



**LEICESTER MUSEUM  
AND THE SCHOOLS**

**AN ILLUSTRATED ACCOUNT  
OF THE WORK OF THE  
SCHOOLS SERVICE DEPARTMENT**

## FOREWORD

Since the issue in 1934 of the first edition of *Leicester Museum and the Schools* many changes have taken place in the service, which has continued to grow and to widen the scope of its activities. In 1937 the Leicestershire County Council, with the aid of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, gave a grant which enabled the loan service to be extended to include certain of the schools under the County Education Authority. Miss Ruth Weston, M.Sc., the first Organiser for School Service, whose enthusiasm and skill were responsible for the prominence achieved by the Service in the first ten years of its life, was succeeded on her resignation in 1940 by Miss Audrie Fitzjohn, M.Sc., and she in turn by Miss M. E. Pickles, B.Sc., the present Organiser, in 1943.

Under these members of the staff and their assistants the School Service rapidly expanded, and new quarters were taken for the department in Princess Road, but this in turn has now become too small to house the various activities of the School Service. In 1941 the department became responsible for circulating material from the College of Art Collections, while in 1942 the success of the Holidays-at-Home arrangements at the Museum led to the formation of Children's Clubs as a permanent feature of the work of the department. Again as a result of wartime conditions the service was extended in 1943 to units of H.M. Forces stationed in the area; teaching materials were borrowed and lectures were arranged for members of the Forces.

With the return to peace the way is again open for development in the department, and loans of material to Rehabilitation Centres and hospitals have recently been authorized by the Committee, while lectures are still given to men serving in the Forces and to prisoners of war.

This new edition of *Leicester Museum and the Schools* will, it is hoped, serve to bring to the notice of all those interested in educational work in the City and County the facilities offered by the School Service Department of the Museum in providing those visual aids which play so large a part in present day education.

M. B. Hodge, Director.

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The Leicester Museum Schools Service Department originated in 1924, when a resident guide-lecturer was appointed. Parties from schools, voluntary organisations and the general public thereby gained the advantages of a personal introduction to the collections and their background which had hitherto been lacking. The scheme rapidly became popular, and many city schools took advantage of the guide lecturer's services.

Seven years later a new line of activity was undertaken. Hitherto the department's function had been to explain the Museum to the visitors; now, in addition it was to take the Museum to the schools. In 1931 a collection of specimens, models and illustrations covering the whole field of educational activities was built up and mounted for transportation. A scheme of circulation was worked out in conjunction with the Education Committee, by which fortnightly deliveries were made to schools which sent in requests for material. The scheme was subsequently extended to county schools, deliveries in this case being monthly. This was the first large scale application of the schools loan idea in England, and, in response to its instant success, the collection has continued to grow rapidly, separate accommodation outside the Museum being necessitated by its expansion in 1941.

Despite war-time restrictions on transport, deliveries continued throughout the war, and were even extended to cover other spheres of educational work, especially Service Units. The collection having outgrown its present quarters, it has been necessary to restrict its growth, but in view of the increasing demand for material, this can only be a temporary check.