

First let me say how delighted I am to have the opportunity of attending your conference in Oxford, a city which is itself a near perfect example of how buildings and monuments designed for functional use in a past age can be preserved in all their former charm and grace to play an important and practical role in the life of the twentieth century.

But Oxford is not unique. I do not think I will be accused of boasting when I say that there are few countries which can rival Britain in her wealth of historic buildings and monuments and in her record of ensuring that these are preserved for the enjoyment of ourselves and future generations. The addresses you have heard by the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, by Mr. Arnold Taylor of the Ministry of Public Building and Works and other speakers, together with the visits you have made to just a few of the notable buildings in this city, have I hope underlined the fact that we, like very many other countries, have a great heritage of which we are justly proud. I think it is to our credit, also, that many of our historic properties are not only preserved but are used, are *living*, and are not simply tangible reminders of the past. Many of our most famous and beautiful historic castles and houses are still the homes of the descendants of those who built them; many of our old inns and taverns are, fortunately, still in daily use, combining the traditional hospitality of the past with modern facilities for the comfort of today's travellers. Even if one were to cast aside the aesthetic and cultural arguments for conserving these buildings, they would still earn their right to exist in this materialistic age, when the weight of opinion seems too often to be on the side of disposing of anything which does not contribute directly to the search for wealth or to the race for technological or scientific achievement.

In recent years there has emerged a new and powerful reason for the continued preservation of historic buildings and monuments, one which alone would justify their existence if none other were available. I refer, of course, to the development of tourism.

Tourism is a complex subject. In the first place, it is a major trade. Technological developments, especially in transport, and the growth in leisure time have all contributed to a vast expansion in international tourism.

Tourism has been described as the largest single item in world trade and one which has the fastest rate of growth. It has been estimated that international tourist

movements increased from 114 million visits in 1965 to 137 million visits in 1967, with a travel expenditure on these visits in that year to the value of £ 5,000 million. Most forecasts confidently predict an even greater rate of expansion in the immediate future.

This travel is not evenly spread throughout the world, for 80 per cent of it is concentrated in and between North America and the European countries. In addition to this expansion in international tourism, domestic tourism and pleasure travel within national frontiers of developed countries are themselves a massive movement. 80 per cent of the total visitor business in these countries comes from the home market.

Britain has enjoyed its share of this world expansion of mobility. In just over two decades the British tourist trade has achieved for itself the position of fourth largest foreign-currency earner and biggest single source of American dollars. With the development of tourism, Britain's historic properties have found themselves with a new role as vital assets in a thriving modern industry.

In 1968 Britain received for the first time in any one year more than four million overseas visitors. Our earnings from this traffic, including fares paid by these visitors to British air and shipping lines, were in the region of £ 380 million. At the current rate of growth, over five million overseas visitors are expected to come to Britain in 1970. The annual total could reach ten million during the following decade. As the numbers of overseas visitors coming to Britain have increased, so too has the amount of leisure time which British people themselves have to spend on holidays and recreational activities. The importance of Britain's historic houses and monuments in this rapidly-developing leisure movement can be seen from the fact that they now receive some 20 million visits annually, of which over two million are made by overseas visitors. These figures, I should add, do not include visitors to museums and art galleries, but to historic properties in the care of the Ministry of Public Building and Works, the National Trust and to those in private ownership.

Surveys carried out by the British Travel Association among overseas visitors have indicated the relative popularity of various tourist centres. London, with its wealth of historic buildings and monuments is, of course, the most popular centre. Windsor (an historic town with its famous castle), this city of Oxford (with its colleges), Stratford-upon-Avon (with its lovely

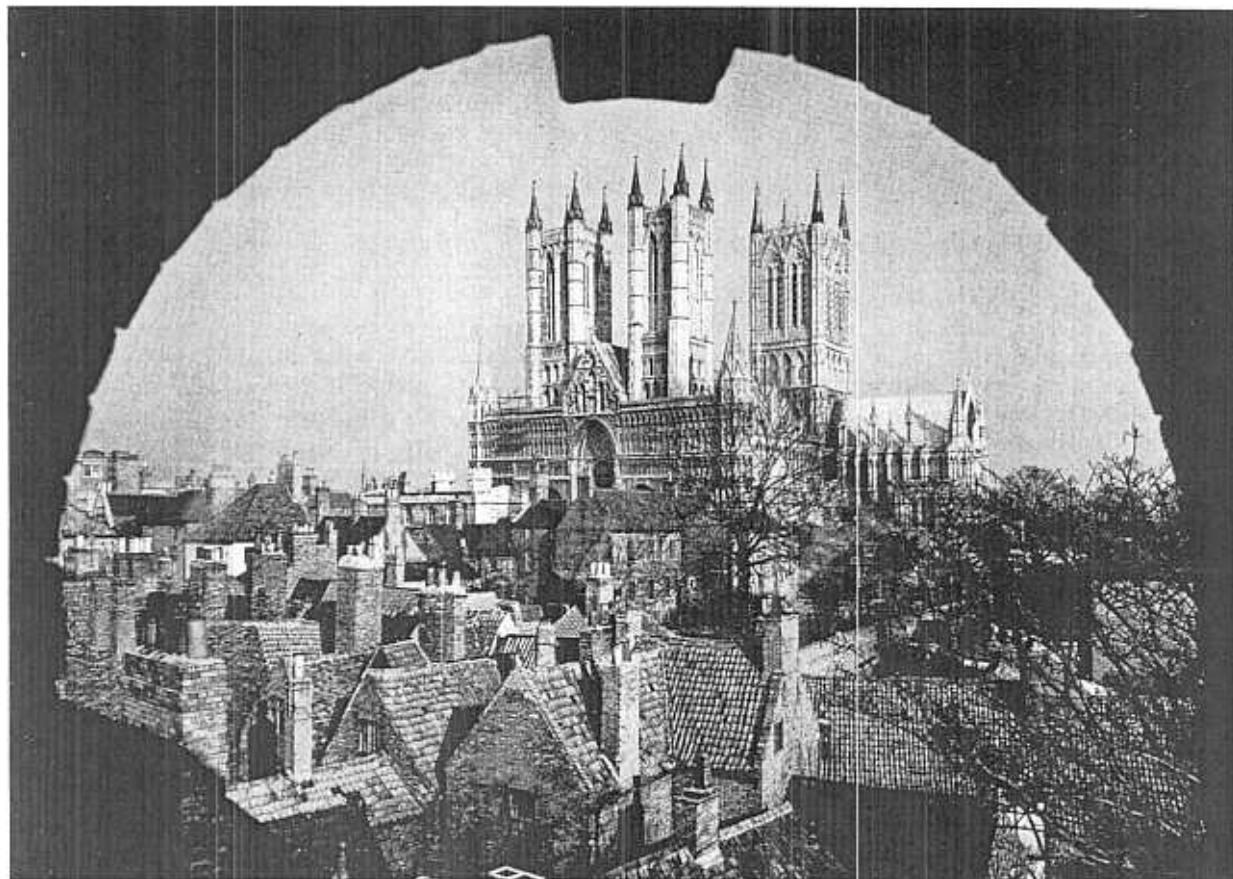
old buildings and its associations with Shakespeare), Edinburgh (an historic city which is rich in old buildings) — all closely follow London in order of popularity, reflecting clearly the interest in history which is common among visitors to Britain irrespective of nationality. In 1968 the Association carried out, in conjunction with the Greater London Council, a study of overseas visitors to the capital city. No less than 68 per cent went to theatres, museums and art galleries. The complexity of studying tourist activity arises particularly from the fact that, although travel is an important item of trade and commerce, it embraces a wide range of businesses and interests and involves social, cultural and educational considerations that cannot be measured strictly in terms of money or economics. Just as the services required by the visitor have a wide effect on the country or region visited, they do not exist simply for the tourist and, indeed, many of them have no intrinsic value. The total tourist product, in other words, is what the visitor wants to buy; is the attraction at the destination and, in many cases, a combination

of attraction and several destinations. Furthermore, tourists are heterogeneous. The vast movement comprises many different groups of people. Each country benefits from different types of tourist traffic. For example, in Britain we are not competitive in the type of travel movement seeking the pleasure of hot, sunny beaches. But we are wholly competitive in the more sophisticated form of tourist interest in cultural and educational subjects. In trade terms, we can claim culture as a more powerful magnet than sun in making people move.

For Britain, and, indeed, for many countries in Europe, particularly the northern countries, tradition, folk-lore, historic monuments, museums, theatres and music festivals constitute a major part of their total national resources in developing tourist business.

We have already reached a situation where the tourist movement is a large enough business or trade to make it worth while preserving our cultural heritage, of which historic monuments and ancient buildings form an important part. We have to face the fact that in

Fig. 1. — Lincoln Cathedral, Lincolnshire. (Copyright by the British Tourist Authority.)



this time of change and development there is increasing pressure on a country's basic resources — on land, sites and spaces. In our historic cities there is a constant battle to preserve old buildings and to ensure that they are not pulled down for modern development, when a new building with a relatively short term of life, and which is easily replaceable, often replaces the "irreplaceable".

Ancient monuments have a monopoly value that must be regarded as a long term investment. There are many examples of these monuments benefiting from the increasing value of tourism, so they become, in financial and commercial terms, better investments than anything which can take their place. I am confident this will become increasingly true as time goes on and as the tourist business grows. There are, nevertheless, many problems in this growth. It is not sufficient merely to preserve. There is, in any case, a fashion in preserving. We have to take a wider look at our definition of historic buildings and ancient monuments. We need to give more thought to how we use what is pre-

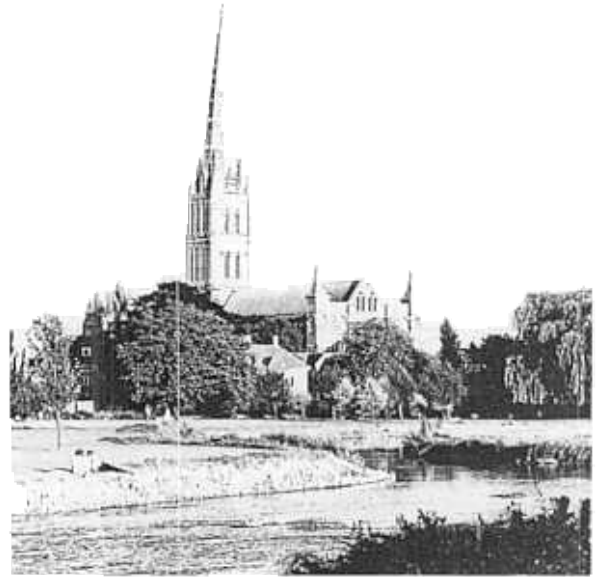


Fig. 2. — Salisbury from the Queen Elizabeth Gardens, Wiltshire. (Copyright by the British Tourist Authority.)

Fig. 3. — Bateman's home of Rudyard Kipling at Burwash, Sussex. (Copyright by the British Tourist Authority.)





Fig. 4. — Longleat near Wasminster, Wiltshire.
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served, especially in the interests of tourism. As an example of the first point, we are already in Britain making strides in recognising the interest in preserving industrial buildings of the 18th and early 19th centuries, in treating machinery as monuments of this country's history and tradition. We have much more to do to make visits to monuments enjoyable to the public. There is no reason why learning or cultural appreciation should be made difficult or dull. We have a vast treasure house in the country's museums, but some do not take enough trouble to show off their treasures in an attractive way. The task of preservation and finding appropriate use for what is preserved is not a simple one.

The work of the conservationists, the cultural experts and the educationalists in this field has to be allied to the tourist trade. I must emphasise that this is becoming more complex and more professional. There are many aspects of tourism which would be more readily understood by the manufacturers of soap than by museum directors. If there is a desire to increase visitors to historic monuments, the marketing skills of commerce

Fig. 5. — Battle Abbey at Hastings, Sussex. (Copyright by the British Tourist Authority.)

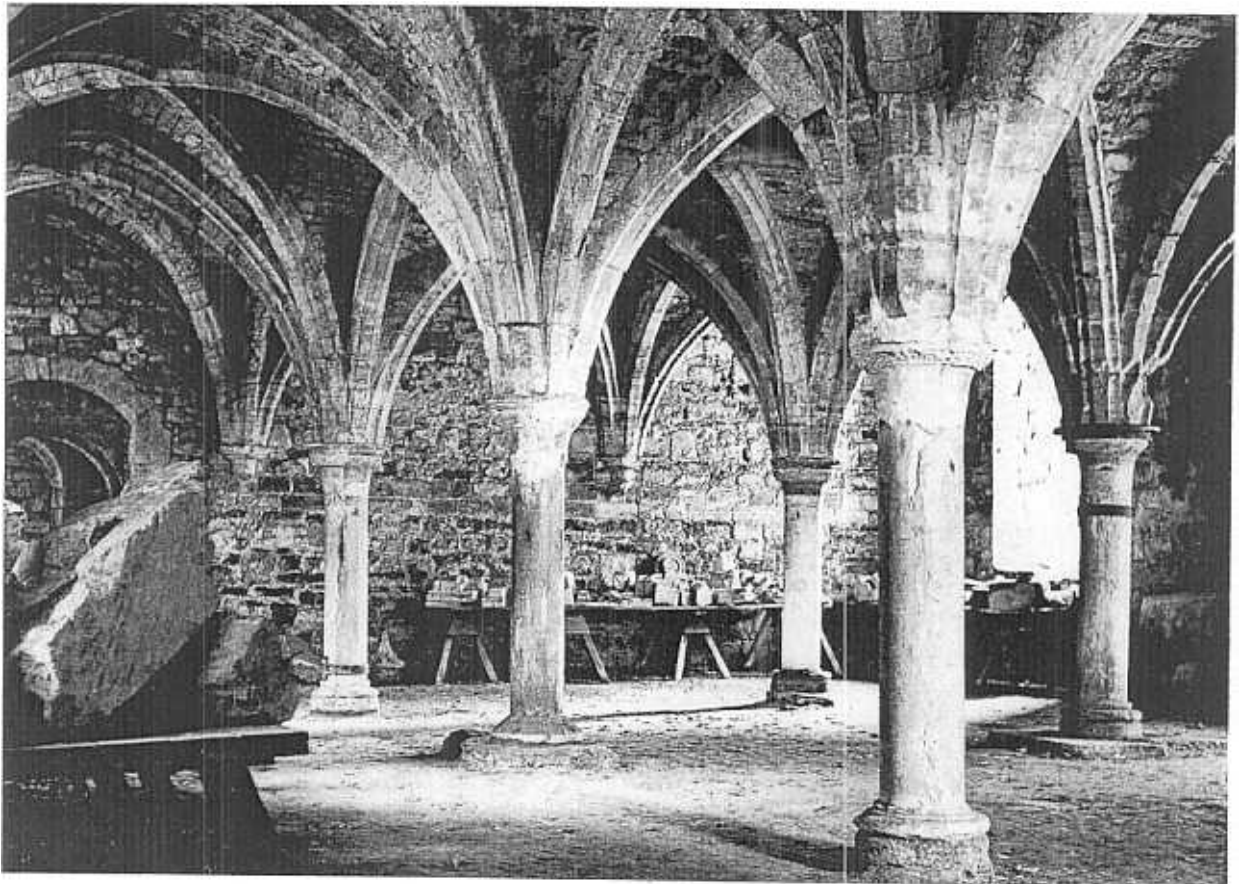




Fig. 6. — Chartwell Manor, Kent.
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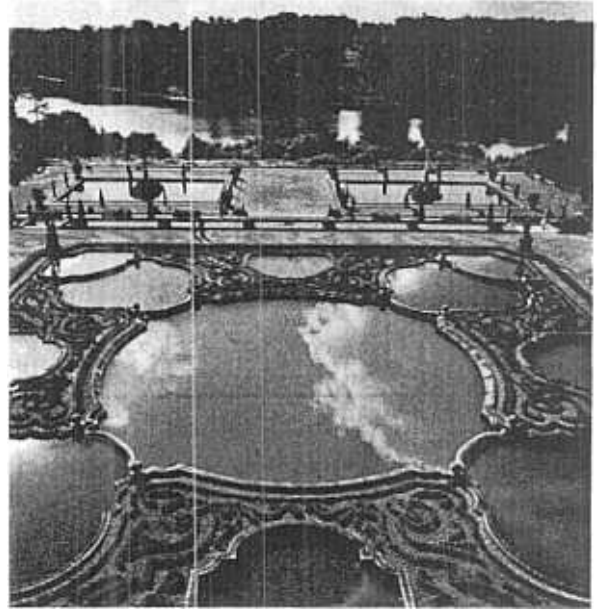


Fig. 7. — The Water Garden at Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire.
(Copyright by the British Tourist Authority.)

can play a valuable role. It is foolish to assume that all tourists will be interested in all monuments, but each will attract an appropriate type of traffic.

Three years ago, following a recommendation made at a conference of historic houses owners, the British Travel Association established an Historic Houses Committee, of which, I am glad to say, Lord Euston is a valued member. This Committee embraces the interest of the Ministry of Public Building and Works, the National Trust, the National Trust for Scotland and representatives of private interests. Since then the Association has benefitted from the continued advice of the Committee, particularly on publicity and promotional matters and on the subject of improved facilities at historic properties.

The question of finance and taxation has been high on the agenda in all the Committee's discussions and the Committee has made recommendations to the Chancellor of the Exchequer recommending measures which, if adopted, would alleviate the position of quite a number of owners anxious to maintain their properties in family hands but faced with almost impossible financial problems in attempting to do so. The Committee will continue to press for these measures.

Last year the Committee was successful in persuading the Ministry of Transport to accept recommendations that privately-owned historic properties open to the public could be signposted with an approved sign. The Committee has been and is receiving applications from owners anxious to have these signs erected and has the responsibility of saying whether in their view

the property is one which, because of its historic or architectural interest and its attraction for visitors, justifies signs.

This year, on behalf of the Historic Houses Committee, the British Travel Association, in co-operation with the Ministry of Public Building and Works, the National Trust, the National Trust for Scotland and more than 120 privately-owned properties, has issued for the first time an "Open to View" season ticket for overseas visitors. We are also running a special competition designed to encourage young people between the ages of eight and eighteen to visit more of what we call our "Homes of History". And we have published a booklet, called "Open to You", which gives details of special events throughout the year at historic properties.

These are just a few examples of the efforts which are being made by the Association and its Historic Houses Committee to create a greater awareness of, and interest in, Britain's wealth of historic properties.

This work is an example of the value of linking the interests of tourism and of those responsible for historic monuments. A further and perhaps, in the long term, more important benefit can be derived from such a combination of activity by jointly persuading governments to take this whole question into account in their broad tourism policy, which affects the scale and conditions of investment with which we are together concerned.

In Britain, as in other countries, we are now faced with the challenge of the "jumbo" jets. It is estimated



Fig. 8. — Harewood House, Yorkshire. (Copyright by the British Tourist Authority.)

that some 1,000 million dollars is being invested in the Boeing 747s alone. The British Airports Authority is spending £ 15 million this year in preparing for the arrival of these large aircraft and a further £ 20 million (still a comparatively small amount) is being invested in hotel development. This level of investment is completely out of line with investment in the preservation, maintenance and development of basic tourist assets such as historic buildings and monuments. It is doubtful if the current total annual investment in these buildings of £ 3,750,000 by the Ministry of Public Building and Works and the Historic Buildings Council is enough to enable the present stock of historic buildings open to the public to be maintained, let alone to provide sufficient funds to expand facilities to increase their use and enjoyment. This is an example of the problem we have here in Britain, but I have every reason to believe it is the same in many other European countries.

The advent of the "jumbo" jets will see the start of a new era in international tourism. Many more people will have the means and the time to travel. But historic monuments do not have an unlimited capacity. If we are to deal with this problem the tourists must come over a longer season and be interested in areas and activities which are not on the present tourist map at all. There is a limit to the capacity of the Tower of London — a limit to the numbers of people who can visit the Crown Jewels at peak times on peak days. To some extent this challenge could be met by the alteration of itineraries and staggering of traffic at times of the year or weeks of the year. In many cases there can be more professional handling of each group of people, better catering facilities, better use of technical means to guide people, new ways (such as *Son et Lumière*) to show off historic properties. There is increasing growth in specialist tourism embracing enthusiasts who want to pursue a serious form

of travel, to learn something, to become expert in some aspect of art or culture. Summer schools or winter schools, educational courses for students of all ages, can be made part of tourism and can be allied to the task of preserving and using our country's cultural heritage.

The need to establish better communications between those responsible for historic properties and tourism is clearly seen in our concern and the concern of our Government to provide finance for travel facilities. I welcome the attention that you are giving to tourist activities and hope that my comments may contribute not only to your understanding of the opportunities the growth of tourism provides, but will indicate ways in which tourism and cultural interests may work more closely together to their mutual advantage.

There will be difficulties in seeking effective co-operation. The approach of the preservers has so often, and rightly so, been in conflict with commerce and business. Yet there is a long history of successful co-operation and I believe that the harnessing of the skills of the tourist trade to your long-term task of

preserving monuments will be of vital importance to us all.

The growth of tourism emphasises the fact that we live in a shrinking world. We have many common problems. We can learn from each other, and in particular from an exchange of what might be termed "case histories", by studying the ways in which our respective countries have dealt with these problems. Many of us have valuable first-hand knowledge of operating experimental schemes linking the tourist and cultural interest. By working together and sharing our information, the experience thus gained will be a great help to us all in planning for the future. I am sure this co-operation will be of mutual benefit and, without a doubt, the powerful economic forces of tourism can be harnessed to aid the work of conservation. Together, we shall bring pleasure and enjoyment to millions of people, whilst at the same time making a useful contribution to the economies of our respective countries. I wish you all every success.

Lord GEDDES