



# SPALDING



*Tulipland*  
**OFFICIAL GUIDE**







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## Foreword

**S**PALDING, once an inland port on the banks of the River Welland, is a typical country market town; and it may still be said that "Spalding is an handsome town", as James Camden, the historian, described it in the 16th century.

Modern Spalding is skilfully blended with the ancient town; the old houses, some of them Georgian, exist alongside the modern shops and houses. In recent years there has been much planned development in Spalding, new housing estates and other buildings have been erected through municipal and private enterprise: the expansion continues.

The surrounding tulip fields which have made the town world famous are the shop windows of a thriving bulb and horticultural industry. Thousands come each spring to gaze at the acres of floral carpets which form a spectacular scene of many colours.

No less important is Spalding's place in agriculture. It is the centre of some of the most fertile land in the country which contributes much to the nation's larder.

It is also the focal point of one of the most important land drainage systems in the country, with a network of waterways, controlled by skilled engineers, which play a vital part in keeping the district immune from flooding by the water which rushes down to the sea from inland hills.

The two-mile Coronation Channel, a by-pass of the river, with its modern electrically-operated sluices, is well worth a visit. It is a masterpiece of engineering, and is an integral part of the Welland Major Improvement Scheme which is taking place for 30 miles from the Wash at Fosdyke to Stamford.

The town has much to offer in other ways. The pages which follow provide the visitor with a brief account of its most interesting features and some revealing details of its link with history and of its achievements in recent years.





Spalding from the air



## Capital of Tulipland

**S**PALDING is the capital of Tulipland, a romantic role and one which it has held for many years. Here is a thriving town in the Fenlands, on the banks of the Welland ; a town whose history goes back to the Romans, and whose future rests in the fertile soil which makes it one of the most important agricultural market towns in the country.

Because of its geographical position in a flat landscape interwoven with streams and dykes, many liken Spalding in "the Parts of Holland" in Lincolnshire to the Dutch towns across the sea. Hundreds of acres of tulips, daffodils, narcissi and hyacinths flood the district with colour from March to May, providing a picture of unrivalled beauty, a paradise for the artist and the poet, but a scene defying description by any pen. Away they spread across the fields in dazzling array from the roads and winding lanes as far as the eye can see, forming a gigantic rainbow carpet. The Fens stand apart from all other English landscapes and have a charm of their own in their spaciousness and their long level views of distant landmarks, all of which is accentuated by the flower fields in the spring.

Tulipland is fast returning to something like the acreage it occupied before the war, and a feature now is the carefully organised annual festival. The popularity of Tulip Time has grown beyond all imagination. Each year brings thousands of visitors during the peak period—generally the last week in April and the first fortnight in May. On the three Tulip Sundays, milling crowds turn this quiet market town into something resembling an inland pleasure resort.

Tulip Time brings its problems, the chief of which is dealing with traffic. An official route is essential, not only for seeing the fields, but from the point of view of safety. It has to be long enough—usually 45 miles—to accommodate comfortably thousands of vehicles. It is selected carefully each year by the police and highway authority, and final approval is by the Ministry of Transport.

A constituted committee works all the year round preparing for Tulip Time. Centrepiece of the programme is



## *Spalding*

the 'Tulip Queen and her court who are chosen from girls who work in the flower industry. The crowning of the queen, which ceremony is usually performed by a film star, takes place in April each year in Ayscoughfee Gardens. In 1959 a floral parade followed the crowning ceremony; some of the floats were breathtakingly beautiful and there is no doubt this will be repeated annually.

There go from Spalding every spring millions of lovely blooms to the great cities. The flower forcing season usually begins with daffodils and tulips in early January, and continues until the late spring, during which period hundreds of greenhouses in the neighbourhood have been filled with delightful bloom. This is followed by the exquisite flowers in the fields. The Victoria Tower Gardens, Westminster, London, and other London parks are planted with daffodil bulbs from here annually; also, in the spring of each year, masses of beautiful Lincolnshire-grown tulips are to be seen in Hyde Park.

The rich, deep loam soil in the Spalding district produces some of the most bountiful crops of foodstuff to be found anywhere. Many thousands of acres of grassland were ploughed up during the war to add to this production, and the importance of the area was never greater than during the war period and since, in the vital contribution it has made to the country's larder. The economic conditions during the war also led to an intensive cultivation of all kinds of vegetables and salad crops under glass as well as out-of-doors, and these products are still important.

Old methods of agriculture have been displaced almost entirely by modern means of cultivation on a highly scientific and mechanised scale. Thousands of acres of potatoes are grown. Before it became famous for flowers, Spalding's name was synonymous with potatoes. The district is also prolific in the production of sugar beet for delivery to Spalding Sugar Factory, which each season converts 200,000 tons of beet into fine white granulated sugar.

Fruit-growing is carried on on a fairly large scale, and the town has a canning factory belonging to Smedley's Ltd. Two firms in the town are engaged in brining, or the pickling of vegetables.



## *Official Guide*

The absence of hedges over areas of many square miles, the division of fields and bordering of roads by straight-cut dykes as part of an intricate and ingenious system of drainage, the great churches—of astonishing size considering that all the stone had to be brought from distant places—the straightness of roads, often marked by lines of graceful trees—all of these things are remarkable sights for the stranger. The Fens have their own local wild life—birds and insects rarely seen elsewhere, because their habits are linked with the marshes and dykes and the particular kind of shelter and food they provide.

### **The Parish Church and Ayscoughfee Hall**





## A Page of history

ANTIQUARIES credit the Romans with constructing banks which, for three miles from the town towards the sea, in earlier days, confined the River Welland to a definite course against its temptation to spread itself over the surrounding lowlands.

After the Roman period there is little firm history until in 1051 Thorold of Buckenhale founded Spalding Priory, which began as a dependency of Crowland Abbey a few miles distant. After the Conquest, a Norman knight, Ivo Taillebois of Angers, who settled here, enriched the Priory and transferred its allegiance from Crowland to the Abbey of Angers. Spalding Priory prospered in spite of jealousy and antagonism from Crowland, and in 1397 secured its independence from Angers. At the Dissolution under Henry VIII it shared the common fate, and as it was situated within the town its buildings gradually disappeared, partly no doubt by removal of material for re-use, partly by encroachments on the site by houses as Spalding grew. Some of the stone is incorporated in ancient cottages situated in Priory Road, south of the Market Place.

Spalding had a castle on the east side of what is now Pinchbeck Road, but it has long since vanished, although part of the moat may still be traced. In Saxon times it was probably a modest building, but Ivo Taillebois, the Norman lord, must have given it increased importance when he settled here upon his marriage to a Saxon lady. He had been standard-bearer at the Battle of Hastings, and was nephew to the Conqueror. The Council has commenced the development of that part of the town as a playing field and recreational centre which is known as Castle Fields.

An interesting event was the establishment in 1710 of the Spalding Gentlemen's Society, still in existence. It was the forerunner of the now numerous learned societies devoted to the study of literature, history and antiquities. It was not until seven years later that the Society of Antiquaries of London was formed. The founder of the Spalding Gentlemen's Society was Maurice Johnson, who later became one of the founders of the Society of Antiquaries of London. Among distinguished members of this

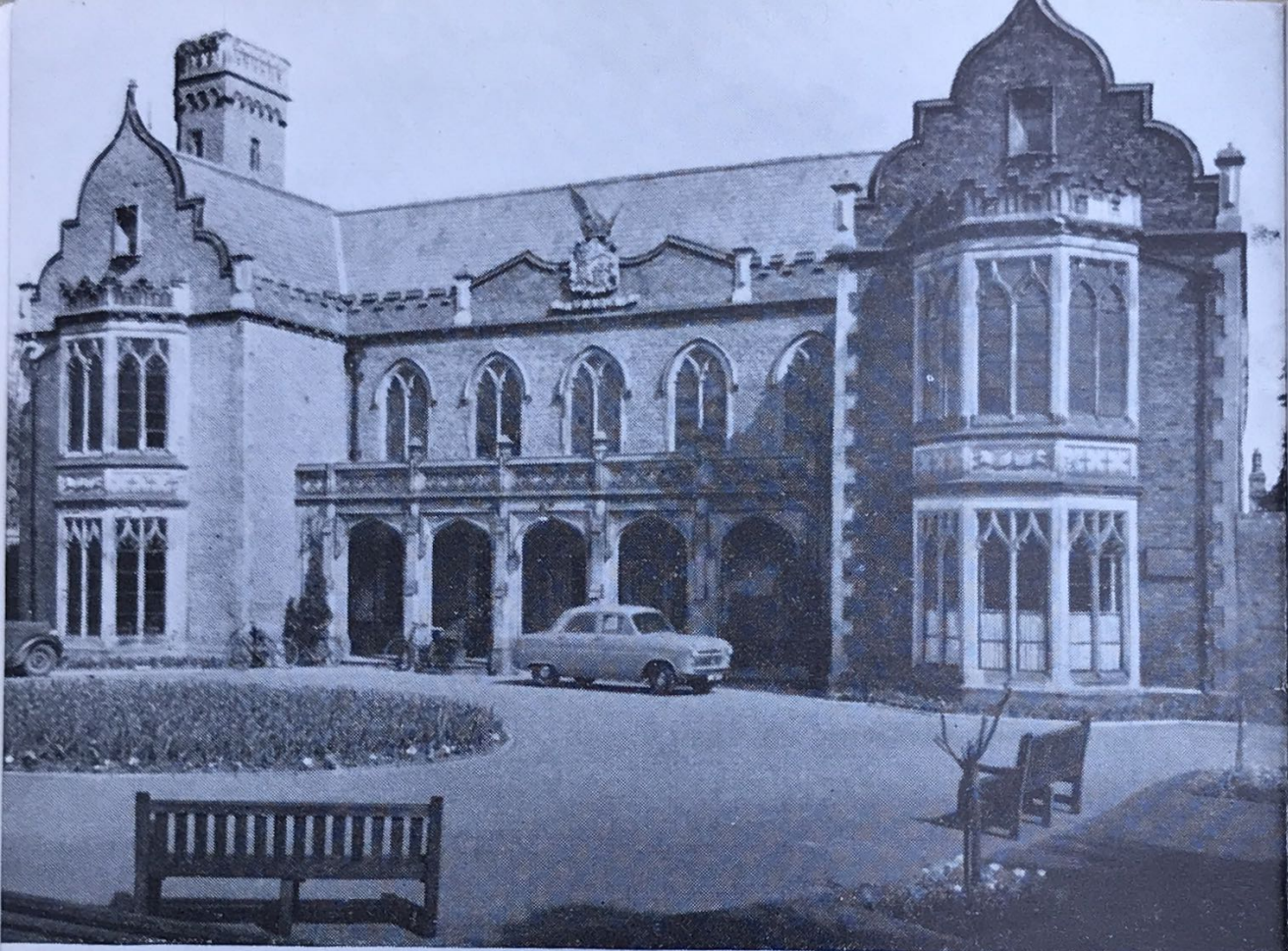


Spalding society were the great mathematician and philosopher, Sir Isaac Newton (a Lincolnshire man); Dr. William Stukeley, whose antiquarian writings have served as a basis for much later study; Sir Hans Sloane, the famous architect; George Vertue, the engraver; and among literary men, Pope, Addison and Gray. The example and influence of the Spalding Gentlemen's Society have been of great importance in advancing those antiquarian studies to which a rapidly changing England owes not merely a vast store of profoundly interesting knowledge, but also the preservation of so many relics of the past. Of the Society's rooms in Broad Street some account is given in our general description of the town (see page 21), which also includes accounts of the two principal buildings of historical interest now remaining in Spalding, namely, the Parish Church (see page 19) and Ayscoughfee Hall (see page 17).

### **Georgian Houses in Church Street**







Ayscoughfee Hall

## Modern Spalding

A TOUR of Spalding starting from the railway station will probably prove most interesting to the visitor. Almost alongside the Station Approach is the modern Cattle Market, the Spalding Bulb and Produce Auction and the central bus station and car park. At the end of Station Street is the Regent Theatre and beyond it the Sessions House, an imposing building in Gothic style, dating from 1842 ; it is used for Quarter Sessions, meetings of the Holland County Council, and other official purposes. On the opposite side of Sheep Market is the head Post Office. Continuing from Sheep Market along Hall Place (which was the site of the Old Town Hall demolished in 1853), the visitor soon finds himself in Market Place, the centre of the business life of the town and scene of great animation on market days, not only on account of the stalls erected here, but by the large gathering of farmers,



cattle dealers, potato growers and merchants, bulb growers and others concerned in the agricultural interests of the wide area for which Spalding is the market centre.

Some of the shop fronts in Market Place are noteworthy for their originality of design. Both here and in Hall Place shops destroyed by enemy action during the last war have been replaced. At the far end of the oblong space is the handsome building in Renaissance style erected as the Corn Exchange, but also used for public meetings, concerts and other functions, the accommodation including a large public hall with a permanent stage. The hall was built in 1855. The Council Chamber is on the first floor.

A few yards beyond Market Place an important junction of roads is reached, with the High Bridge leading across the Welland immediately ahead. This bridge—one of seven crossing the river at Spalding—was rebuilt in 1838; the stone is said to have been salvaged from churches ruined by the encroachment of the sea on the Yorkshire coast. The road turning to the right on the near side of the river is London Road, flanked by good residential property, and, as its name suggests, the main road from Spalding to London, via Peterborough. Across the river, turning off to the right immediately beyond the bridge, is Church Gate, with the ancient and picturesque White Horse Inn, standing at the corner of this road and Church Street, which leads straight ahead. Church Gate and London Road, running parallel with the river between them, present a pleasant type of picture frequently seen in Dutch towns, but seldom in England. A few yards along Church Gate, Ayscoughfee Hall, one of the outstanding features of the town, is reached.

**Ayscoughfee Hall**, dating from the early fifteenth century, partly restored in the Gothic style, but still showing much mellow old brickwork, is now the property of the Spalding Urban District Council, which body deserves the thanks of the visitors and townsfolk alike for the way in which the delightful old gardens of the mansion have been developed as a public resort of quite unusual character.

A distinctive feature of the grounds, which are open from 8 a.m. on weekdays and from 10 a.m. on Sundays, closing half-an-hour after sunset each day, consists of high



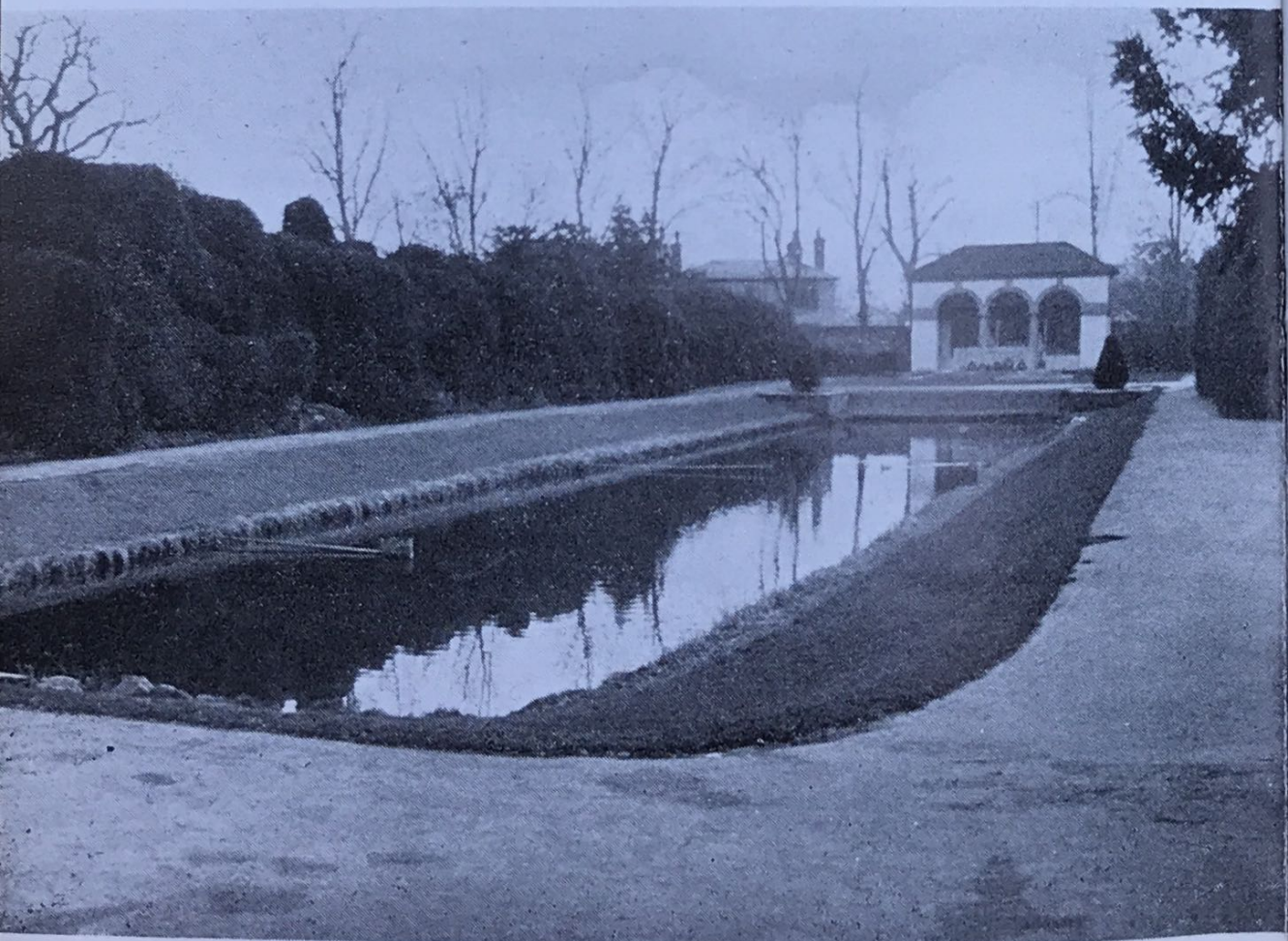
## *Spalding*

and ancient hedges of yew. Against this striking background are seen fresh green lawns and bowling greens, and a small lake, with the town's War Memorial closing the vista. The Memorial takes the form of a stone building in Romanesque style, with an open arcade of round arches; within are inscribed the names of the fallen; the architectural design is admirably suited to its environment, and the whole picture stands out as something quite individual.

From the gardens, charming views of the older parts of the mansion are gained, as well as the grand old Parish Church, which lifts its noble crocketed spire only a stone's throw away. In the gardens are public tennis lawns and hard courts, public bowling greens, open-air aviaries containing an interesting collection of birds.

A report made by an expert, Mr. J. A. Knowles of York, on the glass in Ayscoughfee Hall, in 1946, states that the stained glass windows contain glass of very rare antiquarian

## **Ayscoughfee Gardens**





value and artistic interest, and of considerable monetary value. This small but interesting collection of ancient glass was hitherto unknown to connoisseurs, and was not catalogued in any of the books of reference such as Dr. Nelson's *Ancient Stained Glass in England*. The three-light window in the gallery contains a collection of ancient glass of practically all periods from the 14th to the 18th century of both English and foreign workmanship. There is a fine collection of diamond quarries painted with birds and Mr. Knowles could not recall seeing one of similar size elsewhere. There are two or three panels of French glass of high quality, a marriage, and a christening, which may have been part of a series representing the Seven Sacraments. Other fragments perhaps form part of an "Incredulity of St. Thomas" subject. There is a fine 14th-century quarry with a representation of Christ holding the Globe of the World. There are some Dutch and Flemish heraldic ovals. The window on the staircase, which was wrecked in an air-raid in the last war, contains heraldic shields.

The hall is also the home of a Bird Museum, accommodating several hundred British specimens removed from the Gentlemen's Society's Bird Museum in Red Lion Street. They include many birds and eggs from Cowbit Wash—once the happy hunting ground of the wildfowler.

A recreation ground, including swings and other amusements for children, is provided in Love Lane, adjoining the gardens.

**The Parish Church of St. Mary and St. Nicholas** is so close to Ayscoughfee Hall that a visit to this fine old building naturally comes next on the itinerary. The plan of the building is unusually complicated, for in addition to the north and south aisles to the nave there are east and west aisles to the transepts. The original church, founded by Prior William Littleport in 1240, and built in the Early English style, has been altered by additions of the Decorated and Perpendicular periods. The large square chantry chapel of St. Mary and St. Thomas Becket adjoining the south transept is a notable feature. The rood screen at the entrance to the chancel is partly ancient; there is a room above the admirably vaulted north porch, and this room has the unusual feature of a window looking into the





The Parish Church



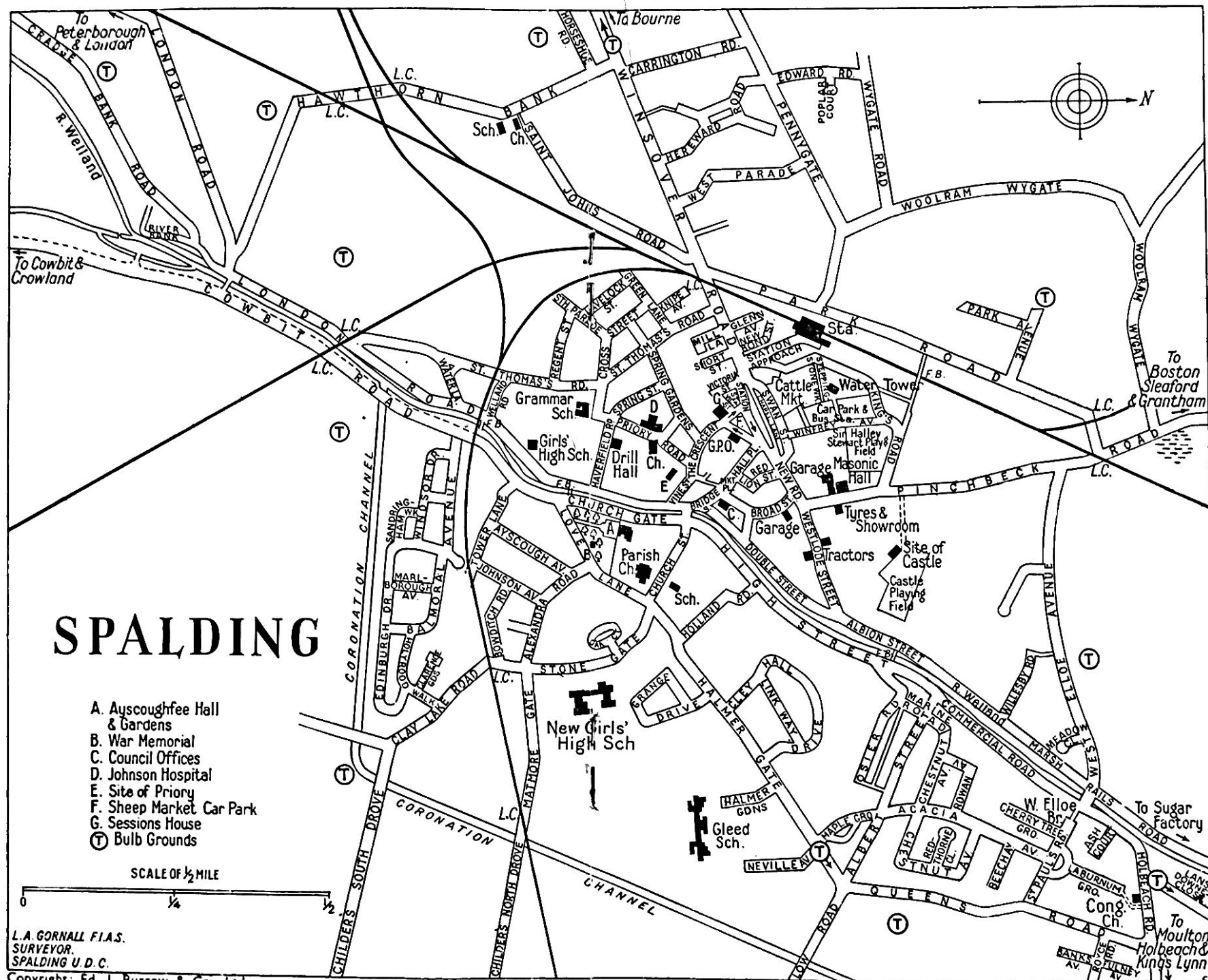
church. The church was the subject of important alterations to the designs of Sir Gilbert Scott in 1864. Its complicated arrangement presents a number of quite unusual vistas as one looks across nave, aisles and transepts from various points of view. The five-light window above the chancel arch ; the ancient sanctus bell-cot at the point of the gable above this window ; and the fine Perpendicular tower and spire set in an unusual position adjoining the south aisle, are among other notable features. In September, 1946, a beautiful memorial was placed on the wall near the pulpit in memory of Canon Basil G. Nicholas, M.A., who died in March, 1945, after 25 years as vicar of the parish.

In 1954 the spire of the church was restored and the weather-cock re-gilded—the first time for 100 years. The work was made possible by £2,000 raised by public subscription in a very few weeks. People in all walks of life and of all religious denominations subscribed.

**Other interesting buildings** can be seen around the town. In Broad Street is the building containing the library, museum and hall of the Spalding Gentlemen's Society, to which reference has already been made on page 14. The museum contains an interesting collection of antiquities, and the library is rich in historical and archaeological works, including some valuable rarities. The very fine Loewental Collection was added in December, 1949. The monthly meetings of the Society, at which papers are read on the special subjects in which the Society is interested, are held in the hall. The ground floor section of the Bird Museum, in Red Lion Street, has a representative collection of foreign birds from America, Africa, India and Australia. By courtesy of the owners, the Spalding Gentlemen's Society, it can be inspected on application at the Museum.

The Prior's Oven, 1 Sheep Market, erected about 1230, was part of the Priory of Spalding, and because of its shape has always been known locally as "The Prior's Oven"—a name now singularly apt, although its original purpose was very far removed from the present one. It was, in medieval days, a monastic prison where refractory monks and laymen were kept in the existing arched chamber ; many are the stories handed down of the cruelties endured within its walls. A few years after the erecting of the





Street Plan of Spalding



## *Spalding*

vaulted chamber, a lofty tower was added by Clement Hatfield, Lord Prior from 1292 to 1318, and it is recorded that a bell which hung in this tower rang the death knell at the execution of some eighty felons, the last being in the year 1502. Of the original building, only the immensely strong lower vault now remains; this, in the last and previous centuries, was used as a blacksmith's shop, a square room (the present Tea Room) being added a century or so ago.

Fulney House, on the outskirts of the town, is an extremely ancient building, said to date in part from Norman times; it was the dairy of Spalding Priory. At Fulney Farm is a 120-acre estate run by the Land Settlement Association. Here bulbs, strawberries, flowers, etc. are grown and marketed. The scheme originated in the 1930's to give a number of unemployed from depressed areas a new start in life. A little farther afield, and more to the north (about three miles from the centre of the town),

### **The ancient White Horse Inn**





are the ruins known as Wykeham Chapel, a domestic chapel dedicated to St. Nicholas, built by Clement Hatfield, prior of Spalding, in the early fourteenth century ; attached to it are remains of what was in effect a "country house" of the priors. The ruins include several features of interest, including the east window of the chapel in Perpendicular style and a spiral staircase.

In November, 1947, the then Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Tom Williams, planted nine oak trees in the grounds of the Abbey to commemorate the achievement by the County of Holland in raising the most money of any county for the Red Cross Agriculture Fund in the 1939-45 War.

In the town are a number of ancient inns, some of them having picturesque old yards. The "White Horse", already mentioned, is the best specimen architecturally ; the old "Ram Skin" Inn a few yards away in Double Street has a good square-headed doorway. The "White Hart" can trace its existence back to 1377, the year of Richard II's coronation ; his badge was a White Hart. The oldest part of the present structure dates from the rebuilding after the fire of 1714.

## The Council and its Services

THE Urban District of Spalding is governed by a progressive Council and all the local services are up to date. One of the most important developments—apart from housing—in recent years has been in connection with its water undertaking. A 100-feet high reinforced concrete water tower, with a capacity of 750,000 gallons, has been built in Winfrey Avenue. It is complete with offices and stores, and was officially opened by the Marquess of Exeter, K.G., in April, 1955. The water supply is unexcelled, being derived from artesian bores at Bourne, from whence it is pumped to Spalding. The supply has been augmented and safeguarded by the provision of a 36-inch bore at Bourne. In addition to providing water for its own inhabitants, Spalding also supplies as far as Newton and Tydd St. Giles in the Isle of Ely, the whole of the large East Elloe Rural district, and to within 14 miles of Skegness,





The Corn Exchange  
and Urban District Council Offices



covering an area of 187,508 acres, and providing for the needs of a population of over 80,000.

In connection with the water undertaking, the Council owns watercress beds at Bourne, from which thousands of punnets are sent to all parts of the country each year.

The new water tower is part of a general development in that part of the town. A bus station and car park have been completed near the tower.

On the other side of Winfrey Avenue is a field of  $4\frac{1}{2}$  acres which was given to the town by the Sir Halley Stewart Trust in memory of the late Sir Halley Stewart, a former Member of Parliament for the old Spalding Division. The field, now known as the Sir Halley Stewart Playing Field (with the name inscribed on ornamental entrance gates) was officially opened by Dr. Harold C. Stewart, Sir Halley's grandson, in 1954.

The traffic problem in the town has been tackled by the introduction of one-way streets and bollards. Included in the system is a floral roundabout in Hall Place. This necessitated the removal of the old fountain, which commemorated Spalding's first piped water supply towards the end of the last century. It has been re-erected in Ayscoughfee Gardens.

The model Cattle Market (regarded as one of the best in the country) is in close proximity to the Railway Station. The new bus station and car park are nearby.

The Council has made good progress with its housing programme. Nearly 400 houses have been completed on St. Paul's Estate, and a start has been made on Windsor Estate—extending from Cowbit Road to Clay Lake—where 350 dwellings will be built. All the streets have royal names, and provision is made for 80 private houses. Bungalows for old people known as "Oak Court" have been built in Stonegate and more have been and are being erected in other parts of the town.

A two-mile by-pass channel of the River Welland was opened in September, 1953, by Sir Thomas Dugdale, then Minister of Agriculture. Appropriately named the Coronation Channel, it forms a crescent shape in the



## *Spalding*

eastern half of the town. Apart from its practical use in the prevention of flooding, it has made the town more attractive, offering pleasant walks and facilities for water sports. Seven road bridges, a railway bridge, and two sets of modern electrically operated automatic sluice gates are included in the system. A more detailed account is included under the heading of Land Drainage in this book.

Spalding is one of two centres (Boston is the other) from which the Holland County Council administers the affairs of the Parts of Holland. The quarterly meetings of the County Council are held alternately at Spalding and Boston.

### EDUCATION

In addition to the primary schools, Spalding is equipped with excellent modern secondary schools. The Grammar School, for boys only, in Priory Road, was originally founded by Sir John Gamlyn in the sixteenth century and transferred to its present buildings in 1881. The school provides for 400 pupils.

The Girls' High School was established by the County Council in 1920, and is controlled by a progressive Board of Governors. A fine new building in Stonegate provides accommodation for many pupils, but some have still to use the original school in London Road.

A new school—St. Paul's Primary School—has been built in Queen's Road to cater for upwards of 200 children in that part of the East Ward. It was officially opened in July, 1955.

The Gleed Modern Secondary School in Halmer Gate is a fine structure, the building being completed and opened in 1939. It caters for boys and girls of eleven plus who graduate there from the primary schools in the town and immediate district. The first school of its kind in the County of Holland, it is named after Sir John Gleed, member of the County Council for fifty years and chairman for twenty-nine, who died in July, 1946.



# The bulb and flower industry

"Here Tulips bloom as they are told."

RUPERT BROOKE

**E**IGHTY years ago a few pioneers foresaw a future which has developed into a sound business, bulb and flower growing. A few young men, realising that daffodils were saleable things, started upon this venture and their lead was soon followed by other thinking men. In the course of twenty years there were approximately fifty people engaged in earning their living in this way and perhaps their combined holdings covered an area of 1,000 acres. As their sons, brought up in the trade, grew to be men, the number of acres naturally increased, and in a further twenty years Spalding flowers became famous.

In the early days the growers were content to provide outdoor bloom only, but as numbers increased so did competition, and in order to be progressive, these Spalding men began to build glasshouses. Though this method of artificial production was then a luxury only indulged in by

**A tulip field on a bulb farm at Fulney**





## *Spalding*

well-established firms, it became a necessity, and a large acreage of land is now under glass and nearly every grower has this facility.

Glass, wood, coal, fuel oil, paper and string are normally used in immense quantities, thus providing much business and employment outside the area.

Usually for about nine months of every year no less than 5,000 people are found employment in the greenhouses or in the outdoor operations of the growers. Seventy-five per cent of this is female labour, mostly young girls, who crop, sort, tie and pack the flowers for market. Huge sheds are to be seen all over the district and if you look in at any time during the season you will see sixty or seventy girls, happy in their job, and working with deft fingers among millions of beautiful blooms.

The operations of these busy and hard-working people extend over practically the whole of the year. Bulb planting is undertaken in August and September, and glasshouse flowers are available as early as Christmas, and continue throughout the following six months. It would be impossible for anyone to tell how many million flowers are grown, but it is estimated that the total quantity sent from the district each season is not less than 12 million boxes.

Experiments have proved that the soil in this part of the country will produce bulbs equal to any which can be imported from Holland.

### **LAND DRAINAGE**

Situated as it is in the centre of the low-lying Fen district, Spalding owes a lot, if not its very existence, to land drainage. Some idea of the importance of this service to the community can be obtained from the information obtained for this Guide from the Welland River Board and the important drainage boards of this area. The following boards are administered collectively : Welland River Board ; Baston Langtoft and The Deepings Internal Drainage Board ; Holland Elloe Internal Drainage Board ; South Holland Drainage Board ; South Holland Embankment Drainage Board ; South Welland Internal Drainage Board. The chief officers are : Clerk, Mr. Raymond W. Hastings, M.B.E., Market Place, Spalding (Telephone 2207); Engineer, Mr. R. L. G. Baxter, B.Sc., A.C.G.I., A.M.I.C.E., Welland House, Double Street, Spalding (Telephone 2245/6).



The Deeping Fen, Spalding and Pinchbeck Internal Drainage Board, Deeping House, Welland Terrace, Spalding (Telephone Spalding 3667) and the North Welland Internal Drainage Board (Telephone Spalding 2794) are separately administered.

The drainage boards are collectively responsible for tidal and non-tidal rivers and drains, various types of sea and tidal defence works, flood embankments and river control works, river gauging, heavy oil and electric-driven pumping stations, tidal and non-tidal sluices and locks, bridges and other structures.

Annual estimates for the Engineers' departments make provision for normal works of maintenance on about 800 miles of water-course and their ancillary structures in an area comprising some 153,000 acres of fen and an administrative catchment area of approximately 400,000 acres. In addition to works of maintenance, there are always a number of Government grant-aided improvement schemes in hand.

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## Recreation

**GOLF.** The Spalding Golf Club has an excellent 9-hole course adjoining Surfleet Station (four miles north of Spalding). Hon. Secretary: Mr. Ben Smalley, "Chip-leigh", Holland Road, Spalding. Telephone: Spalding 2659.

**TENNIS.** There are public tennis courts in Ayscoughfee Gardens. The Spalding Town Lawn Tennis Club has its own courts at Clay Lake Road, and other clubs flourish in the town.

**BOWLS.** There are public bowling greens in Ayscoughfee Gardens, and other greens controlled by various clubs.

**FISHING.** The district is intersected by a number of fresh water rivers which have been cut to drain the surface water to the sea, of which the principal are: Vernatts, Glen, Counter Drain and North and South Drove Drains. These comprise a stretch of about fifty miles, in which excellent coarse water fishing is controlled by the Spalding Fishing Club. Visitors may obtain tickets from the Hon. Secretary, Mr. H. Parkinson, 76 St. Thomas's Road, Spalding, Tel. 2487. Visitors applying for day tickets must be recommended by a member. The Coronation Channel and the River Welland from Locks Mill to the Folly River are steadily increasing in popularity amongst coarse fishermen. Permits to fish in waters controlled by the Welland River Board and licences are available at many centres in the town and district. The Fishery Officer who will make arrangements for parties of anglers is Mr. L. G. Wiles, "Hillcrest", 144 Empingham Road, Stamford (Telephone Stamford 3277).

**FOOTBALL.** The town's premier football club is Spalding United, which runs two teams, in the United Counties League and the Lincolnshire League. About 40 junior clubs comprise Spalding and District League. Spalding Rugby Football Club run two fifteens.

**CLUBS.** The social welfare of the town is well catered for by numerous clubs of which the principal are: The Spalding Club Co. Ltd., Broad Street; the Constitutional Club, Broad Street; The Holland Ex-Service Men's Club, Double Street, and Y.M.C.A., Spring Gardens. There is a flourishing Youth Club with a membership of 300. The Youth Centre is in Westlode Street.



INDOOR AMUSEMENT. The Regent Theatre in Sheep Market, the Savoy Theatre in Westlode Street, and the Odeon Theatre in London Road. Good work is done by Spalding Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society, and other amateur societies. There are also badminton and table tennis clubs. Darts and crib are very popular and local leagues are organised.

## Excursions from Spalding

MANY interesting excursions from Spalding can be conveniently made across the fertile fenland. The Lincolnshire Road Car Co. Ltd. cover practically every place of interest in the district.

A favourite short excursion by road is to Crowland Abbey (10 miles) via Cowbit, where is Cowbit Wash, formed by the flooding of the Welland and used for skating contests on those rare occasions when an English winter makes such sport possible. The bells of Crowland Abbey have been broadcast, the last occasion being in 1954. The ruins, partly restored to form the parish church, are those of a Benedictine abbey founded in A.D. 714. The original building was destroyed by the Danes and the existing architecture shows work of several periods from the late twelfth century to 1427, when Abbot Upton built the noble west tower with its dwarf spire, the most imposing feature of the remains. The west front, retaining a number of medieval statues, dates from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. But Crowland has an antiquity more rare than its abbey—the famous Triangular Bridge, the only structure of its kind now existing. Tradition says it was built by order of John of Gaunt, whose visit to Crowland in 1389 agrees with the period of its architecture. The erection of the bridge at a meeting place of small streams, which still flow in culverts under the town streets, accounts for its unique shape. On the south side of the bridge is the strange, weather-worn stone figure of which there is no conclusive information.

Crowland is almost on the borders of that part of Cambridgeshire known as the Isle of Ely and about ten



## *Spalding*

miles south by road is the little Fen town of Whittlesey on the verge of what was once the last lake (now drained) of Whittlesey mere. Another excursion southwards from Spalding, by road or rail, is to Peterborough, about 18 miles, where the Cathedral with its remarkable thirteenth-century west front and solemn Norman interior is the chief attraction.

About 16 miles north of Spalding by road or rail is quaint old Boston, particularly interesting to American visitors as the mother-town of Boston, U.S.A., and for the magnificent tower of its church, the famous "Boston Stump". This great tower is a landmark which can be seen for miles around, and from the shores of the Wash. Other interesting old buildings at Boston include the fifteenth-century Guildhall, old Grammar School, and Shodfriars' Hall.

West from Spalding by road the old town of Bourne is reached in 11 miles and marks practically the western

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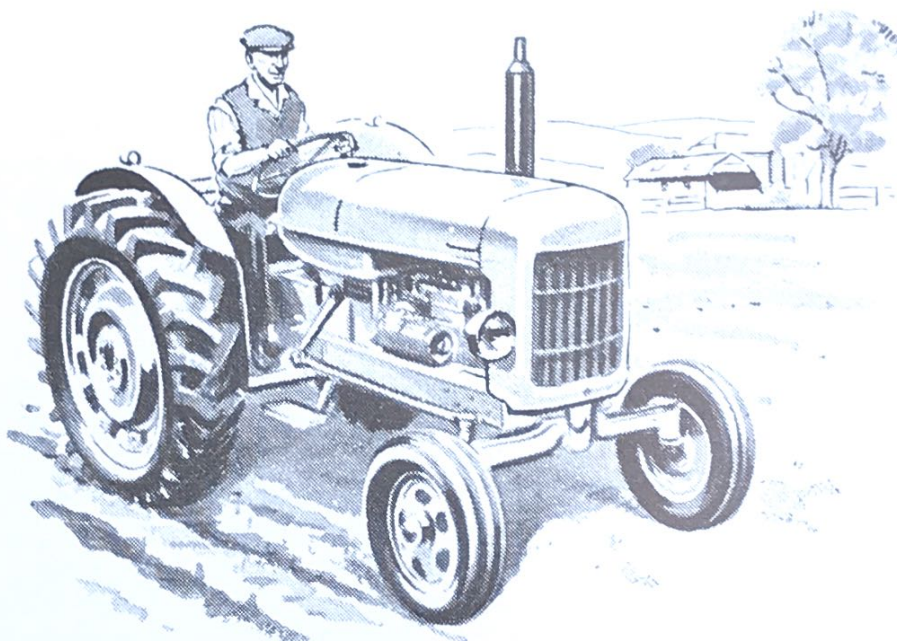
limits of the Fens. Its church incorporates remains of an Augustinian abbey. The Well Head, from which issues a copious supply of pure water, through a natural fissure of the limestone, should be seen. Beyond Bourne the country rises gradually to the Lincolnshire Wolds in the neighbourhood of Grantham, with its noble church, and Oakham, where the twelfth-century Hall of Oakham Castle contains a remarkable collection of old horseshoes.

An excellent idea of the spaciousness and peculiar character of the Fens is gained on the 26-miles run by car to King's Lynn. At Holbeach ( $7\frac{1}{4}$  miles) is a large fourteenth-century church with windows showing flamboyant tracery and unusual character. It is worth while to turn off along the "droves" through the Fens to the left from Holbeach or from Gedney (which has a magnificent church), about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles farther on, and make one's way to the actual shores of The Wash. When the tide is out a vast expanse of mud, with a tortuous network of creeks, is revealed, and one has no difficulty in accepting the story that King John lost his treasure in attempting to cross The Wash. This curious cul-de-sac of the North Sea is hardly a beautiful sight, but it is a very remarkable one when seen for the first time. On the mud grows an edible seaweed called samphire which is pickled in vinegar and sold inland. Ten miles or more distant "Boston Stump" is seen rising like a monstrous finger from a sea level horizon. The main road continues to the small town of Long Sutton, whose church of Norman and later times contains a parvise chamber over the south porch and a remarkable two-storeyed fourteenth-century vestry. Three miles further on the outflow of the River Nene is crossed at Sutton Bridge. Here we enter Norfolk and continue across the Fens to the interesting old port of King's Lynn. Here are two great churches containing fine Flemish brasses, one depicting a "Peacock Feast" of the fourteenth century. The old town gate called South Gates, the Greyfriars' Steeple (relic of a Franciscan monastery), the picturesque seventeenth-century Guildhall, the ancient pilgrim chapel of Red Mount and many stately old houses are features of interest. Royal Sandringham (gardens and grounds open to the public on Wednesdays and Thursdays in summer, except when the Royal family is in residence) is only six miles distant.



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EARLY CLOSING DAY : Thursday.

HOTELS AND CAFÉS : White Hart (Trust House), R.A.C., A.A. ; Red Lion, R.A.C., A.A. ; Waverley Hotel and Café, Station Street ; Crosskeys Hotel ; Greyhound Hotel ; Exchange Commercial ; Norwood ; Prior's Oven Café ; Turner's Café ; Isobel's Pantry.

MARKET DAYS : Tuesday and Saturday.

NEWSPAPERS : *Lincolnshire Free Press* (Tuesday, 4d.) ; *Spalding Standard* and *Spalding Guardian* (both Friday, 3d.).

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## *Spalding*

ORDNANCE MAPS for the area covered by the District Map on page 41 are as follows : One inch to the mile, Seventh Series, Nos. 113, 114, 123, 124, 134, and 135. Ordnance Maps and all publications of Ed. J. Burrow & Co. Ltd. may be obtained from "Geographia" Ltd., 167 Fleet Street, London, E.C.4.

PARKING PLACES : Market Place, except Tuesday and Saturday ; New Road ; Sheep Market, Winfrey Avenue. On market days a limited space is available in New Road. A fee of 6d. per car is charged.

PLACES OF WORSHIP : *Church of England*—SS. Mary and Nicholas (the Parish Church), St. John the Baptist, Hawthorn Bank, and St. Paul, Fulney. *Roman Catholic*—Church of the Immaculate Conception and St. Norbert, Henrietta Street. (Here is a replica of the famous Grotto of Lourdes.) *Congregational*—Pinchbeck Road and Holbeach Road. *Baptist*—Chapel Lane and Spalding Common. *Methodist*—Broad Street, St. Thomas's Road, and Little London. *Friends' Meeting House*—Double Street. *Plymouth Brethren*—Church Street. *Christadelphian*—New Road. *Salvation Army Citadel*—Westlode Street. *Pennygate Mission*—Pennygate.

POPULATION : 14,500.

POSTAL DATA : G.P.O., Sheep Market. Letter deliveries, 6.45 a.m. and 11 a.m. (6.45 a.m. and 11.30 a.m. Saturdays). Final collections from Head Office 9 p.m.

RATES IN THE £ : 19/6 for year 1959-60.

RATEABLE VALUE : £206,337.





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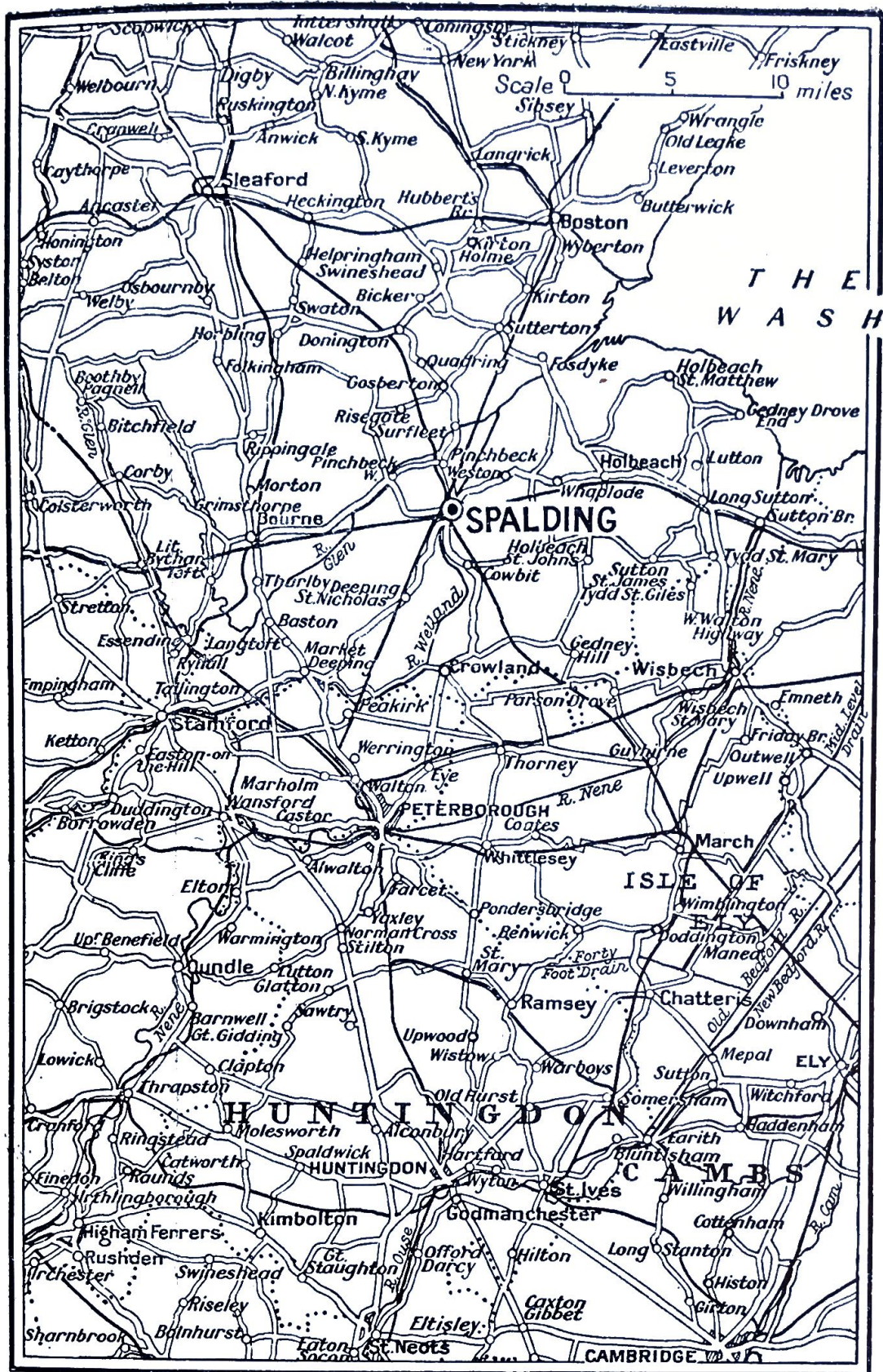
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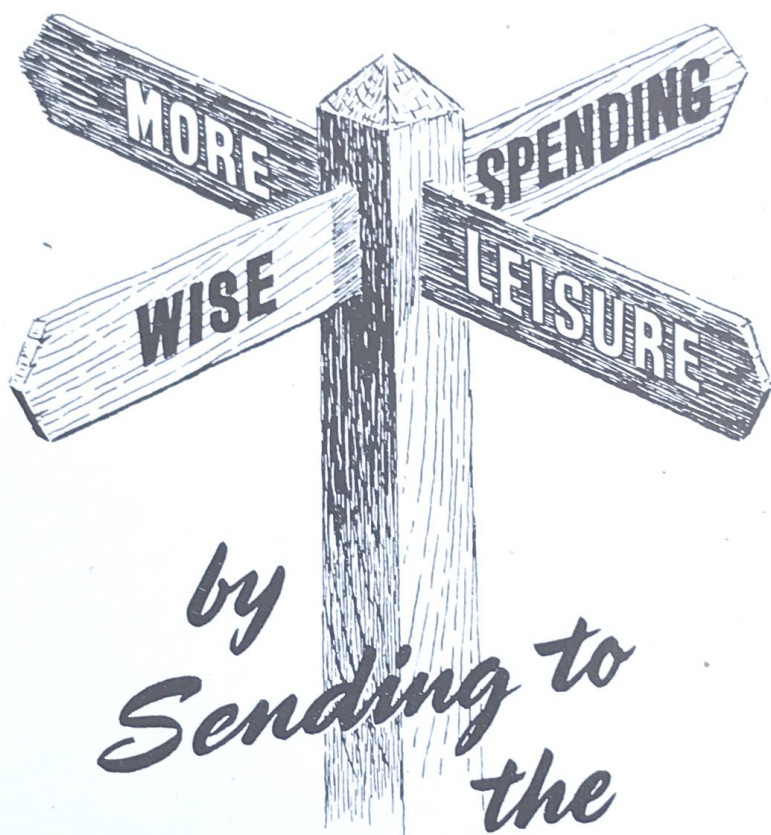
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