



Dancing Butchers

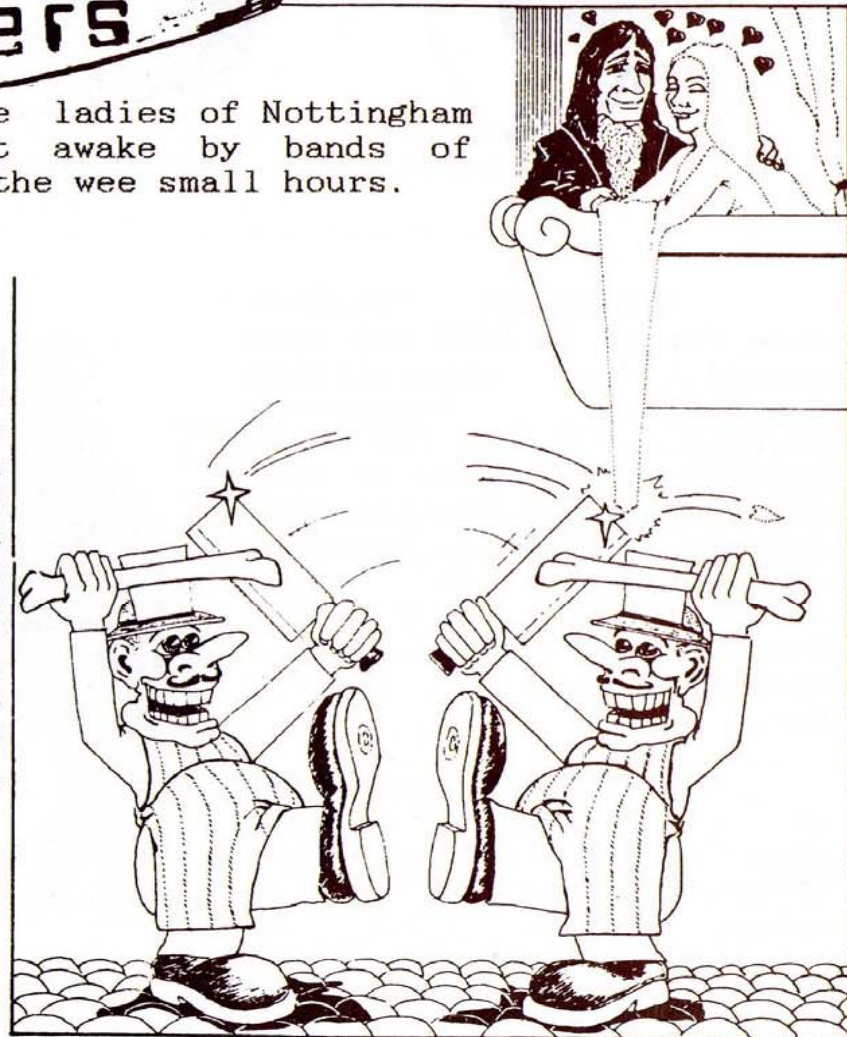
In 1710, "The Tatler" wrote of letters sent by the ladies of Nottingham complaining of lack of sleep. They were, it seems kept awake by bands of carousing lovers and seranaders wandering the streets in the wee small hours.

The honest citizens were so enraged that they took to throwing things, especially at the noisiest of them all, the dancing butchers. These worthies would wander around, banging their marrow bones on cleavers and other tools of the trade, making music!

They did the job in style and would dress themselves up for the occasion in best blue aprons and 'white papers'. Their exploits are recorded when the newly elected M.P., D.P. Coke returned to the city. He was seranaded by the butchers who then 'entertained' the populace elsewhere in the city.

Popularity brought the butchers into the public eye and they began to accept paid bookings, receiving a guinea and a half from Mrs Pole of Radbourne for a seranade. If however, when they were performing, no fee was forthcoming the butchers would make more and more noise until the unlucky recipients of their attentions would pay up just to be rid of them.

LEGENDS OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
by PAT MAYFIELD
Drawing by Steve Edgell.



The serenading butchers of Nottingham who performed by banging their meat cleavers on marrow bones.