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*Dennis Wright*

# CALDECOTT RUTLAND

*A Pen Picture of an English Village*

BY

MARIAN NEENAN



JOHN HAWTHORN  
(S. R. FULLER)  
UPPINGHAM  
1954



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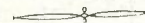
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Hand-set in 10 point Old Face  
in the Office of  
John Hawthorn (S. R. Fuller).

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## FOREWORD.



IN these few pages, I have ventured to set down as far as I can, accounts from Church documents and other records, and also gems and jottings, too precious to be lost, from people's reminiscences, so patiently and kindly told.

I am very grateful to all friends who have lent volumes and photographs and given advice, to Mrs. Varley, M.A., Lincoln Archivist, and particularly to the Vicar for his encouragement.

I trust this little booklet may be of interest in our own Village and perhaps further afield, and that St. John's may benefit from the sale thereof.

*November, 1954.*

M.N.

## CALDECOTT, Rutland.

### CHAPTER I.

THE site of what is now Caldecott was early recognised by the Ancients to be a very admirable position for a settlement. It possessed everything : all life's necessities—food, shelter, fuel, and above all, numerous springs of pure drinking water. It could even provide luxuries—the fordable Welland (Woolland, Eauland or Holland) for travel, clay for vessels, flints for weapons, osiers for baskets and coracles, trees for fuel, and delicious luscious pasture to fatten herds or provide abundant milk and “cow fat.”

The slopes leaning away from the river were excellent sheep grazing grounds so that there were always clothes,—skins for the lazy, and woven, by the industrious. More, the prolific little brook not only supplied drink for man and beast and fish for more than Fridays, but was the haunt of that jewel of all the finned species, the epicure's dream, the salmon trout. And although this turbulent little stream caused, with the Welland, annual floods, the settlement planted itself safely on the higher ground above flood level.

And so Caldecott came into being.

This stream, known as the Eye Brook (Eye being Anglo-Saxon for water) Little Eye, or Lytelee, as opposed to Big Eye farther north, is a tributary of the Welland and rises at 639 ft. above sea level on Tilton Hill and runs for many miles as the Rutland—Leicestershire boundary, and at last reaches Stoke Dry from whence it flows through the south end of Caldecott, having been at some time deviated from its natural course, and enters the Welland in Marshes Meadows. The abundance of water is easily accounted for by the numerous underground streams rushing along the Lias clay (workmen's terms for layers) upon which they are cradled all along the valley : as much as  $5\frac{1}{2}$  million gallons is the daily flow. This exuberant little brook, and the Welland, which rises at Naseby, have washed away the top strata and Northampton Sands, cutting great gashes in the escarpments and working down to the clay which is broken by upsurges of the harder rocks. Pieces of hardened pottery-like clay, of a brilliant gentian blue can sometimes be seen embedded in the brittle grey masses near the little springs. On top of the clay are drift, gravel and

alluvial deposits which, with the phosphates, make the valley perhaps the richest and most fertile in the country ; even abroad it is known as “The Vale of Plenty.”

Geographers tell us, that given other necessities, early settlements of this locality chiefly occurred where clay, water and Northampton sand met.

The little village is described by travellers as well-built, attractive, and of good style. The picturesque houses, many topped with thatch, are of a delightful, mellow, tawny honey or amber shade, built of nearby ironstone, known geologically as Northampton sandstone, which is the inferior or lower oolitic limestone, dug out of the quarries to the north of the village. The different shades in the houses show the different depths and hardness of the rock, the lowest looking sometimes almost purple. The house corners are strengthened with Welton and Ketton stone, whiter and harder than the yellow oolite, and some of the roofs are of Collyweston slate, a rock which hardens and splits vertically as it weathers.

Of food, in the forests there was always ample. Geese and pigs were easily reared in them.

Caldecott was part of Lei, Leigh, Lye or Leifield—the home of the wild boar—a one-time royal forest in S.W. Rutland and E. Leicestershire. It was forested and perambulated by 12 “lawful knights” in the reign of King John. They began beyond Medbourne and Hallaton where “the water which is called the ‘Lipping’” (A.S. for leaping) falls into the ‘Welond,’ taking in Caldecott, Uppingham Brand, and Preston Underwoods in the circuit.” To the south across the ford, was the Great Rockingham Forest, extending almost across Northamptonshire and soon to be the death-bed of the famous Hereward the Wake, stabbed in the back by a jealous courtier.

This forest abounded in deer which in sharp winters would frequently cross the Welland into Caldecott Lordship, when exciting chases took place.

Of William the Conqueror and subsequent kings who hunted here, and of Queen Elizabeth I, who was lost in the forest, much has been written, and tales told of the deer stealers of 200 years ago, among them one Richard Vicars of Caldecott who could jump three yards backward at the age of 70, and who hid the venison in the still existing chimney, while his confederates favoured roofs as safer hiding places.

Lying as it does under the shadow of the ancient Rockingham Castle, a gem among the ancestral homes of England,



with its Norman bastions and mediaeval terraces, Caldecott might so easily have become imitative and dependent, but it seems never to have tolerated feudalism. While admiring the lords of the Castle and delighting in the structural beauty, proximity, and antiquity of the one time Royal domain, the folk this side the river are of an independence of spirit that rises above dukes and earls. There is found here a united front, a keen sense of justice and an almost insular temperament bordering on clanship.

The history of Caldecott is varied, but untroubled. The Ancient Britons here, were later called by the Romans, Coritani. The province was Flavia Caesariensis. There is ample proof that a Roman camp actually occupied the site where the main village now stands, though so far, the name is hidden in obscurity. Quoting from a MSS. 1860, the camp extended "from the angle of the White Hart orchard wall, the N.E. corner up Butler's lane to the town street and into Mr. Brown's premises opposite." Then it continued a straight line a few yards from the turnpike road into Mr. Edward's home close where a conspicuous piece of bank and ditch remain, into Mr. Stoke's windmill close where the N.W. corner may be plainly seen (here some years ago a carriage way from the Manor House, where Mr. Stokes lived was made to the Uppingham Road). The line then proceeded southwards across North Holm and where the Mill Dam now stands, which was the S.W. corner. From there the line turns across the entrance to the town into Mr. Hunt's home close, near the brook and new railway, where the S.E. corner was, and a line back to the White Hart completes the circuit of the camp."

When diggings were made and the course of the brook altered, many relics, such as rings, bone pins and part of a dagger were found, but nothing seems now to be known of these.

Outside the camp, on an eminence along the Great Easton Road, the remains of the burial ground was found. The Romans, a clean hygienic race, never buried their dead among the living and before ballast was taken for use of the railway in 1850, graves could be traced by charcoal along the bottom. The top stone of a quern (handmill) was found, coins of various Emperors, the earliest a Constantine 300 A.D., a ring representing a serpent, with its tail in its mouth, and urns of the ashes of the cremated bodies. A large oval excavation was found, several yards across, with two entrances, opposite each other, and when several ballast waggon loads of soil and bones of animals were taken out, a rudely constructed hearth of pebbles

was revealed with a piece of charred oak laid across. (A few pieces labelled 'Great Easton' found their way into Leicester Museum, 18-5-54).

There is evidence to suggest that the Romans worshipped on the site of the present church. The Sacellum, whose walls enclosed a roofless space about five feet square, was consecrated to some deity and contained an altar and sometimes a statue of the god to whom it was dedicated. Under the plaster of the centre of the present chancel arch, is a stone about two feet square with a border having on it a rudely executed sculpture of two human figures in high relief. This may have formed part of the Roman altar. It is thought that the Sacellum walls were used as the chancel of the first Christian Church and that when roofed there was no light except from a slit in the wall, and that the Roman stones surrounding this slit have been re-assembled, probably even inverted, and used again to enclose the tiny window in the south wall of the present chancel. Then, the stones in the church porch show evidence of very great age, and these may have been brought from another part and were perhaps originally used as the door (way) of the Sacellum, and certainly red Roman tiles are plainly visible in the fabric of the north exterior.

During the 6th and 7th centuries A.D., Caldecott was occupied by a tribe of the Middle Angles and, during the Saxon Heptarchy, the settlement was included in the kingdom of Mercia. It could have been about this time that a name was found necessary. A cold (ceald) east wind blowing up the valley, shepherd's huts (cott) and animal shelters (cote) all Anglo Saxon words, gave an appropriate combination of the name of Caldecote, or Caldecott, called in 1576 Caucot, and in 1637 Cawcott.

At least six other places bear this name, being apparently conspicuously lower in temperature than their neighbouring villages. A modern, local post-card, date stamped with each one, eventually arrived here, only five miles from Uppingham where it began its circuitous journey, and could have been delivered by hand in an hour or so. It is certain that the Danes were in the locality by the number of Danish terms—*thorpes* (hamlets), and names ending with *by* as Corby—*cor* (a raven) and *by* (homestead). They would row up the river, as was their custom, make a lightning raid, seize the fat juicy young cattle, rush with them to their long boats while others burnt everything within range, to make a screen of fire behind which their escape was made. The district was well known in



the Conqueror's Day as the district providing iron for arrow-heads, and Caldecott is actually mentioned in Domesday Book, 1085—"Of the same Bishop (of Lincoln) Walterus holds two hides in Liddentone. There pertains, Stoke, Snelstone and Caldecote, Bardi held it with sac and soc."

Bardi was a Sleaford Saxon Thane of some standing for he had the power or privilege under Edward the Confessor of holding a manorial court (sac and soc). That, and the proud owner farmers and free men "whose long hair floated" marked Liddington as an aristocrat among villages. Our Bishop Remigius de Feschamp, who supplanted the unfortunate Bardi, and whose estate was so large that he had to engage liegeman like Walter (us) to manage for him, was transferred by King William from Dorchester to the See of Lincoln in 1072. His Bishopric extended from Hatfield (Herts.) to Lincoln and included Rutland and Leicestershire.

Caldecott has almost one quarter square mile of land in that part of S.E. Rutland known as the Wrangdike Hundred, extending from it to Tixover and N. Luffenham. The name—from "Wrongedich," dates from 1166, but the "hundred" as a district much earlier. Its ownership is a story of buying and selling, giving and bequeathing, and now belongs to the Marquess of Exeter. A hundred was a piece of land which could supply a hundred soldiers for the sovereign, support a hundred families, and which contained a hundred hides of land. A hide was as much as would support one free family and dependents, probably about 120 acres. The courts were held at "Barroughden" and the Lord of the Manor claimed a chief rent as Lord of the Hundred, and two Jurors were summoned from Caldecott. The overseers used to pay the "Head Silver" but on the introduction of the new Poor Laws, the auditors would not allow it. It appears that the Constable, who was Head of the Hundred, used to pay it. In the accounts of Caldecott are—1767, and 1821, "Paid Head Silver 19 shillings, but in 1778, "Paid Head Silver £1 18s. 4d., so it appears that 1778 was a two year payment with a fourpenny fine added.

To continue the story of Caldecott itself, one must look to the Church. In 1126, the Pope gave confirmation of the various possessions of the Bishop of Lincoln, including some property in Caldecott. It was probably about this time, tired of the long tramp to mass at Lyddington, or perhaps a little later, inspired by travellers' tales of a proposed crusade, that Caldecott built its first tiny church, on the Roman site. Of the small plain nave, two fragments still stand, east and west of

the chancel arch. It is recorded in the Lincoln archives that "in 1267 the Vicar of Lyddington is to find a priest to serve the chapel of Caldecott residing there." He was probably an energetic man, this dominus capellanus parochi (chaplain of the parish), because in about 1280 the church was almost entirely rebuilt, a south aisle was added, the chancel extended eastward, and the nave westward. There is a distinct break in the north wall showing where the extension took place, the old wall probably remaining standing until the new part was finished. This church was probably dedicated to St. Matthew, as Caldecott feast is St. Matthew's day, 21st September, but later is known to have been dedicated to the Virgin Mary and now is known as the church of St. John the Evangelist. It has been suggested that a Snelston church might have been St. John's. The dedication festivals or wakes in the time of Henry VIII were often transferred to All Saints' day in order to avoid a multiplicity of holidays, and so the original dedications became forgotten. Towards the end of the 14th century the tower and spire were added, probably in the reign of Richard II, somewhere about the time of Wat Tyler's rebellion and during the ministry of John Crowe and Thomas Hunt, the chaplains who were ordered to pay 4d. in tax to the King in 1379. But the beneficed Vicar had to pay XII pence.

In the following century a clerestory was added, and in each succeeding century except the 16th, something new was built, local craftsmen doing the work, and though there is no rich ornamentation, no Crusader's tomb, it is a church of the people, and the exterior presents a gracefully proportioned whole; also here are delightful revelations for those who care to look, queer gargoyles and dainty heads, of a bishop and a Tudor king. Inside are the priest's stone seats, an aumbry, a piscina, a recess for a reliquary and the time-worn rood arch and steps which once led to the rood loft from which the priests would preach.

Part of this loft is thought to have found its way to the underpart of the old belfry floor, for "during 1865 restorations a gilt and carved oak beam was seen ornamented with heads of a king and queen and roses on each end and in the middle." A little later, mention is made in the Lincoln Cathedral Chapter Acts of a villein of Caldecott being confirmed in 1520 by the Dean and Chapter, and there is a full account, an isolated survival, of field names as given to the Bishop by his bailiff, 1509. There are 'Crosse furlong,' 'Gooseholme,' 'Brigge furlong' and 'Estmedewong' among them.

While England was in the turmoil of the Dissolution of the



Monasteries, The Church seems to have been a little neglected or perhaps the congregation hesitant. Indirectly however, the Dissolution gave us our first Lord of the Manor, Gregory Cromwell. His father, Thomas, as successor to Cardinal Wolsey, was chief adviser to Henry VIII in the disposal of the monasteries, and came in the course of these self appointed tasks to Launde Abbey, serene and refreshing in its verdant loveliness. Thomas was very impressed and wrote in the margin of his book—"Launde for self"—for besides beauty, it had rich revenues. But it was not to be. After his execution, the Manor and Park and a large area which included Caldecott, were given by the young Edward VI in 1548 to Thomas' son, Gregory (who had married Elizabeth Seymour, sister to Henry's third wife) "in survivorship for their lives." But only enjoying his estate three years, he died at Launde Abbey where a wall monument bears his crest. A chronicler says that "in such an age he was lucky to die in his bed and only his dullness saved him," but perhaps his wisdom lay in his dullness. After the death of the Lady Elizabeth, the reversion was granted to William Cecil, Lord Burleigh, and the lands still remain in the possession of his descendant, the Marquis of Exeter.

## CHAPTER II.

IN 1553 ecclesiastical property situated in Caldecott and worth 18 shillings belonged to the Cistercian Monastery of Pipewell but after the dissolution, a grant of 5 acres of meadow, lying upon Welland and in the tenure of William Conyer was made to Anthony, William and John Conyer. A few years later an Episcopal visitation was made, but as Caldecott was not mentioned it must be assumed it was neither good nor bad, though on another occasion in the same century, Caldecott was reprimanded because the priest was not wearing a surplice.

On May 2nd, 1639, in the reign of Charles I a parishioner, Peter Woodcock promoted a cause in the Court of High Commissioners against Robert Rudd who had been vicar here for forty-eight years. He was accused of neglect of duties and contempt of office, disgracing his priestly function and busying himself in sordid employments, serving a thatcher with straw and helping the thatcher to 'serve' his house, thereby acquiring good skill in this faculty. For several years he had neglected to read Divine Service, and prayers on Saint Days, and had neglected to wear the surplice but only a threadbare coat with four skirts. He preached against Nebuchadnezzar com-

paring him skilfully with graziers that did eat grass like an ox and died like an ass, and that such graziers did live in these days whereby he meant Peter Woodcock. When the parishioners were kneeling at the Communion rail he would take away the Bread and Wine and dispose of it to his proper use and sometimes would even draw away the cup from the communicants.

The Court ordered that a curate was to be provided who was to have a competent stipend allowed him out of the profits of Rudd's Vicarage. Rudd was to pay £100 and make public apology. His 'R.R.' and Latin motto are still to be seen on the house opposite Lyddington Church Lane. Previous to all this, Peter Woodcock had given, or changed the church plate which consists of a cup and paten cover of silver, marked with the maker's mark D.G. 30, and each bearing round the rim "changed this Cupp by mee Peter Woodcock of Caldecot in the County of Rutland this 30th day of June 1637, added to it 48d." He probably at one time lived at Meadow Farm, now in the occupation of Mr. Billson, as stones in the gateway are inscribed 'P.W. 1640—P.W. 1651.'

In spite of so much bitterness between clergy and laity, great alterations and repairs went on in the church. The steeple was restored as is seen by the date 1638, on the south side; the aisle was rebuilt, lancet-headed windows re-inserted and the porch built of Ashlar and old stones, but the early English door was left in its former position.

The music at this time was provided by instruments played by a little orchestra who sat in a 'neat deal gallery' at the back of the church where, at that time there was a floor or platform, half-way up what is now the belfry. Then, or perhaps many years later, the violin was played by Mr. Woodcock, the bass viol by Mr. Close, while hymn tunes were written from ear by Mr. Brown.

For a period of fifty years or so, Tobias Norris I, who had set up a bell foundry in Stamford, had been supplying many churches with bells, and Caldecott must for a long time have debated whether to instal some or not, until finally the order was given to Toby of the third generation in the reign of William and Mary, to supply a peal of bells. It was a great undertaking in so small a community, but the first, the little treble, was given by Peter Browne, and bears the inscription "Peter Browne gave me to this town, 1696." The second and third have no inscription, but the date 1696, the fourth 'Toby Norris made us all five,' and the fifth, Robert Colwell.



Little did anyone think as they proudly watched the raising of the bells and listened to the first exhilarating chiming that in a hundred years' time they would be temporarily silenced by a devastating stroke of lightning which affected much of the church. A visitor at the time said: "Between 3 and 4 a.m. in July, 1797, about a yard-and-a-half of the 100 foot steeple fell entirely off. The frames and the wheels of the bells were shattered so that the 4th only could just be tolled. Chasms and holes were made in the masonry and moulding and stones and mortar fell on to almost every pew. The north wall of the nave near the pulpit is cracked from the top to within three-feet-and-a-half of the bottom, yet no glass is broken anywhere except a small circular single pane between the gallery and the steeple." Typical of Caldecott people, repairs were started, rebuilding with Weldon stone, even while sightseers were still visiting the spot.

The visitor also remarks: "The chancel is separated from the nave by a pointed arch. A corresponding one separates the nave from the steeple, which is now walled up. On the upper part, which is the back of the neat deal gallery, is painted Time with his scythe and hour-glass, and Death. On the north wall at the end of the gallery is an ancient painting of the Garden of Eden, with Adam and Eve under the Tree of Knowledge, with birds and beasts around them."

But time marches on. Twenty years later the "Grate Bell" needed repairing and was mended for 18s. 11d. By 1863, it had become imperative to repair the roof, and make improvement in the interior. The churchyard walls and gate too, were often in need of repair. Mr. George Brookes seemed to have made several new gates at the cost of £1, but in 1857 a new iron gate and fencing cost £10 19s. 2d., and it was agreed that Mr. R. Morris should pay 13/- as his share for the fence enclosing the end of his garden. Perhaps the gate was ornamental and much coveted, for three years later it was stolen, causing great consternation and expense.

"Replacing churchyard gate when stolen and repairing others when maliciously damaged. Mr. Irving new gate £1 18s. repairing 8/-. Mr. Hawthorn for printing bills of £5 and £10 reward, 9/-. Sticking bills 2s. 3d."

The church repairs about this time cost £565—a gigantic sum for 1863.

From the drawing in the church porch, made at the time of the thunderstorm, it will be seen that the roof was low and

leaded. Now it was to be raised and two clerestory windows added. This restoration is plainly seen from the outside of the church. The work was carried out by Messrs. Sampson and Malone, Hull.

#### Receipts.

	£	s.	d.
Subscriptions	233	10	0
Bazaar	30	16	10
Offertories	23	10	0
Sale of lead	137	9	5
Sale of wood	6	16	9
Church rate	133	9	7

£565 12 7

#### Expenditure.

	£	s.	d.
Reseating & restoring interior of church with two new windows in Clerestory	265	0	0
New roof to nave and aisle	225	17	3
New pulpit, Reading desk, New windows & sundries	74	15	4

£565 12 7

One authority suggests that it was at this period that the altar rail was placed east, instead of west, of the sedilia, leaving them "cold, neglected and pointless."

In 1882, a subscription list is shown for lighting the church presumably lamp installation. Previously, accounts say "sconces for pulpit 7/-, choir candlesticks 8/-," and parishioners brought their own candles, placing them in holders at the end of black oak tulip-headed pews (some think box pews).

Concerts were now thought of as a means of raising money and three in rapid succession brought in £22.

In 1908, a great two-day fête was held in the Vicarage grounds with the Great Easton Coronation band in attendance.

The Rev. Pocock said, when explaining that the heating apparatus was costing £155 and the organ chamber and vestry £257, "The old stove at its best was an ugly makeshift, having done duty for several generations, it was past repair and gave off smoke instead of warmth. With regard to the organ chamber and vestry, all agree that a great improvement has been effected. The idea is not a new one, but belongs to the last century, but the honour of making it a reality was reserved for the present age." The old vestry had been taken down and stored for 4s. 6d., and the new organ chamber was made from three old houses in Mill Lane. The old organ was sold to the members of a chapel near Wittering and taken away on a farm waggon. The new one was supplied by Messrs. Taylor, of Leicester, at a cost of £340, £100 of which was given by Mr.



Carnegie and the rest supplied by subscription and various efforts.

Progress is an expensive luxury, and as soon as electric light came into the village in 1935, the church council decided that St. John's must have it. The original lamps had been replaced by larger ones given by Corby parish church, but even these caused a great deal of unnecessary work. It was not, however, until the grievous death of Mr. E. J. Ward that electricity was installed as a memorial to a faithful friend and servant of the church.

An unusual burial took place in 1937. A former vicar was Rev. Packer, one of whose children had become a naturalised American lawyer and requested that at his death he might be buried at Caldecott. Brought from America to Liverpool on the *Queen Mary*, the glass lidded £400 copper casket containing the embalmed body proceeded by road to Caldecott where the arrival of the cortège caused much interest and surprise in the neighbourhood. During the night before the interment, the casket remained in the church where many people went to see the figure, in full evening dress, lying on his silken cushions.

To come right up-to-date, there is the enormous undertaking for the re-hanging of the bells. The bold idea of an annual fête and gymkhana, always held near midsummer day, combining the efforts of the village hall committee and the church council, has proved a happy and successful one, not only financially but in the spirit of unity displayed in the village. By now, having been held for eight successive years, it appears to have become an institution and a recognised social occasion. The total cost of the scheme was £990 7s. 6d., detailed :—

Re-tuning and re-hanging, etc. of bells	£660 10s. 0d.
Stonemason (tower)	£296 10s. 0d.
Architects	£27 9s. 0d.
Faculty	£4 14s. 6d.
Mr. Bradley	£1 4s. 0d.

The original demolition was carried out by Mr. Stanger, a pillar of the church, and Mr. W. Vice. Although the bells, when safe, have always had a willing band of ringers, a new team of campanologists, under the excellent leadership of Mrs. Tom Billson, were making splendid progress when Mrs. Billson's sad and untimely death in January, 1954, put an abrupt end to the tuition. Our Bishop, Dr. Spencer-Leeson, at a service in 1952, consecrated the bells and, afterwards at the school, chatted freely with all but made a special point of going be-

hind the scenes and thanking 'the backroom girls' who had catered so generously and graciously.

In past days, loyal as Caldecott has been to the church, there have been the dissenters. The influence of the great preachers, such as George Fox, born at Billesdon, and the Wesley brothers, had penetrated into the smallest villages. In 1672, State papers report that a request for a licence was made by Thomas Langdale to hold Congregational meetings in his own house at Caldecott. Again in 1789 (George III) "I humbly certify your worships, that my dwelling-house, situated at Caldecott, is intended to be used as a meeting place for the Protestant Dissenters from the Church of England for religious worship, and request a licence for that end. As witness my hand, Francis Smith, also witness our hands who live in the same place, William Smith, Jane Vicars, John Allin."

Forty years later a return had to be made of all places of worship other than Church of England, and "from Caldecott, one Independent Decenters Chapill, attendance 40 to 50, Mr. Chapel Minister."

The dramatic side of worship has not been neglected. A Passion Play, "Pilate," was given by the concert party in 1933. A Nativity Play by the Sunday School children, trained by Mrs. H. Chambers and Miss Margaret Wright, with Mrs. Stokes, the organist accompanying, was given in 1944.

The Caldecott and Rockingham Choral Society under Mrs. Rissik's conductorship have given "The Messiah" and "Elijah," the members also singing the solos and part songs. The Sunday School continues to flourish as in 1846, "Here is a Sunday School with small library."

Other bits of news are :

- 1807. Singers meet and bear 14s. 1d. Paid Robert Morris for ale after coming back from Oakham 2s. 6d.
- 1841. Mr. Jeffs work at gallery seat 1/- String and wire for harmonium 11d.
- 1890. April 13th, sudden death of Thos. Eagle, C.W. after evening service.
- 1893. Last entry of well-known family, the "Chapill" had claimed them.
- 1897. Four bottles Communion wine 4s. 4d.
- 1910. First whist drive held March 4th.
- 1911. Advertising old organ in *Stamford Mercury* 2/-.
- 1919. Rev. Mr. Gilham 9 years fees £1 16s. Coronation ale (George IV) 10/- Horse and self 5/- Filling up forms for the House of Commons 2/-.



In the drastic restoration in 1863, the old oak pulpit was sold for making furniture and the 15th century tracery of the reading desk lost sight of. At some time, the font has been moved and four new pillars made by a churchwarden, but the main 13th century structure luckily remains. 'R.D. 1724' on the oak chest is probably R. Deacon. The text scrolls were painted by Rev. Gilham's daughter. The royal arms of Queen Victoria, instead of the reigning sovereign, are still hanging under the tower.

### CHAPTER III.

THE little manor of Snelston before mentioned, lying about one mile N.W. of Caldecott has unfortunately disappeared though from the air, earthworks are plainly visible showing pale patches due to a different growth of grass. Its history cannot very well be separated from Caldecott, it may even have been the original Anglo-Saxon settlement, Snel-ton, "the enclosed piece of ground" belonging to Snel. In 1243 it was owned by Emma de la Legh and in 1534 a record says "the incumbent of Lyddington received two marks a year from the churches of Caldecott and Snelston." It is not quite clear when the village ceased to be occupied, perhaps 1550-1650, as the 1654 reference is only "Snelston field." Whether the people moved to get nearer to their work, or whether it was found more convenient and congenial to come down among the valley dwellers is only a matter of conjecture. Whatever it was, the departure of the last family with its little belongings conjures up a pitiful picture. Many scattered stones are still to be seen and a street formation leading down to the main road. When the ground is excavated it will probably be found to teem with history. What is thought to be a stone coffin with lid grooves has been seen and covered up again in this century, and in the last, a stone coffin containing jewelry was found on the opposite side of the road. Coins have been found in the dykes, including an Anglo Saxon about 800, now in the British Museum.

A vivid and pathetic picture of Caldecott in the 19th century is portrayed by entries in the overseers' account book. Caldecott was almost entirely agricultural and many of the families were excessively poor, some almost destitute. A day's sickness of the breadwinner spelt want, and a month's, sheer starvation. The only benefits were those asked for from the overseers who had no rules to guide them, but handed out moneys at their own discretion from 1d. to £1, usually from 16 to 20 times a



BY COURTESY OF J. R. DAWSON, CORBY.

CORONATION, 1953. MAYPOLE DANCE.





CORONATION GROUP, 1953.

week. The entries were often summed up at the end of the year. e.g. "The amount of constant relief of Poor of Caldecott from Lady Day 1826 to Lady Day 1827, £176 14s. 0½d." John Ougden, John Stokes. This money was raised by levies of 6d., 9d., 11d. or 1/- and the overseers, men, it is hoped of integrity and understanding were appointed at the "Vestry," at the same time as the Parish constables, Church Wardens, Way Wardens (of whom Mr. Hunt was the last) and a Dyke Reeve. The overseers were to be in office for six month periods. The Records were meticulously kept. Coal (which usually had to come from Leicester) and other fuel, were bought by them in large quantities to be re-sold to the poor in smaller amounts, invariably at a loss. The overseer also bargained with local practitioners to doctor the poor, sometimes for as low as £6 for a year and this might involve journeys from Market Harboro or Oakham. e.g. "Agreed with Mr. Walker, assistant to Dr. Spencer, to doctor poor of Caldecott for £8, to April 6th, 1831." In addition to assisting with money for loss of work, sickness, help at funerals, journeys, and relieving vagrants, "town houses" were built, and constables paid from 5/5 to £3 15s. 10d. per half year. In October, 1822, six new houses were built by Robt. and Thos. Clarke for a total sum of £114 3s. 6d.

Some interesting items are :—

Mr. Crowson collecting industry money ...	1/-
Mr. Allen after 5th April for sparrows ...	3d.
Head Silver ...	19/-
Relieve a Vagrant ...	6d.
5 new rails to guard little houses ...	1/8
Putting in ...	6d.
Waiting of Doctor ...	1/-
Men on the road ...	£1 2s. 6d.
Paid, Letters from London ...	3d. & 11d.
Paid ... Passage to America ...	£14

For a funeral washing and mending 6d. laying out 3/-, waiting on him 3/6, victuals for the women 2/8, peck of bran 4½d. Paid for 10 leeches at 3d. each, 2/6. Relieved company distressed seaman on Liverpool passport, 1/6. Jane Bellamy 2 shifts making 5/1. 5 days up round 10d. For ale when the wood came home 3/- Caitley's girl for calling two meetings 4d. Catherine Cox sitting up 2 nights with Mary Deacon 1/- Francis Smith 1 day when Mr. Ward would not pay him 8d.

There was a Society known as the "Society for Promoting Industry" which encouraged the industrious poor throughout Rutland. Caldecott people seemed to have belonged to it.



The women knitted stockings, spinning linen and jersey, afterwards woven into tamise. Wages sometimes ran from nine to fifteen shillings a week. But it was not all sadness. There was plenty of fun and people made the most of holidays or anything that broke the routine. Caldecott Feast, on St. Matthew's Day, 21st September, lasted for a week from about the 19th September. Events used to take place on the Green and in the (old) Plough Yard, but the last time a visiting Fair came was in 1931, when amusements were in the field next to the Eye Brook on the W. side of the road. Everything could be bought at the Fair and Public Houses were free, and villagers had a special feast on Sunday.

Then there was a Pancake Day, the Pancake Bell ringing at 11 o'clock. December 21st, St. Thomas's Day was Gooding Day or Widow's Day when widows went a-Thomasing from door to door collecting alms or charities. A Mummer's Play was acted at Christmas time when a band of village men and boys strode in and performed the play. Refreshments were usually given them, and they strode out again. After a lapse of many years Mr. Chris Keightley revived the play for Coronation night, June 2nd, 1953. On Plough Monday, a similar thing happened when eight men gave their song on the 2nd Monday in the New Year.

The coming of the railway in 1851 naturally caused great excitement. Previous to this, after pillion riding and pack horse days, the Leeds stage coach came through the village, and the Uppingham to London coach, three times a week. The road was fairly good, a bridge having been built over the Eye Brook in the early 19th century and the one over the Welland much earlier by Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, who with his retinue had been mud-bound so often at the ford, that he had collected money to build a substantial bridge. The arrival of the Leeds Mail coach was heralded by a great clattering of horses' hoofs on the cobbled roads and the post boy vociferously playing "The days we went a gypsying" as they rushed into the village and on to the next "stage" at the Falcon or Sondes Arms from where one solitary newspaper—a weekly—would have to be brought. A story is told on one occasion, the Guard called here for the mail bag while the horses were changed and the postmaster who had gone to bed rather muddled, dropped his own "bags" through the bedroom window and it was not until the light of the "Green Dragon" was reached that he realised he had got breeches instead of the mail.

Then the year of the Crystal Palace Exhibition, the L.N.W. R. Company ran the Rugby to Peterborough line so close to Caldecott that the saying arose "Rockingham names me, Caldecott claims me but Great Easton owns me." Some of the first passengers going up to the Exhibition were Mr. and Mrs. Crowson, ancestors of Mr. G. W. Wignell. His mother also saw the crowds clamouring at the last execution and saw the opening of the Holborn Viaduct and Smithfield Market. Rockingham station was for many years used by Uppingham for passengers and goods. The carters were kept very busy, sometimes doing two and three double journeys a day carrying merchandise or schoolboys' trunks.

A big addition to Caldecott's population was made in 1937. Corby (Northants) Water Company's experts had selected the Eye Brook as potential supply for Corby's new town, and a weir had recorded the water flow for four years to obtain a working average and prove the sufficiency of supply before "even a sod was cut." This proved to be 5½ million gallons per day. An Act of Parliament allowed the blocking of the water, but 700,000 gallons per day were to come through the fields dependent on the Eye Brook. In addition any town or village which laid a claim for a pipe line supply from the reservoir, was allowed the water, even as far as Wellingborough. Men familiar with the work came from Co. Durham, (some married village girls and stayed here) and the scheme begun in 1937 was completed in 1941. The dam, with a pressure of 20,000 tons against its face, is half in Caldecott and half in Great Easton, and the reservoir about one tenth in Caldecott. The latter was a great skating rink on its completion during several weeks of severe frost. The former at one short period of the war, a mock battle line. At sundown each evening, we noticed increasing air activity, thundering planes circling round the village, missing the church spire apparently by inches, and as darkness wore on, brilliant fuschia flares lit up the western side of the village. Guy Gibson and his daring companions practised bombing the target, preparatory to their historic visit to the Mohne dam. For a fortnight they thrilled us. Then after a certain Saturday night they came no more. War history records the rest of the gallant story.

Built only for utility the reservoir has unwittingly added great beauty to many miles of our countryside. A walk from the Uppingham Road through "Snelstone" or "Hobbijohns" to the crest of the hill, shows only one of the lovely panoramas that surround Caldecott. Looking westward is a view



that might almost be Switzerland. The vast expanse of the reservoir lake, like a huge mirror below, the ornamental bridge at one end and the not unsightly dam at the other, the conifers in varying shades of green and probably mountain like clouds beyond, and the breathtaking splendour more than repays the effort of the climb. Another enchanting scene is looking E. and S.E. from the hills (300 ft.—400 ft.) on the north side of Caldecott. There is the unparalleled view of the viaduct with its 88, 86 or is it 90 (?) arches. Then picturesque Gretton, dotted along the hillside, and to the south—Caldecott in the valley below. Strangers say this is one of the loveliest sights in the country. The view on the S.W. is enhanced by the long stretch of the reservoir with Cottingham behind it making a delightful approach to the village, as also does the entrance down the leafy Rockingham hill from the south side, showing the winding ribbon of the Welland, and Caldecott firm yet peaceful behind, and beyond that the Lyddington and Uppingham hills framed against the evening sky.

No village is complete without its Manor House and Mill. Wm. Le Queux in "Tickencote Treasure" suggests a secret passage might exist from the Manor House to Bringhurst. It was long occupied by the Stokes family, one of whose initials are on a stone "J.S. 1695," but parts of the house appear much older and may even contain an exciting priest-hole. It is thought that Gregory Cromwell with the Lady Elizabeth may have visited there in the reign of Edward VI. Another occupant, who became High Sheriff of Rutland in 1837, was John Stokes whose descendants have recently written "Just Rutland." The house also bears an interesting Brass Fire Insurance Plate of the Yorkshire Insurance Co. 1824, one of the few in the district, being at one time a compulsory measure in safeguarding insurance claims.

Caldecott's original mill was a windmill, as shown on the 1800 maps. It was a great oak post, fitted with an iron pivot and sails, and below the post the building, for stores and machinery. It stood on an eminence in the Close which still bears its name, the small field near the beginning of what the older generation calls the Turnpike Road, *i.e.*—Uppingham Road. The first water mill stood about 200 yards higher up the brook than the present one, and "Bates Dam," next to Mr. Jo Wignell's new house (the old one, formerly the dame school was burnt down in 1944) kept the water from coming into the lane. Probably at this time, the building with the sundial on the main road was the "Sun Inn" and later "Engine

and Tender." Eventually this corner building became a mill and as such was bought by Mr. Vice of Blaby as a wedding present for his daughter and Mr. Birchnall, a miller, a 100 years ago. It was not until 1878 that the large room was added, using much material from the dismantled windmill. Grinding ceased after 1910 and later the attached chandler's shop came into prominence, but closed in 1948. Meanwhile in 1922 a good floor had been laid and the room let for village functions, the smaller, older room being a reading-cum-billiard-cum, ante room until 1946 when the mill became garage premises.

1878 saw also the building of the village "Board School." Children before this had not been entirely ignorant for there had been a dame's school kept by Miss Brookes in Mill Lane, and then one by Miss Raines at the Post Office where Mr. Hunt's stables are now. The site chosen was where shepherd huts stood on Mr. Laxton's land. In Lyddington Road the six 1822 houses became redundant and the stone was bought for £10 per house and used for building the School House and School which opened on Dec. 2nd, 1878, with 31 scholars and Mr. Humphrey Hall Gladwin as head master and his wife, a Roman Catholic, as Infants' Mistress. Among the first days' pupils were S.M. and Lydia Brooks, Jane Wignell, Pridmore Chambers and then Harry Hunt, Annie Vice, Jane and A. M. Keightley. Mr. Gladwin records on the first day that no children could do arithmetic but 15 could read fairly well. He has been succeeded by four headmistresses and during the 76 years, 790 scholars have been admitted. A glance through the early log book would make parents thankful for present medical services. Impetigo, ring worm, "the Plague," skin diseases and epidemics, ran rife and whole families were frequently excluded from school. When the Board School became a Council one, the village very much resented the taking away of documents and only just managed to rescue the Parish Award and Log Book. Further excitement was caused in 1920-1923 when the Senior Scholars were directed to the newly opened Central School (once a prisoner-of-war camp) in Uppingham, but finally the new régime was pleasantly accepted. Each school mistress has done her utmost for the scholars entrusted to her, encouraging courteous behaviour, hard work, initiative, useful application of leisure and good citizenship.

Honesty and punctuality do not have to be taught, it is innate in Caldecott children, as is their keen sense of justice, noticed particularly on their popular sports day when all the



village turns out and notices that even the youngest is an equally good winner or loser. The cup for the highest points was given by Mr. Chambers, an old pupil. Scholarships are gained, concerts given, outings and parties enjoyed and co-operation in village life undertaken.

Drama, dancing and singing competitions have been won; the latter on one occasion having "We are seven" written across the winning certificate, by the adjudicator who said the seven reminded him of the winning piccaninnies in America. On November 25th, 1953, the children were invited to broadcast in "Preparation for Christmas" which included singing, parts of their annual nativity play, and talking. When the B.B.C. cars, mechanism and operators arrived, the children were awed with excitement, but responded perfectly, the only wrong notes all day were "teacher" (B.B.C. word) bumping into the piano, and dropping a shoe as she was preparing to pad silently about the room. When the relay came on December 7th, parents sat tense at home waiting for the miracle of hearing their own children's voices on the air, while at school, the children were almost numbed with the mystery of it all as the recording came through the Vicar's loud speaker, listened to by more B.B.C. officials, and Mrs. Burditt and Mrs. Johnson, who had helped with the original dressing.

#### CHAPTER IV.

IN war, there are personal ties as far back as 1815. Mr. Walter Brown remembers his grandfather talking about his ancestor who set out to join the Iron Duke. Mr. Barfoot Saunt's ancestor, Dr. Gatty, of Market Harboro', who married Elizabeth Saunt, and who came back and sometimes doctored the poor of Caldecott, was one who rode with Wellington into Paris. Mr. Smith, now about 85, is a Boer War veteran. A war memorial in the church reminds us of the Caldecott men who gave their lives in 1914-1918. The latest war is still vivid in the memory of all. Functions were organised so that on their arrival the boys, at a social, were enthusiastically welcomed back, and each asked to accept a share of the £185 with the village's deep gratitude; but the joy was marred by the absence of those who would never return.

At home, all services were kept at full strength, A.R.P. and Red Cross, with headquarters in the old disused chapel, W.V.S., Home Guard, Rest Centre, Emergency Kitchen. Two consignments of evacuees with a teacher were received, several staying

until the end of the war. They were nice children, worldly wise, but surprised to see apples growing on trees!

A few harmless bombs were dropped in the fields including a large unexploded one. A few scares sent us into shelters or under the kitchen table, but we soon grew immune and slept on. One October afternoon a burst of machine-gun fire sent bullets through the roof of Mr. Hallam's and Mr. Ward's house in Foresters' cottages, so that in the bedroom the sky could be seen through the holes. The noise was terrific, like the street being suddenly ripped open. The plane, coming up the main street then dipping almost to the ground, turned at a sharp angle opposite the school house and headed for the railway and Stamford.

£8000 was saved in four saving campaigns, each of which lasted a week, and was made gay and attractive by entertainments, socials etc. On one occasion, a 'dentists' waiting-room was set up on the green and while the 'dentist' was amusing the crowd extracting a gory tooth five or six inches long, another enthusiast was extracting savings money from the spectators.

A band of patriotic school girls raised £49 2s. 0d. at little bazaars, giving the money to the Red Cross and the *Spitfire* fund, to which also the village gave a subscription of £34.

At the Victory feast, three sheep were eaten, given by Mr. Billson, Mr. Brown and Mr. Hunt. A bonfire was lit on the village green and the church was floodlit by Mr. Neenan.

Caldecott boasts good stories and story-tellers. There was the tale of the runaway debtor, a Caldecott man on trial for debt at Oakham, being sentenced, jumped out of the dock, got clear, raced to Caldecott, beating horses and all pursuers, crossed the Eye brook into Great Easton parish and, being in another county, became a free man, according to an 1820 law.

Similarly, when prize fighting was a criminal offence, Heenan fought Sayers in Pitchcroft Meadow by the Welland, so that if the police arrived they could cross the river to avoid arrest.

Mr. Stanger tells the tale, inimitably, of the quarrelsome man with the nagging wife, who lived in what is now Post Office Lane. One night she decided to give him a scare and pretended she had jumped into the well, making a big sound as of falling, and banging of a lid, and left apparent evidence that she was drowned, thinking that when he thought she had gone beyond recall he would relent, but on secretly approach-



ing, in night attire to see how he was taking his loss, she found him dancing on the well lid, in high glee!

Another tale our *raconteurs* tell, is of the village idiot with more wit than his tormentors. Feigning to be a ghost, one of them hid, for a wager, behind a tombstone in the dead of night. Just as the idiot was passing by, the ghost began wailing and moaning "I can't get in, I can't get in," whereupon he was more than astonished to receive a crack on the head with a good stout stick, and to hear the words "Ye shouldn't ha' got out yer silly old—— yer shouldn't ha' got out."

There have probably been many clever and fascinating characters in Caldecott but, unlike Boswell and Johnson, the biographers have been lacking. There were two characters whose family took their name from the village as far back as the 14th century. These were John and William de Caldecott, who became High Sheriffs of Rutland in the reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, though at that time living near Ketton. In 1602, Ferdinand de Caldecott and his mother Mary brought an action against Richard Morris of Caldecott to recover lands conveyed by Mary's husband.

Peter Browne who gave the bell is probably the same Peter Browne who, in July 1679, with John Browne "made the first wooden water-engine at a charge of £60 for Market Harboro' and bound themselves for £10 for the space of twenty years to maintain and repair this certain water vessel which John and Peter Browne have sold and delivered for the use of this town." This early pump stood near where 'Saunt's Pump' hotel now stands.

Another inventor was C. Deacon, a mill wright of the last century, who made and repaired machines for many miles around. A brass tablet at the water mill at Islip bears out this fact.

It is to Mr. Barnet, a Caldecott chronicler of the middle 19th century that we are indebted for much of the 1860 information contained herein.

Catherine or Kitty Cox was an energetic woman who stitched for the poor, attended the sick and dying, did washing, and was at everybody's beck and call for an amazing number of years in the early 19th century.

Many well remember Adam and Eliza, the fiddler and tambourinist, who settled in Caldecott but attended all the local fairs singing the "The Quot Pot Song," and charming all with their ditties and performances.

For the Caldecott celebrations of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's coronation a committee was formed and weekly collections were made in the village. The day began at 7.15 a.m. with Holy Communion. Bells were rung, the Maypole danced and a fancy dress parade took place on the green, and another short service was held, followed by television viewing for which a set had been installed in the church. As the latter part of the day was wet, a relay of meals was enjoyed in the school, and the sports postponed, but in the evening the school was bursting with people, many offering to contribute to the entertainment. Mr. J. Ward sang, Mr. C. Keightley, jr. and the Pace boys formed a mouth organ band and Mr. J. Bradley accompanied with the bones. Six organisations made enjoyable tableaux, the Parish Council winning with "An old fashioned wedding," the 'mothers' being runners-up. Prizes were presented by Mrs. Cox to the fancy-dress winners, and to Mrs. Hunt for the best decorated house, and beakers were given to each child. Something quite unique was the delightful coloured fountain set up on the Village Green by Mr. Douglas Brown.

Of organisations and clubs, Caldecott, though lacking a village hall has always had many, and has always been lucky in having someone to take an interest in social welfare. That there is a Parish Council goes without saying, women being members for the first time.

Photographs are in existence of the cricket club in 1879 and of a country dance team in 1908, and again in 1927, one which took many prizes in the district. There was a choral society of very high repute which took many firsts about 1920-1930. A tennis club in 1936 ran, for several years, renting a court from Mr. Fred Wignell in the field opposite the church, and a cricket club which started at the same time closed at the beginning of the war. In recent years there is the football club which this year won the cup. The oldest organisation in the village is the men's whist team, which plays in the Welland Valley Whist League and also recently won the much coveted cup.

The present choral society combines with Rockingham. A concert party, formed in 1931 and having the blessing of the Education Committee, began with small plays, progressed to such operas as *Iolanthe* and *The Mikado*. In 1947, it was honoured by a request from Oakham to re-enact Queen Elizabeth I presenting the horse shoe to Rutland at Oakham Castle, at a time when the County staged a Pageant as part of the



fight for her independence. In 1951, the party formed the nucleus of the Village Pageant when there were twenty-four scenes of Caldecott history with a cast of over sixty players. Each year the society was invited to play in neighbouring villages to help with their local charities, proceeds of which must have mounted to many hundreds of pounds.

A canning club, formed immediately after the war, is run by a band of unselfish women who obtained the required certificate as a symbol of proficiency, and now most kindly give up valuable time to can fruit for us.

The British Legion, after many years, is having a temporary lapse.

The Village Hall committee was formed when it became necessary to raise money to pay rent for the Mill Hall which otherwise would have been closed after Mrs. Vice's daughter's tragic death. Funds were then begun to build the Village Hall and now, with a site bought and £1010 in the bank, the foundations are just laid. The material, brought from the disused huts, has been given by the Corby (Northants) Water Co.

Then last, but not least, there is a happy united band forming the Women's Institute, which celebrated its Silver Jubilee in 1951, welcoming one of its founders, Mrs. Bland, and many of the original committee, who all received gifts. Silver spoons have been won for handicrafts and of latter years some of our members are earning us an exalted place in the cookery world by the excellence of their exhibits.

Money is raised to help such charities as the Cancer campaign, Dr. Barnardo's Homes, and the Blind Institution. A supper and entertainment was given to the blind of Rutland this year, and for several years a similar party has been arranged for the village pensioners.

The Women's Institute undertook the catering for King King George V's Jubilee and George VI's Coronation. In 1951 for the commemoration of the Festival of Britain the members asked permission from the Parish Council to clear up the rubbish-dump and turn it into a wayside garden. Originally a pinfold and the property of the Lord of the Manor, it had been handed over to the Parish Council for an ash-tip, but when the Council began to collect ashes in the war this was unnecessary and each year it became more over-grown and unsightly. The task looked a formidable one but by the time Mrs. Close and Mrs. Murrant had made a bonfire to dispose of

brambles and thistles, Mrs. Munro had poked around with a rake and crammed sacks with rubbish, stones had been buried and debris carted away, hope was revived. About 18in. down was what appeared to be a cobblestone yard with stones about five inches across, but after moving one or two, the rest were left in case we were destroying history. At last, all was finished. A teak seat was bought by the members, and the pensioners were invited to an opening tea, with Councillor Brown speaking for the Parish Council and Miss Abbott and the President speaking for the W.I. Later, poems on the "Festival Garden" were judged by Dr. Griffin, who pronounced Mrs. Williams the winner with—

"Come for a walk" you said to me  
Right gladly now I can agree.  
For when my feet get tired and slow  
I can enjoy the seat, and so  
Look round this simple garden fair  
With flowers sweet to scent the air,  
And bless the folks who were so kind  
To have our happiness in mind.

Another was—

In olden days a village pound  
Where straying cattle oft were found  
Later still mid sun and breezes  
Housewives threw their bits and pieces.

Along came the Head of the W.I.  
With mortal combat in her eye.  
Said "Ah I'll call a meeting,  
That's just the place to put the seat in."

Out came the broken pots and pans,  
Nettles, briars, and rusty cans,  
Bottles, stones and nasty clinkers,  
That made the blood flow from our fingers.

Also—

Around the wall they planted shrubs  
Far more aesthetic than old tubs.

And—

So little boys please keep your feet  
From off the ladies' village seat.  
Appreciate what they have done  
In nineteen-hundred-and-fifty-one.



From the Records there are some interesting points. "By virtue of an endowment dated 1250, all tythes, oblations and obventions (except corn and hay) within the parishes of Lyddington and Caldecott belong to ye vicar."

In 1246 grants were made to hospitallers of 2 hides of land. In 1534 the incumbent of Lyddington received 2 marks a year from Caldecott. The rate of wages for all kinds of servants, and even workmen were assessed by the Justice at Oakham in 1610. A man servant, who could make a rick and kill a hog, had 50 shillings per annum, if not, only 40. A chief woman servant to cooke, bake, brew and make malt and oversee the other servants had 26 shillings and eight pence per year, but if she could not oversee the servants, only 23s. 4d. The wages in harvest were fivepence per day with victuals and tenpence without.

Under the Commonwealth (about which time many of our oldest houses were built) an augmentation of £31 per year was ordered for the Minister of Caldecott.

In 1742 Paid to the vicar yearly, by every cottage in Caldecott, 2d. as wax shot, 2 shillings for every milch beast, and yearly at Easter for all persons above the age of 16, 2d. Paid to ye vicar for every score of sheep bought between Candlemas and Clipping Day and depastured within ye aforesaid parishes 10d. If pigs be taken in kind, the owner chuses ye three first and the vicar ye fourth. Pigeons, fruit of all kinds, honey and wax are either taken in kind or money paid in proportion of the value of ym.

In 1799, tithes were extinguished and land enclosed. The tithe barn stood where 'Ye Olde House' stands now on Mr. Jeffs' property on the N.E. corner of the village. In 1797, a notice of the coming enclosures was put up on the church porch (at the time of the thunderstorm) though part of the parish was in open state, fields were all known by name: Buckland, Frank Furlong, White Roods, Mill Acres, Furlong, Beggars Bushes, Saltmoor (or mere) where 'cannon balls' are frequently ploughed up, Cotton Leys, Russell's Quick, Cow Pasture, North Holm, The Ashes, and Stockwell.

After 1340, the wool trade was so protected that no one might be a woolwinder unless he were furnished with a certificate from the J.P's. at the Sessions. 1789 (George III) "We whose names are underwritten do recommend the bearer, Richard Trueman of Caldecott to the Justices of the Peace of Quarter Sessions as a person qualified to be sworn as a wool-

winder according to the directions of an Act of Parliament passed last Sessions.

C. Peach      W. Gibson      Hy Shield.

In 1742, "The Vicarage House at Caldecott has three bays with yard adjoining, half-a-rood of ground, now divided into two tenements and in ye occupation of John Robinson and William Ireland," but in 1860, The Rev. T. W. Gilham "had a handsome new rectory house built with 47 acres of glebe land" (this was one of the last houses to be built of the stone from the local quarries to the north of the village).

Tithe valued annually at £65 was the Vicar's only income from Caldecott.

As recently as 1933, Bede House charities have provided a Caldecott old lady with about 3/- per week.

## CHAPTER V.

*Do you know that :*

In a severe winter nearly 150 years ago, a Caldecott man saw an ox roasted on the frozen Thames.

Caldecott once had two crosses, one on each green.

A one-fingered clock was installed in the church in 1724.

A mill grind-stone is somewhere used as a doorstep.

There is a cheese-window in one of the houses.

"A ghost-witch sways on yonder tree."

Thomas Browne, apothecary of Uppingham, who married Prudence Kirkby, a Caldecott girl, was a descendant of the Robert Browne of Little Casterton and Achurch, originator of the Brownists and Congregationalism.

In the 19th century the population was 360; in 1938, 222 for gas masks, and now is 275.

One house is in the continental style with a room over the gateway.

A 100 years ago, if work in Caldecott was scarce, men without family ties went to work at Fen drainage.

A Caldecott man on holiday went round into the next street for a shave, got lost, and had to go back by train.

As recently as 1931, a board saying "Tea, Tobacco & Snuff" was over Mrs. Burchnall's door.



Caldecott always used to speak of itself as a town. "Town Garden," "Town Pump" "Town Houses."

That *Playfair* in 1888, and *Forbra* in 1932, both Grand National winners, were born and bred in Mr. Hunt's stables.

Until 1691, all entries in church registers were in Latin, after which marriages and baptisms were entered in English, and even ministers did not agree over the spelling of names, *e.g.*—Cately, Kately, Keightley, and Wignel, Wignal, Wygnell, Wingel, Wigfall.

The Plough Inn ceased to be a hostelry in April, 1948, having been one, or a malt house, since 1578.

"The Hall is the seat of Captain Townsend." 1885.

In coaching days a toll bar stood where Messrs. Ellis and Everard's shed stands. The office of toll-keeper was re-let annually. Saddle horses were charged 2d. and waggons 3d. A butcher's shop was near where the kiosk now stands. Mr. Bradleys's shop was a blacksmith's and there was also a forge in the Plough Yard. The Salvation Army used to meet at the N.E. of the village.

A servant girl, Ruth Salmon, was said to have been murdered in an orchard 200 years ago.

Caldecott boasts an ancient pigeon cote.

The custom here is said to be borough English.  
(Youngest son being heir).

Some years ago, plum cakes—called Kattern cake—used to be baked on the eve of St. Catherine's Day, November 24th. St. Catherine is the patron Saint of lace makers.

In 1846, Caldecott's inhabitants included a surveyor, two tailors, a London merchant, a malster, a stay maker and a wool comber.

The feast at Queen Victoria's Jubilee was held in a barn which stood between Burgess' Row and Mr. Billson's yard.

During part of the great seven weeks' snow in 1947, Caldecott was entirely cut off from the rest of the world for several days and had to dig itself out.

In the following November there were 9½ days of continuous fog.

Caldecott once had a bleaching ground, and in one house are two Caldecott woven sheets.

On February 2nd, 1950, three sons of Mr. & Mrs. A. Sharman all joined the Army together. Another son had been a Captain in the Chindits in Burma.

QUESTIONNAIRE :

- A.—Which is the oldest dated house ?
- B.—Which is the oldest dated stone in the churchyard ?
- C.—Where has the King Stone gone from Cross Bank ?
- D.—What is "Pimpole."

ANSWERS :

- A.—Mrs. Tasker's, 1578.
- B.—Edward Morris, 1658.
- C.—It is a quoin in the "Black Horse" wall.
- D.—The pinfold.

Where is the Gretton house paved with Caldecott grave stones ?

Who crossed the Welland with a fitch of bacon on his back ?

Is this Cawcott where the're Awk'ard ?

Why is Snelston called Bear's Lane ?

Who shook hands with the Bishop's cup of tea ?

When did the settles disappear from outside the front doors ?

Where did the black oak pews with the poppy heads go ?

And who made furniture out of the old oak pulpit ?

Who stole the stocks in 1835 ?

Where have Mr. Woodcock's violin and Mr. Close's viol gone ?

Whose house is haunted ?

What is wax shot ?

CALDECOTT WOULD LIKE TO KNOW !





# A PAGEANT OF CALDECOTT HISTORY.

JUNE, 1951.

(See Frontispiece).

## CASTE OF SIXTY PLAYERS.

Village Parson	Rev. A. L. Toop	A.D. 1696.	The Bells are hung.
Britons. B.C. 200.	Peter Stokes	John Chapman	William Stanger
	Bertie Jeffs	Robert Colwell	Charles Bradley
	Roy Johnson	Peter Browne	Walter Brown
Romans. B.C. 55-A.D. 436.	Baden Wright	Toby Norris	Dennis Wright
Septimus	Elsie Wright	A.D. 1757.	John Thompson
Octavia	Pauline Marshall	Murder	Bryan Walton
Maxima	Herbert Chambers	A.D. 1797.	
Pertinax		Stonemason	Charles Bradley
		Joiner	George Watson
Saxons. A.D. 1050.	Phyllis Wright	Soldier. A.D. 1815	Walter Brown*
	Christine Knights	Stocks. A.D. 1835.	B. Jeffs, P. Stokes
Domesday Overseer	W. Stokes	A.D. 1837.	
		Sheriff	Mrs. F. Wignell*
Farmer, A.D. 1346.	Patrick Neenan	Boy	Nigel Stokes
Labourer	Michael Coomes	A.D. 1851.	D. Brown*
Servant	Hilda Wignell	I. Watson	B. Jeffs*
		A. Murrant	P. Stokes
Soldiers. A.D. 1485.	John Thompson	Young man	M. Wright
	Bryan Walton	Girl	Freda Burditt
Monk. A.D. 1540.	Michael Coomes	Landlord	Dennis Wright
A.D. 1548. Lord &	F. Watson	Widows	
Lady of the Manor	Hilda Dyne	a-Thomasing	Mrs. Woolley
Children	Margaret Billson	Mrs. Munro	Mrs. Harwood
	Christine Hinch	A.D. 1902.	
		School Official	B. Prentice
A.D. 1604.		Headmistress	Mrs. Coomes
Gentleman	George Watson	John Ward	Reg. Ward*
Villagers		Dame School Cameo	
A.D. 1639.		D. Wright*	Wendy Chambers
Adam	Edward Burditt	Muriel Marshall	Georgina Keightley
Giles	Walter Stokes	Pauline Marshall	Eileen Jeffs
Peter Woodcock	Nigel Stokes	Sunday Bakehouse	Mrs. Brewster
Mistress Woodcock	Phyllis Wright	Scenes	Mrs. Close
Jeremy	Victor Watts	Grand National	T. B. Saunt
Betty	Marjorie Burditt	Winners 1888 & 1932	Nigel Stokes
A.D. 1681.		Riding for Mr. Hunt	
Wedding Couple	Roy Johnson	1910.	
	Rosemary Johnson	Adam	William Stanger
Dancers	Bryan Walton	Eliza	Mrs. Stanger
	Liam Logue		
	Derek Pace	Accompanist : Mrs. I. Stokes	
	Margaret Marshall		
	Elisabeth Saunders	Maypole Dances.	
	Rose Keightley		

The whole Pageant was written, devised and produced by members of CALDECOTT VILLAGE.

Asterisk denotes descendants of characters.

OLD MAPS OF RUTLAND, AND BOOKS,  
MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE PUBLISHER OF THIS BOOKLET.



# CALDECOTT, Rutland



THE CHURCH