of Builders, the C.P.R.E. formed Architectural Advisory Panels all over the country, to give free architectural advice to those who required it under the Housing (Rural Workers) Act; and assistance in connection with Town and Country Planning Schemes. The Minister of Health issued a series of Memoranda to all local authorities, urging them to make use of these Panels. The Council's housing publications, produced through the County Branches, are well known.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING. Public opinion has become extremely sensitive to threats to amenity and to the possible

destruction of natural beauty, and this is the direct result of increasing secrecy and reluctance to co-operate on the part of those responsible for some of the developments about which the public get to hear quite by accident at the last moment. It is the C.P.R.E. view that architects, engineers and representatives of amenity interests should be brought in at the very outset and well-informed public opinion could insist upon this and bring it about. Indeed, the changed outlook in planning makes the creation of this well-informed public opinion essential, and the C.P.R.E. is helping to create it.

HOUSING. The Central Housing Advisory Committee of the Ministry of Health asked the C.P.R.E. for a Memorandum on the appearance of Local Authority Housing Estates. This was provided. The C.P.R.E. pressed the Ministry for new legislation to ensure a renewal of reconditioning of rural houses and the Housing Act provides for this. Representations have been made to the Ministry about the byelaws controlling the height of rooms, and about the use of stone and other local materials in building, for which a subsidy is now available under the Housing Act. The Council is constantly being asked to intervene and advise upon the choice of housing sites.

ROAD WORKS. In consequence of representations made to him by the C.P.R.E., the Minister of Transport drew the attention of highway authorities to preservation of amenities in all schemes of new road planning or road widening, and stressed the importance of preserving trees wherever possible and planting new ones. Special instructions were issued to the Department's Divisional Road Engineers. The Council's Report on Trunk Roads, published in 1937, is still in many respects up-to-date and the advent of Motorways should not make it obsolete.

ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION. The Central Electricity Board issued, to undertakers of electricity schemes a Memorandum to the same effect, and the C.P.R.E. had a working arrangement with the Board and the undertakers about the siting of transmission lines. The Council is in close touch with the British Electricity Authority and Area Boards to the same end. The Council's Memorandum on this subject is a valuable document and is in process of revision to conform to the structure of the Nationalised industry.

NATIONAL PARKS. The Council initiated the movement for the establishment of National Parks in this country. It gave authoritative evidence before the Government National Parks Committee in 1931 and again before the National Parks Committee set up by the Minister of Town and Country Planning in 1946. Together with the

C.P.R.Wales it established the Standing Committee on National Parks of the C.P.R.E. and C.P.R.W., which meets once a month under the Chairmanship of Lord Birkett. This Committee has done valuable work in protecting potential National Park areas and it is largely due to its efforts that the Government have been able at last to introduce the National Parks Bill.

TREES. The C.P.R.E. urges local authorities to make Tree Preservation Orders in appropriate circumstances because it has been inundated with complaints about indiscriminate tree felling as a result of felling licences issued by the Board of Trade. The afforestation of Gathering Grounds has been the subject of a special investigation about which representations have been made to the Central Water Advisory Committee of the Ministry of Health. Arrangements are in process for providing skilled assistance to Planning Authorities in this respect as a result of conversations with the County Councils Association.

UGLY ADVERTISEMENTS. With the Scapa Society, the C.P.R.E. has led the attack on unsightly outdoor advertising and is hoping shortly to see the reward for its efforts. Every local authority should have a copy of the C.P.R.E. Memorandum "Posters and the Planning Act".

EDUCATION. In the matter of education, the Council has exhibitions of photographs which have been displayed in hundreds of towns and villages and are an invaluable means of bringing home to the individual the many problems with which the C.P.R.E. is confronted. Lectures and lantern slides form another means of propaganda. The C.P.R.E. pamphlet "How Schools can Help to Preserve the Countryside", was well received by Education Authorities. A list of pamphlets and books published by or in conjunction with the C.P.R.E. can be had on application.

EVIDENCE BEFORE GOVERNMENT COMMISSIONS. Evidence was given before the Barlow Commission on the Distribution of the Industrial Population, the Scott Committee on Rural Land Utilisation, and the Uthwatt Committee on Compensation and Betterment; and more recently before the New Towns Advisory Committee appointed by the Minister of Town and Country Planning, and before the Minister of Health's Rural Housing Advisory Committee.

BUILDING OF HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL MERIT. The C.P.R.E. is joining with the Georgian Group, the R.I.B.A., The S.P.A.B. and the National Trust in making representations about

the future of such buildings and evidence has been submitted to the Gowers Committee

FINANCE AND MEMBERSHIP. The C.P.R.E. is a purely voluntary, non-political, democratic organisation whose services are at everybody's disposal. It receives no Government grant in aid, and requires none. It is entirely dependent on public generosity. At no time have its services been in greater demand. Members can help by recruiting new members and interesting them in its work. The measure of the public's support is the measure of the Council's achievement.

One final point: The minimum Annual Subscription of the Northamptonshire Branch is 10/-. If you are not a member already, we ask you to join without delay to help us to carry out the many tasks we have set ourselves.

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Income and Expenditure Account — Year ending 30th September, 1959

Expenditure		Income	
£	s. d.	£	s. d.
To Printing and Stationery	18 5 3	By Subscriptions	59 7 0
„ Postages and Tele-phones	3 5 6	„ Interest on Deposit Account	6 8 9
„ Conferences and Meetings	28 0 0	„ Barnack Windmill Restoration	45 0 0
„ Subscriptions	7 15 6		
„ Barnack Windmill Restoration Committee	45 0 0		
	<u>102 6 3</u>		
„ Excess of Income to Accumulated Fund	8 9 6		
	<u>£110 15 9</u>		<u>£110 15 9</u>

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30th SEPTEMBER, 1959

Liabilities		Assets	
£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Sundry Creditors	4 18 2	Sundry Debtors	5 13 0
Accumulated Fund:		Cash at Bank:	
Balance		Current	
B/Fwd. 365 8 10		A/c. 59 8 9	
Surplus		Deposit	
for year 8 9 6		A/c. 313 14 9	
	<u>- 373 18 4</u>		<u>373 3 6</u>
	<u>£378 16 6</u>		<u>£378 16 6</u>

3th October, 1959.

J. HAYWARD,
Hon. Treasurer.

THE COUNCIL FOR THE PRESERVATION OF RURAL ENGLAND NORTHAMPTONSHIRE BRANCH

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