ABSTRACTS OF ARTICLES

The residences and revenues of the bishops of Chester in the Restoration era, 1660–1689
M. C. Freeman

The diocese of Chester in the Restoration era was in a weak financial position, with a limited income and an array of expenses and demands, including the need to repair the physical damage and dislocation left by the civil war. Drawing on a mixture of familiar and lesser known sources, this article traces how, with some success, the Restoration bishops set about improving their position, making good the bishop's palace in Chester, securing a more central base in Wigan and boosting their income in a number of ways, including the imposition and collection of assorted rents, fees and fines. On the other hand, the article shows that over this period expenses and outgoings remained substantial, including both the one-off costs incurred at the installation of a new bishop, the need to repair and maintain the bishop's palace and other properties and the recurrent demands of salaries, charitable work and patronage. The Restoration diocese of Chester was in many ways unwieldy and, it is suggested, the fragile financial position of its bishops inhibited their efforts to achieve administrative control and pastoral oversight.

Economic change and possible proto-industrialisation in the parish of Standish in the late seventeenth century: The evidence from wills and inventories, 1671–1680
C. J. Watson

The parish of Standish in south-west Lancashire in the later seventeenth century was a fairly prosperous area, dominated by

agriculture and small-scale farming. Surviving wills and inventories give strong insights into aspects of the economy and economic life of the parish during the 1670s and are drawn upon extensively in this article to reconstruct the occupational profile, the nature of agricultural activity and the extent and focus of textile manufacture. It is shown that at this time Standish parish was dominated by farming, though a range of more specialised occupations were present, that the agricultural focus was principally on pastoral farming, with dairying and cheese production making important contributions, and that spinning and weaving provided significant by-employment. Despite the fairly traditional agrarian base of the Standish economy, it is suggested that there were by the 1670s sufficient signs of alternative occupations, specialisms and economic activities to show the presence of aspects of proto-industrialisation - the economic theory which suggests that the industrial period was preceded by a preliminary phase, marked by production beyond local requirements with an eye to sale in non-local markets, the part-time employment of agricultural workers in non-agrarian occupations and the commercialisation of agriculture itself.

Kind-hearted and good with people – or skilled professionals? Social work training at the University of Liverpool
Pat Starkey

The University of Liverpool provided training for social workers for a hundred years, from 1905 to 2005. Drawing upon archives held at Liverpool and elsewhere, this article explores the history of social work training, from its inception at the beginning of the twentieth century, when the University of Liverpool was an innovator in this field, through to the middle decades of the century, demonstrating that over this period the University remained at the forefront, introducing and running specialist training courses, drawing upon the contribution of talented academics and professionals and building valuable links with other agencies in Liverpool and beyond. The article goes on to chart

developments during the latter half of the century, when increasing centralisation and state intervention, together with the growth of academic and professional training courses elsewhere, reduced the importance and centrality of the University of Liverpool in this field, though many of those other courses and agencies built upon the foundations laid at Liverpool and sought to maintain the standards set there.

Sensible economy? Sectarian bigotry? The Liverpool Catholic schools questions, 1938–1939
John Davies

The 1936 Education Act not only raised the school leaving age but also empowered local authorities to make grants of up to 75% to cover the costs of extra places in denominational schools. Drawing heavily upon council records and reports and correspondence found in local newspapers, this article explores afresh the conflict over the implementation of the grant provisions of the Act in Liverpool, where, in a reversal of the position taken by the national parties, Labour councillors generally supported the implementation of grants to Catholic schools where extra spending and places were needed, while the Conservatives strongly opposed financing Catholic education. The Conservative victory in the 1937 Liverpool municipal elections, won in part on the back of a 'no grants' policy, strengthened and entrenched the Conservative stance and led to heated political divisions both within Liverpool and between the city council and the Board of Education. Opposition to grants was maintained for a further year or more, charted in detail in this article, and it brought the Conservatives more success and Labour further woe in the municipal elections of autumn 1938. Shortly thereafter, however, a combination of heavy financial penalties imposed by the Board of Education and legal advice suggesting that the Board's stance could not successfully be challenged, together led the Conservative-dominated council to seek compromise and, amidst restored harmony and consensus, to adopt a policy of building new council schools but then leasing them to the Catholic church.

A surfeit of Liberals:
The Eddisbury by-election of April 1943
D. J. Dutton

The by-election in the largely rural Cheshire constituency of Eddisbury in spring 1943 produced both a vigorous campaign and an unexpected result, explored in this article largely through accounts and correspondence published in local and national newspapers. Although Eddisbury had been held with little opposition by a Liberal National MP since the 1930s, the sitting MP's death early in 1943 triggered a by-election in which the war-time electoral truce was partly set aside and which revealed not only the fragmentation of Liberalism but also the rise of the newly-formed and reform-minded Common Wealth party. Although many would-be candidates came forward and jockeyed for position, some of them – including the principal Liberal National candidate – emerging in unusual ways, from questionable backgrounds and in strange colours, in the end just three stood in the by-election, with the Common Wealth party candidate securing victory and eclipsing his two rivals drawn from Liberal backgrounds. The electoral success of Common Wealth proved very short-lived, but its impact at Eddisbury and elsewhere often was and is seen as evidence of a leftward shift in war-time political opinion and thus as a forerunner of the 1945 Labour victory. However, it is argued that the Eddisbury result should also be seen as a protest by many voters against the Liberal National candidate who stood in the by-election and as evidence of the much wider electoral and political decline of the Liberals.

A possible Easter sepulchre at St Helen's church, Sefton
M. J. Stammers

This short note suggests that the stone arched recess in the north chancel wall of St Helen's church in Sefton should be interpreted as a rare survival of a pre-Reformation Easter sepulchre rather than as an aumbry. Although most modern writers and architectural historians identify it as an aumbry, and it certainly has

at some stage been converted to this use, it is argued that its position and elaborately decorated stonework surround, as well as its similarity to other surviving stone Easter sepulchres, found in a range of English churches and cathedrals outside the North West, support this new identification and make it far more likely that it was originally designed as an Easter sepulchre and thus was at the heart of the church's pre-Reformation celebration of Easter.