

# THE CONCERTINA NEWSLETTER

## FOR PLAYERS AND COLLECTORS OF THE CONCERTINA AND RELATED METAL REED INSTRUMENTS

NO: 2

Free on Subscription  
Supported by Donations

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c/o Concertina Newsletter,  
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Leicestershire.

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### 1. EDITORIAL

The first newsletter received a fine and rewarding response from concertina players and collectors all over the country, America too, - over 250 people have now subscribed to the newsletter, and as you will read in this and later issues, many have sent in fascinating contributions!

There's been no shortage of comments, and suggestions for the features in future issues, and I'll endeavour to produce (or solicit from others!) as much information as possible on the topics requested by you. As before, a lot of material has had to be held over for future issues, including some useful photocopies of good tutors and instructions for English concertina, which couldn't be ready in time.

Financially, we shall be able to produce the newsletter in its present form for some time at least, for although only about 25% of subscribers have sent further stamped addressed envelopes, the generosity of a few "satisfied customers" has resulted in enough money to print the next two issues, and pay postage for those who haven't been able to send S.A.E.'s.

So, I'm sure all subscribers would like to thank the under-mentioned people whose kind contributions are helping to keep this newsletter going and growing!

John P.J. Entract  
I. Haigh  
Roger Avery  
David Palmer  
Albert Dyer  
.Henry Daniels

Harry Hatton  
David Peel  
Robert Loades  
Miss J. Thorpe  
Mr. Keogh

Last but not least, many people have commented on the clarity of the first issue, this was due in no small part to the excellent typing of Mrs. Pat Hague: Mrs. Hague - thank you very much!

Finally, I can only repeat the comments from the first issue - this is your forum, your communication with other players and collectors, and as such relies on its readership for continued criticism, comments and articles - so keep those letters and cards coming, folks! And remember, since postage is the main cost (nearly £8 per issue) large stamped addressed envelopes are essential for those subscribers who can afford it.

A Merry Christmas to you all!

Neil

Neil Wayne

## 2. NEWS FROM SUBSCRIBERS

From the many letters you have sent in since the first Newsletter, and from your forms too, I've been able to pick out quite a lot of different interests and points of view. If you have similar interests to any fellow subscribers in your area, do get in touch with them!

### Morris Dancing and Music

Many of us are interested in the Morris and its music. I had an encouraging letter from the past-Bagman of the Morris ring, and hope many more experienced Morris musicians will accept, and contribute to, the newsletter in the future. If you're keen to learn more about the skills of playing for the Morris, do get in touch with these subscribers:-

Lawrence Platt, 6 Clipstone Ave., Mapperley, Nottingham.  
Tel. 267689 (The Dolphin Morris Men)

M. Perry, 31A Canterbury Road, Herne Bay, Kent. (Wortsum Morris Men)

P. Chetwood, 98 Engel Park, London N.W.7

John Watcham, 11 Goldsborough Crescent, Chingford, London E.4

Ernest Price, 4 Waverley Road, Blaby, Leics.

Pete Surgey, 22 Five Lamb Lane, Bramcote, Notts. Tel. Sandi, 5390

Chris. Dillon, 2 Arcade Chambers, Station Rd., Clacton, Essex.

Peter Fox, 14 Sunningdale Rd., Urmston, Manchester  
(Fiery Clockface Ceilidh Band)

Ron. Shuttleworth, 41, Morningside, Coventry.

Robin Scott, 22 Bretten Close, New Duston, Northampton.

M. Jackson, 17 St. Mary's Crescent, Leamington, Warks.

More subscribers interested in Melodions and Button Accordians are:-

J. Kirkpatrick, 43 Mount Pleasant Rd., London, N.17

A. J. Gibbons, Abercarne House, Church Lane West, Aldershot.

James Catterall, 18 The Grove, Benton, Newcastle on Tyne

Doug. Sherriff, c/o Cecil Sharp House, London.

Frank Bull, 63 Swanland Road, Hessle, Yorks.

Roger M. Avery, 11 Eton Avenue, London, N.12

Folk Club Organizers with interests in concertinas and free-reed instruments appear below - do visit their clubs if you are in their area.

Shirley Scully, Rose Lodge, Perran-ar-Worthal, Truro.

Bruce Bishop, 32 Colemeadow Road, Coleshill, Birmingham.

Michael Grosvenor-Myer, 33 Highsett, Cambridge.

Players of the Duet concertina are rather thin on the ground, to say the least - though the instrument, in the hands of a skilled

player, is capable of playing music of exceptional complexity and quality. The duet, unlike the English, enables you to play all notes with either hand, thus solos on the right hand can be accompanied with the left. Though many members of the International Concertina Association are expert duet players, only one of our fellow subscribers admits to playing one. He is Graham Thomas of Benfleet, Essex. Are there any more of you out there??

We're priveleged to have as subscribers (and hopefully, future contributors) Tony Rose, David Bland, Doug. Shorriff, and Peter Dashwood, who are staff members of the English Folk Dance and Song Society (E.F.D.S.S.) and several members of the International Concertina Association, including the President, the very Reverend Kenneth Loveless (Rural Dean of Hackney) whom we hope will delight us at some future date with some of his tales of his old friend William Kimber (late Anglo Musician of Headington Quarry Morris Men).

Subscribers with an interest in other old instruments as well as concertinas, and some who make and repair instruments, appear below:-

Ian Hibbert, 9 Trent Lane, Castle Donnington, Leics.  
(Mediaeval instruments and dance : Recorder family, Cornett, Crumhorn etc. Also use of these in musical education.)

Rev. D.A.Cox, 7 Wenny Road, Chatteris, Cambridge  
(Harmoniflute, Norfolk Dulcimer, Reed Organ).

John Golubowicz, 612, George St., Iowa City, Iowa 52240,  
U.S.A. (Banjo, Mandolin, Guitar, Autoharp, plus an anglo)

Bruce Bishop (see above)

S. Beale, 14 Burnon Avenue, Coleshill, Birmingham (Guitar Maker)

John Dodd, 25 Grand Avenue, Berrylands, Surrey.

Mike Huxley, 32 Mount Road, New Malden Surrey (John and Mike are members of "Dunedain" and use mediaeval and Renaissance instruments in their music).

John Gall, Hollingside Farm, Dorchester, Co. Durham (Flutinas Melodians, Harmoniums, and all aspects of metal-reed instruments)

Thos. Edmundson, 127 Ribchester Rd., Blackburn, Lancs  
(collects and repairs many sorts of instruments - a violin expert, but also likes Banjo, piccolo, Sax. clarinet, bouyonki, trumpet, euphonium, cornet, etc. etc.!!)

Northumbrian pipes and pipe tunes are the interests of a few subscribers, who find the printed Books of Pipe tunes just right for playing on the English Concertina. Their addresses are:

Alistair Anderson, 11 Spittal Terrance, Gosforth, Newcastle of the High Level Routes, has adopted many Pipe tunes for the English with great skill - watch out for his forthcoming long playing album of concertina music).

Brian Griffith, Faraday Hall, Ashby Road, Loughborough.

J. Angus Byrne, 37, Osborne Rd., Jesmond, Newcastle on Tyne.

Finally, here's a chance for subscribers who have been more successful with their concertina collecting to help the many people who have a great interest in the instrument but can't get hold of



one at all. Please, if you live near any of the people listed below, and have a spare concertina that you are willing to lend, or to sell, to help them to get started, then I know it would be most welcome! (Remember how difficult it was to get your first playable concertina?). Subscribers who would really appreciate the chance to buy or borrow, a serviceable concertina of any type are as follows:-

Catherine Gould, 18 Shrewsbury Rd., Bolton, Lancs. Tel.44818.

Brian J. Oldham, 19 Victoria Terrace, Lincoln.

Brian Wright, c/o Holland-Hannen, Cubitts, Site Office, Hasty Lane, Altrincham, Cheshire.

Robert Arthur Loades, 24 Greenway Lane, Fakenham, Norfolk.

Geoff. Iverson, 97 Canberbury Road, North Harrow, Middlesex 01-427-3920.

Roy Judge, 9 Wellmeadow Road, London, S.E.13.

David Peel, 107, Clumber Drive, Radcliffe-on-Trent, Nottingham, Tel. R.o.T.3008

Yvonne Grundy, 18 Lawnsгарth, Cottingham, E. Yorks. Te. 0482-844706.

C.D.Duckham, 32 Wellington Terrace, Falmouth, Cornwall.

P. Carrington, 5, Elers Road, Ealing London, W.13.

Dave Middlehurst, 30 Hamilton Road, Kings Langley, Herts.

Steve Tellis, 58 Kimberley Road, Benfleet, Essex.

Tim. Roberts, 19 Woodlands Avenue, Worcester Park, Surrey.

P.G. Challingsworth, R.A.F. Bishops Court, Down Patrick, Co. Down, N. Ireland.

Alistair Markham, 3 Windsor Close, Beresley, Yorks, Te.882762

Victor Grayson, 123, Upgong Lane, Whitby, N. Yorks.

Robert Lagg, 12 Blake Manse, Hercules Rd., London, S.E.1.

Richard Allan, 78 Evelyn Drive, Pinner, Tel. 01-428 3347

E. Thornton, 14, Sykes Lane, Saxelby, Lincoln.

M.A. Rosenblum, 46 Moray Road, London, N.4.

Chris. Faizey, 8 Priors Walk, Pershore, Worcester. Tel.2953.

So do get in touch with any of the above subscribers in your area, especially if you've a spare concertina that they could borrow or buy - and a few tips are always useful when you're just learning to play, too!

### 3. A useful source of music for the English Concertina

The Northumbrian Pipers Society and the EFDSS publish very nice tunebooks, full of lively traditional airs and melodies, arranged for easy sight reading.

1. The Northumbrian Pipers Tune Book, 43p. SBN.902510-002
2. The Fiddlers Tune Book, 30 p (EFDSS and Oxford University Press)
3. The Second Fiddlers Tune book, 30p.
4. Kerr's Caledonian Collection.

#### 4. DATING CONCERTINAS

To assess the year of manufacture of some of my concertinas, members of the International Concertina Association kindly gave me the numbers and approximate age of their instruments. These details are printed here to help you date your instruments. By the way, if anyone has instruments of which the date of make is known, do send in the details.

Wheatsone English (Mostly 48 & 56 key Aeolas)		Lachenal 48 (Rosewood end)	* "H. Boyd" Concertinas (made by Wheatstone)
23285		44755	1890-1900 24547
24636	1900		(see below)
25670		Crabb English	
27804	1918		
29255		17477	1963
32180	1932	17555	1964
32327	1930 ish?	18216	1967
32919	1938 or before		
35153	1939		
36663	1960		
41344			

One must bear in mind that there have been many many different forms of concertinas manufactured by every firm over the years, and many different numbering series have been used. Until we can get a more complete sequence together, these numbers and dates will remain fragmentary.

#### \*"Boyd" Concertinas

Several subscribers have Wheatstone Aeolas (eight sided concertinas) with the name "H. Boyd" cleverly worked into the plated metal fretwork. These appear to have been made for Mr. Boyd by Wheatstone and Co. around the turn of the century, as Boyd was probably the main agent for the firm of Wheatstone in the North East of England. Stefan Sobell and Alistair Anderson, have seen and bought several such instruments in the Newcastle area, and subscriber Harry Hutton of Maydock has a "Boyd" also. If any other subscribers have such instruments, it's interesting to hear about them, with numbers, if possible.

N.W.

#### 5. CONCERTINA CLASSES AT INNER LONDON EDUCATION INSTITUTES

Although these classes have begun, it may still be possible for you to enrol at them, and they are well worth while!

Battersea Institute, Catchmere Road, London, S.W.1.

Thursdays, 7.15 to 9.15 p.m.

Instructor Mr. Frank Butler (for many years secretary of the International Concertina Association)

Holloway Institute, Eden Grove, Holloway Road, London, N.9.

Mondays 7 p.m. - 9 p.m. Instructor, Mr. Frank Butler

Fridays 8 p.m. - 10 p.m. Instructor, Mr. Harry Crabb  
(The Concertina Maker).

6. COPY OF AN HISTORIC POSTER FROM NEW YORK CITY

TABERNACLE  
Thanksgiving Night  
RICHARD HOFFMAN'S  
Grand  
CONCERT

On Thursday Evening, November 25th, 1847  
on which occasion he will be assisted by

MR. JOSEPH BURKE, Violinist

MR. H. C. TIMM

MR. SCHARFENBERT

MR. S. L. LEACH, Vocalist

From London, his second appearance in America  
HERR SARONI, and

MRS. EASTCOTT, Vocalist

MR. H. C. TIMM will preside at the pianoforte

PROGRAMME

1. Song - "Woman's Love", Mr. Leach Klitz
  2. Grand Fantasia - "Les Huguenots", executed by Mr. Hoffman on one of Chickering's Superb Grand Pianofortes, manufactured for a Gentleman in this city Prudent
  3. "Vanel Campe", from the Opera of Il Colonelle, Mrs. Eastcott Ricci
  4. Fantasia - "La Melancholia" executed by Mr. Joseph Burke Phume
  5. Recitative and Air - "Rage Thou Angry Storm", Mr. Leach Benedict
  6. Introductions and Variations - "Semiramis", (by desire) executed by Richard Hoffman Leopold de Meyer
  7. Overture to "Guillaume Tell" Rossini  
arranged for three pianos by Richard Hoffman, and  
executed by Messrs. Scharfenberg, H.C.Timm, and Richard Hoffman on three Superb Grand Pianofortes, manufactured by Messrs. Nunn & Clark, Stodart, and Chickering.
- INTERMISSION OF TEN MINUTES
1. Fantasia on Themes from "Linda de Chamounix" executed by Mr. J. Burke Alard
  2. Song - "On the Banks of Guadalquiver" by Mrs. Eastcott La Venue
  3. Grand Fantasia "La Cracevienne" executed by Richard Hoffman H.W.Wallace
  4. Song - "Weep not for Sorrow", Leach - Violoncello Obligato by Herr Saroni Lachner
  5. Richard Hoffman will have the honor of introducing to the American Public a NEW MUSICAL INSTRUMENT, called WHEATSTONE'S PATENT CONCERTINA and perform on it Themes from the Opera "Norma" Bellini
  6. Grand Due Concertante - from the Opera "Fra Diavolo" executed by Richard Hoffman and Joseph Burke Herz and Lafont

TICKETS, 50 CENTS

To be had at the Music Stores, the Principal Hotels, or Richard Hoffman, Residence, 79 Spring Street, and at the door of the Tabernacle on the Evening of the Performance.  
Doors open at 7. Concert to commence at 8 o'clock precisely.  
No postponement on account of weather.



6. COPY OF AN HISTORIC POSTER FROM NEW YORK CITY - Cont...

Probably the first public appearance in America of the Wheatstone English Concertina (see item 5 in the second half of the programme). This illustrates the way the concertina was used in serious chamber concerts in Victorian times.

This was copied from the book "Heads and Tales" by the sculptress, Malvina Hoffman, daughter of Richard Hoffman.

From Adam McGibbon (who made the first American Radio Broadcast featuring the concertina in the 1920's) of Virginia, U.S.A.

7. INTERNATIONAL CONCERTINA ASSOCIATION CHRISTMAS MEETING

The I.C.A. are holding their special Christmas meeting on Saturday, 4th December at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1.

The I.C.A. are also holding a One-Day Music Course on Saturday 13th February 1972 at Monton School, London, N.7. The course will be particularly suitable for beginners and elementary players, and more advanced players will be there to help. If you would like to go, please write to the Secretary of the I.C.A. Mr. Jim Harvey, 42, St. Barnabas Street, London S.W.1. who'll send you an application form and further details.

8. HERBERT REYNOLDS of Cambridge

Concertina and Harp player.

Information collected by Russell Wortley during 1964-1966 from Harry Day of Wellington Street, Cambridge, whistle player, who died in 1966 aged 85. Herbert Reynold's concertina was then in Harry's possession, in a very dilapidated state; it is now in the Cambridge Folk Museum. Harry did not know what became of Reynold's harp.

Herbert Reynolds lived in Cambridge Place, off Hills Road, Cambridge (about Cambridge's worst slum, demolished soon after the 1939/45 war - R.W.)

Harry always referred to him as "Herb" Reynolds. Herb and his half-brother Charlie Huntlea of East Road, Cambridge, played Anglo-concertina and harp, and used to play together for dancing at fairs and village Feasts up to about 1930 - visiting all the village feasts for 40 miles around. The landlord would give them 10/- and then they took round a little leather bag for contributions after each dance.

They played in the barn at The King's Head, Fen Ditton; also at Bottisham, Wilbraham, Shelford etc. Harry remembered joining in with them with his whistle at Stourbridge Fair, in an upper room at the Oyster House, Garlic Row (oyster stall outside.) They also played at Midsummer Fair (on Midsummer Common, Cambridge) where there were booths where you could get a drink and at one end there was dancing. They played schottisches, quadrilles, lancers, polkas, waltzes etc.

Normally Herb. played concertina and Charlie played harp. They could each play both instruments but Herb Reynolds

was really the better player - he had his own harp, similar to Charlie's, and could play both instruments at once, holding the concertina between his knees and playing it with his right hand while he vamped on the harp with his left hand! The harp stood about 5'6" high and had pedals. The harp was vamped and the concertina could vamp too as well as playing the tune. I found no evidence of a second part being played: when Harry joined in with them he played tune also.

Herb. Reynolds was younger than his half-brother Charlie and was only about 35 when he died (?) (probably about 1930 - but I was not quite certain about this information - R.W.) Charlie Huntlea died just after the 1939/45 war.

Harry Day also mentioned his "mate" Joe Fuller, another concertina player who also played fiddle and was a wonderful vamped on piano. Joe Fuller was a Burwell man who lodged permanently at the common lodging house in East Road. He was very clever at mending concertinas - carried a strip of steel in his pocket and could fit and tune a new reed in 10 minutes. This was before First World War. But he couldn't play like Herb. Reynolds who could join tunes together and adapt any tune to any dance time (i.e. rhythm) that was wanted.

DR. RUSSELL WORTLEY.

9. ARTICLE SUBMITTED BY MR. E. CHARLESWORTH

My father purchased a Crabb concertina about 58 years ago, and later a Jeffries 41 key Anglo, with unusual fingering. When I was 14 he taught me to play the latter, and together with one of my brothers who played the banjo, we made a musical trio. I can remember playing 'Under the Double Eagle' on the march with a concertina band of thirty players through the streets of Hemerton, London, although I have no recollection of the name of the band.

In 1915 my father joined the army, taking the concertina - the Jeffries, with him, and no doubt this was played throughout France.

Later, in the depression, the Crabb concertina was sold, and later both he and my brother died, and little playing was done by me, although at that time I usually went to the then People's Palace in How, for the Sunday League concerts, at which various concertina bands used to perform. I remember the Ashton under Lyne, Oldham and other Northern bands giving excellent concerts, numbers of players averaging 30 to 40.

Coming North myself, to Manchester, my firm in London promoted me to the profession of commercial traveller in the confectionery trade, and this job left little spare time, most evenings being taken up with perpetual writing. It tickles me to read of the 'workers' of today with their 40 hour week. For more years than I can remember, I often averaged 70. The concertina was taken out of its case when I had a moment for relaxation, but apart from the spell in my teens when I was a bugler in the K.R.R. territorials in London, and we read the simple music when practising under the keen beat of the bugle Major, I never learned the art of music reading.



By the way, this band of thirty buglers, was at its time the best in the City of London, having waltzes and four part marches in its repertoire, plus marches with the military band, often practising in London Guildhall in preparation for the Lord Mayors Show, and various tattoos that we took part in.

Finally came the time of retirement after over 51 years service with the old firm. Time now on my hands and the concertina in them? Not so much, two commercial travellers' associations still find jobs for me to undertake. A nearby Technical College, even at my age of 68, insist on my giving lectures on Marketing - attendance of 25 to 50 for each course - and the fees are useful when on pension.

To cap it all, I do a part time job for Granada Publishing calling on schools displaying new books. The old pensioners cry of "I don't know how I found time for work," still runs true for me, with so many interests, that my bike and concertina are still neglected, but the 'tina is in good fettle.

I was delighted to be informed of the Newsletter, and who knows, it may connect up with another pensioned 'Knight of the Road'.

E. Charlesworth,  
40 Clough Avenue,  
Woodleys, Sale, Cheshire.

#### 10. CONCERTINAS IN THE BOER WAR

From "Songs and Music of the Redcoats" (period 1879).

"Nothing is known about the songs of this campaign, although the 94th Regiment marching from Durban to Zululand 'stepped along cheerily whistling or singing popular airs' helped by the concertina of a certain Halligan."

From Mr. A. Austin.

#### 11. FROM GLYNN HUGHES, 26, Lusitania Road, Liverpool 4.

Interesting items from Mr. Glyn Hughes, who is Editor of the fascinating "Ukelele Newsletter". Write for details (no callers) to 26, Lusitania Road, Liverpool, 4.

"For one season, in depressing surroundings, Gus Levaine, a travelling concertina player, make what he could out of a second-rate al-fresco entertainment and 'doing a bottle' (a theatrical expression meaning whipping round with a hat).

From Seven Golden Miles by Kathleen Eyre (Page 78)  
(Weaver and Youles Ltd., 1961)

That was in the late 1890's, the depressing surroundings were, I think, the Royal Palace Gardens, late Raikes Hall, Blackpool, a place that once flourished and went down the nick!

#### "Quaver."

A musical note was sounded during a sex case in a German court the other day. Said a female witness: "We found out that playing the concertina in the nude can be rather painful for a girl". (Enough to make the stoutest soul quaver and become crochety, I shouldn't wonder."

Liverpool Daily Post.

From "The Sketch", December 13th, 1893:

"The ladies of the East End are discarding their native instrument, the concertina, for the more attractive one of the West, the banjo."

G.H.

## 12. THE ACOUSTICS OF THE CONCERTINA

Sir Charles Wheatstone, inventor and patentee of the first concertina (July, 1829, British Patent No: 5803) is probably better known to the general public for his works on electricity and telegraphy, such as the Wheatstone Bridge and the Wheatstone electric Telegraph. A collection of his inventions, including the early mouth-blown concertinas or Symphoniums of 1825-1829 and two Victorian concertinas can be seen in the Electrical Department Gallery 64, of the Science Museum, South Kensington, London. Moreover, his earlier work was almost exclusively concerned with acoustics, especially the acoustics of musical instruments. William Wheatstone his father was a musical instrument maker in the Strand, from about 1780 onwards (I have a harp-lute made by W. Wheatstone) and young Charles patented several improvements to organs, pianos and the like. (See Wheatstones Scientific Publications, 1879, London.) A quick examination of the inside of any old Victorian concertina soon shows that the designer was fully acquainted with the science and application of acoustics, and the degree of sophistication built in to these earliest instruments was really very little improved upon for the next 100 years. I have met several old players who maintain that there is a definite "Wheatstone sound" but this is difficult to assess quantitatively. The effect of methods and materials used by the various makers must play a great part in the formation of tone and until recently, no-one has considered a detailed examination of these factors. Also, many "improvements" have been suggested or patented over the years, various sounding boards, double layered reed pipes, packed reed chambers, and movable flaps and boards inside the instruments in order to enhance the sound quality in some way. Also, the sort of brass or steel of which the reeds are made is known to have a pronounced effect on the tone of the instrument. In an attempt to study the acoustics of the concertina, I had planned to use a double beam oscilloscope and sensitive microphones to analyse the sound produced from different instruments but I have recently heard from John Goll, a concertina and flutina collector in Co. Durham, who plans to use sophisticated sound analysis equipment to investigate this topic. Anyone who is interested in the acoustics of their instruments should get in touch with John, c/o The Newsletter.

The tuning, pitch variations, and temperament of old concertinas is the special interest of Stefan Sobell, the well-known Newcastle player and collector. We hope to publish an article on this subject by Stefan in a future issue, but if anyone has a similar interest, write to Stefan at the Black Gate, Castle Garth, Newcastle-on-Tyne 1.

N.W.

## 13. SMALL ADVERTISEMENTS (15p. for as much space as you need).

- \*For Sale- "Rock Chidley" 48 key English. Brass Reeds, weakish bellows. Write to:- 63, Donnybrook Rd., Streatham, S.W.16.
- \* Letterpress printing - Handbills, Posters and letterheads. Also piano music for sale suitable for duet and English concertinas. 10p per copy:- Mr. Harold Cowlin, 12 Cowfield Road, North Acton, London. W.3.
- \*Wanted- Anglo German or English Concertina, or Melodeon. Quote price and particulars to:- Yvonne Grundy, 18, Cawnsgarth, Cotingham Yorks