

Mr. J. D. Powell.
Mr. and Mrs. E. Reeve Angel.
Mr. P. B. Richardson.
Sir Frederick Robinson.
Mr. W. Royle.
Mr. J. W. Sargent.
Mr. H. Schofield.
Mr. M. V. J. Seaborne.
Mr. R. A. Simmons.
The Earl Spencer.
Mrs. Rita F. Squire.
Miss C. E. Stockburn.
Colonel H. M. Stockdale.
Colonel N. V. Stopford Sackville.
Miss A. Stops.
Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Storry.
Mr. and Mrs. F. Sykes.

Mr. J. A. Thomas.
Mr. W. H. Thurland.
Mr. R. M. C. Thursfield.
Mr. and Mrs. Alan Timpson.
Mrs. W. M. Trimmer.
Mr. T. J. Turland.
Mrs. E. Tynan.
Mrs. Susan Walker.
Mr. C. E. Ward Hunt.
Headmaster, Grammar School,
Wellingborough.
Mr. and Mrs. W. Carey Wilson.
Mr. J. R. Menzies Wilson.
Miss C. Wilson MacQueen.
Mr. J. Woolmer.
Mr. T. M. Wray.
Mr. O. E. P. Wyatt.



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



The Council for the Preservation of Rural England

Northamptonshire Branch

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

Associate organisations

The Peterborough Society and

The Oundle Society

REPORT OF ANNUAL MEETING, 4th NOVEMBER, 1961

The Annual Meeting of the Branch was held on Saturday, 4th November, 1961, in the County Hall, Northampton, by kind permission of the County Council. The Rt. Hon. the Earl Spencer, T.D., M.A., F.S.A., F.R.S.A., Her Majesty's Lieutenant for Northamptonshire, President of the Branch, presided.

After welcoming those present, Lord Spencer proposed and Mr. J. T. H. Pettit seconded the adoption of the Annual Report, which was unanimously approved.

Mr. E. J. Hayward (Hon. Treasurer) then presented the accounts, which were unanimously adopted on the proposition of Mr. E. J. Storry, seconded by Mrs. M. M. Bartlet.

Colonel C. C. S. Genese proposed and Mr. J. T. H. Pettit seconded the re-election of the officers and Committee as follows:

The picture on the front cover shows village centre disintegration; an opportunity to redevelop and revitalise.

<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 Lord Bishop of Peterborough, M.C. Sir Michael Culme-Seymour, Bart., J.P. Ewart Marlow, Esq., M.C., J.P., C.A.
<i>Hon. Treasurer</i>	This office is vacant.
<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, M.B.E., G. Forsyth Lawson, L.R.I.B.A., A. S. Ireson, F.R.S.A., R. G. Howe, Mrs. M. M. Bartlet, J.P.

Mr. E. J. Hayward pointed out to the Committee that he would be leaving the district and therefore the Branch would require a new Treasurer. Lord Spencer expressed thanks on behalf of the Committee for Mr. Hayward's services and work for the Branch.

Mr. J. Noel White, of the Council of Industrial Design, then gave a very interesting address on the design of Farm Buildings. He stressed the need for the land-owner and farmer to realise their responsibility to the community and to produce worthwhile buildings, and pointed out that by means of pre-fabrication it was possible to have a well-designed building at reasonable cost, which would fit happily into the landscape. Emphasising his point that pre-fabricated buildings could be pleasing to the eye, he referred to a Nottinghamshire pre-fabricated school which had recently attracted wide attention on the Continent and, in fact, had won the highest award in its class at the Milan Triennale. He quoted the definition of design given by Frank Pick—one of the great developers of the London Underground—who stated "It is intelligence made visible". Mr White then showed excellent colour slides to illustrate ways and means by which modern farm buildings can take their place in the rural scene without spoiling it.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman, County Council and Speaker was given by Sir Michael Culme-Seymour, who stated that although the Branch was interested in the preservation of old buildings, it was

new buildings which were really more important, and he felt that a résumé of Mr. White's address should be circulated to farmers and land-owners to prove that to do the job properly, in fact, costs no more than to do it badly.

The meeting then closed.

ANNUAL REPORT

During the year under review much has been done in an effort to continue to preserve and restore the rural characteristics of the County. Various items which have been the concern of your Committee are:

- Collingtree — proposed new housing development.
- Yarwell — proposed new housing development.
- Development at Great Oakley.
- Need for new members.
- Barnack Windmill — completion of restoration.
- Distribution of leaflets to farmers.

It was with regret that the Committee accepted the resignation of Mr. A. H. J. Crick and of Mr. E. J. Hayward (Hon. Treasurer) who has now left the district, but the Committee is pleased to report that Mr. N. J. Chittenden, Manager of the National Provincial Bank at Northampton, has kindly agreed to act as Treasurer, pending confirmation at the Annual General Meeting.

The Committee also reports with great pleasure that the Lord Bishop of Peterborough accepted its invitation to become a Vice-President of the Branch.

The Committee once again deeply feels the need for an increase in membership, and in an effort to encourage this the main theme of our Annual Report this year is on the need to take adequate steps to preserve our villages.

THE PROBLEM OF VILLAGE PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT — THE NEXT STAGE

Among many matters claiming its attention, the Northamptonshire Branch of the C.P.R.E. is deeply concerned with two urgent and closely related problems—these are:

1. The preservation of buildings of architectural merit.
2. The harmonious integration of new building developments with the older parts of the villages.



Village regeneration; old cottages demolished and replaced by stone cottages, Kettering Rural District Council



Barnack Windmill restored

To help solve the first problem, we strongly recommend that the Branch should make, in association with the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and the County Planning Department, a register for all those buildings worthy of preservation, and that included in this register should be the names of those who are prepared to sell properties for preservation and restoration. Accordingly, the Branch would be glad to hear from both those who have properties they desire to sell for reconstruction, and also from those who are anxious to buy such properties for that purpose. Moreover, to ensure that the register so compiled would fulfil its objects, it would obviously be necessary for intending buyers to give an assurance that they did not propose to demolish the old property merely in order to build on the site.

So far as the second problem is concerned, even the most superficial observer of the rural scene will at once recognise that it fairly bristles with practical and administrative difficulties. In ever growing numbers people try to escape from our crowded towns into the surrounding countryside, only to duplicate on a smaller scale the very conditions from which they come.

It is doubtful if there has ever been such a spate of building development as at the present time, which inevitably means the use of more and more agricultural land surrounding our villages, and if this continues at the speed and scale as now, unless heroic steps are taken, a large number of our villages could well lose their identity to merge into the urban development of nearby towns.

To start to cope with this tremendous problem we recommend that three or four villages should be selected for the study of their present conditions and their likely future development, with a view to drawing up a comprehensive plan for them in close co-operation with the Planning Authority. This pilot scheme could then in turn be followed as soon as possible by others, and the resultant plans be available for consultations with Parish Councils when applications for development are submitted to them by the Planning Authority for their consideration.

Whilst the Planning Committee's policy, taking the broad aspect, as relating to village development is generally and rightly to restrict new housing development mainly to that of the village needs, there are certain villages which are key centres by reason of their educational, social and health facilities, which are intended for expansion.

It is always easy to criticise, but without recognising and fully appreciating the complexities of village expansion, it is neither helpful nor fair to the Authorities. It is hoped that the staff of the Planning Department will shortly be augmented in order to deal with

this ever-increasing problem, and so co-ordinate their work with the aims of the Branch.

Bearing all this in mind, it seems to us essential that the utmost possible pressure should be brought to bear on Local Government and at national level by interested organisations such as the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the Civic Trust, the Planning Authority and ourselves, to ensure that the right action is taken to preserve and develop our villages before it is too late. Pious regrets will serve no useful purpose. Clear and straight thinking is what is needed now, coupled with quick and well thought-out action. We must also try to arouse Parish Councils and would-be developers to the reality and magnitude of the problems caused by the gradual disintegration of our villages.