



Amgueddfa Genedlaethol Cymru

**Amgueddfa
Werin Cymru
Welsh Folk
Museum**

National Museum of Wales

NOT TO BE REMOVED



Introduction

In March 1946, the Earl of Plymouth presented St. Fagans Castle, with its eighteen acres of gardens and grounds, to the National Museum of Wales as a centre for a Folk Museum. A further eighty acres of St. Fagans Park immediately adjacent to the gardens was also transferred on very acceptable terms. Through Lord Plymouth's generosity, therefore, Wales was provided with approximately one hundred acres of land in situation and character ideal as a site for the development of the Welsh Folk Museum.

A folk museum represents the life and culture of a nation, illustrating the arts and crafts, and in particular the building crafts, of the complete community, and including in its illustration the activities of the mind and spirit—speech, drama, dance and music—as well as of the hand. Such museums are in two parts: galleries for the systematic display of the materials of life and culture, where the research student can study the details of folk life in exhibits emphasizing the evolution and distribution of types, their chronology and many other problems. The environment of the national life is presented in

the open-air section. As circumstances enjoin and funds permit, suitable houses of various dates and character, condemned to destruction for a variety of reasons, are rebuilt on the site: craft workshops are brought together and illustrated, until the complex of structures and their fittings presents a picture of the evolution of society covering a period of several hundred years. Furniture and furnishings occupy their rightful place in the houses; carts, ploughs and other implements their place in sheds and barns. This is no imaginary picture: it has been fully achieved on several sites in the Scandinavian countries, where the influence of the folk museum in improving the standard of taste and maintaining the pride of the people in the best traditions of their past has been remarkable. Such a museum, indeed, comes to be a cultural centre for the nation which it serves.

