



The Borough of Charnwood



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1. Loughborough – a brief history

❖ History of the town

The name of Loughborough derives from the Anglo Saxon word burgh meaning a town, and, probably, a personal name which became Lough. Loughborough is an ancient town situated in the heart of the Borough of Charnwood, very close to the Charnwood Forest, which includes Bradgate Park, Beacon Hill and Swithland Woods. In close proximity are extremely attractive villages such as Newtown Linford, Quorn, and Woodhouse Eaves. The primitive settlers who first came here were attracted to this spot by a number of natural features. The River Soar led directly to the Trent Valley, forming a natural means of communication between the north and south, and to the east and west of the fertile Soar Valley the land was relatively poor and unproductive.

When the Romans came they took over this settlement of the Britons, or at least, certain evidence points towards that being the case. In the grounds of Mount St Bernard's Abbey, which is about seven miles away, an urn filled with Roman coins was found. Some were dated the year 244 and so substantiated the theory that the Romans occupied this area during the third century.

In the Domesday survey of 1086 Loughborough appeared as Lucteburne. William the Conqueror had assigned the manor, together with a good deal of the land, to his nephew, Hugh Lupus, who later became Earl of Chester. By this time Loughborough had become a settled township. Agriculture predominated and continued to have great importance in the town until the latter half of the eighteenth century when its modern industrial character began to emerge. Today the town is renowned for a wide range of industrial products and as a major educational centre.

In the thirteenth century the Lordship passed to Hugh Le Despencer. He obtained grants for fairs in the town and instituted the Thursday market to meet local needs. Loughborough's favourable location encouraged King Henry III to grant a Royal Charter for an annual autumn fair, which is still held today.

When Simon de Montfort fought against Henry III at the battle of Evesham, Hugh Le Despencer sided with de Montfort and was killed during the battle. Loughborough was then granted to Henry, Lord Beaumont and remained with the family for many years. Richard II visited the town in 1387, and in the same year John Wycliffe preached here. The Beaumont family sided with Henry VI during the Wars of the Roses with the result that Edward IV transferred their estates to Lord Hastings. It seems that Hastings later offended Richard III and was executed as a traitor. Henry VII visited the town in 1486 and spent the night in a house standing

just outside the gates of the Parish Church. The town's sympathies were with the Crown during the Civil War and both Charles I and Prince Rupert came here during that period.

Loughborough was rapidly increasing in prosperity. The wool trade was an important feature in the life of the district at this time. It contributed to the prosperity of the town's trade and made textiles an obvious development. Several merchants earned fortunes including Thomas Burton, a member of the Company of the Staple at Calais, who died in 1496 bequeathing legacies for the upkeep of the road bridges and other charitable purposes. As a centre for transport Loughborough benefited from the turnpikes of the early eighteenth century and in 1776 local enterprise led to the canalising of the River Soar. This fostered both trade and manufacturers and until the 1830s the population increased rapidly. The Midland Counties Railway opened in 1840 and the town was the first place to which Thomas Cook organized an excursion. Two further railways came to Loughborough: the London and North Eastern operated a branch which terminated at Derby Road in 1883, and, the last main-line, the Great Central opened in 1898.

By the beginning of the industrial revolution in the latter half of the eighteenth century agriculture in the district was undergoing vigorous improvements, and a major contribution to national prosperity came from the work of the agriculturalist, Robert Bakewell (1726-1795), who farmed at Dishley. Loughborough's woollen industry came to specialize in hosiery and knitwear, but both lace and cotton were produced in the town. Luddites attacked John Heathcoat's factory for machine-made lace in 1816 because of unemployment in the hand-worked trade.

Textiles required bleaches, dyestuffs and machines and to meet these needs engineering and chemical industries developed. William Cotton's patents of 1864 gave Loughborough a world lead in knitting machinery and the town until recently retained a prominent position in the industry. Engineering skills and favourable transport in the nineteenth century brought in Taylor's bell foundry in 1839, electrical engineering and vehicle building including locomotives with Brush in 1889, Morris's cranes in 1897, and a variety of other foundry work. Local clays favoured brick and tile manufacture and the town produced many goods ranging from baskets to greenhouses.

During the twentieth century printing and chemicals, both pharmaceutical and agricultural, have augmented the nineteenth century industries. Coach building, electrical and railway equipment, and civil engineering contribute to the prosperity of the town.

Until the middle of the nineteenth century the town had only manorial courts to govern it, and these proved inadequate to cope with the necessities of drainage and pure water, the lack of which caused an abnormally high death rate and stopped the town's growth. The Board of Health established in 1850 inaugurated

improvements, but expansion led to incorporation of Loughborough in 1888. The municipal borough continued to govern the town until 1974 when the town became the centre of the newly established Borough of Charnwood.

The town has had a turbulent history: In the 1380s Lollard preachers visited it, plague in 1609 which lasted more than a year killed many people; a skirmish was fought at Cotes in 1644 during the Civil War; in 1666 a great fire swept the town; non-conformity, which received stimulus from preachers in Cromwell's New Model Army in the seventeenth century suffered riotous opposition in 1753 when General Baptist preachers came to it. Less violent was the reception in 1850 of the first Roman Catholic convent established in England since the Reformation.

Education in Loughborough has a long history; the endowed schools trace their origins to the Burton legacies of 1495. Further bequests for schools included Bartholomew Hickling's in 1683. Growing needs in the nineteenth century led to schools provided from public funds. In the twentieth century further and higher education developed from the Technical Institute of 1909 into the Loughborough College, which Dr Herbert Schofield led. In 1952 it divided and became the basis of the present day Burleigh Community College, Loughborough College, Loughborough College of Art and Design, Loughborough College of Education, and Loughborough University of Technology, which received its Royal Charter in 1966. In 1977 the University broadened its range of studies by amalgamating with Loughborough College of Education and in 1997 Loughborough College of Art and Design became a School of the University. Since then it has become acknowledged as a leader in technological innovation, and is now known simply as Loughborough University.

❖ The Coat of Arms

On 1st April 1974 Loughborough, Barrow-upon-Soar Rural District and Shepshed Urban District became the District of Charnwood. The status of Borough was conferred upon the District of Charnwood on 15th May 1974 and the new Borough of Charnwood adopted the Loughborough coat of arms, which is based on those families who in the past have been closely associated with the town.

Towns and cities can apply for grants of what became known as coats of arms, because in the days of chivalry, arms had been displayed on surcoats as well as on shields. Loughborough applied for such a grant in 1888, and was awarded one with ideas taken from the achievements of three families who once owned the town, the **Dispensers**, the **Beaumonts** and the **Hastings**.

The Borough's Coat of Arms

Beaumont lion in gold, holding a ladies' maunch for the Hastings and a fret for the Despencers under paw

Black bull's head for the Hastings family



Ladies' maunch (sleeve) for the Hastings family

Motto
"In Truth Lieth Victory"

Black bar with 2 gold cockle shells and a gold fret (lace pattern) for the Despenser family

2. The Lords of the Manor

1066

When William the Conqueror ascended the throne, he gave considerable estates in Leicestershire, including the town of Loughborough, to his nephew, Hugh Lupus of Avrenches, son of Richard, Earl of Orange and the Countess Emma, half-sister to the Conqueror. He made him Earl of Chester in 1070. By this time Loughborough had become a settled township around which agriculture predominated. Hugh Lupus died in 1102, and was buried in St Werburgh's Abbey. For upwards of 100 years the Manor of Loughborough continued in his family until in the early thirteenth century it passed into the hands of Hugh le Despencer.

1221

Hugh Le Despencer obtained grants to institute a Thursday market and Loughborough's favourable location encouraged King Henry III to grant a Royal Charter in 1221 for an annual fair on the eve and feast of St Peter ad Vincular. In the following year Despencer obtained permission to hold another fair on the second Thursday in November which is still held today.

1265

When Despenser, who had joined Simon de Monfort, was slain at the battle of Evesham, the Lordship of Loughborough was granted to his widow Alivia, daughter of Philip Basset of Wycomb.

Brian de Insula, who quelled an insurrection of rebellious Barons and took the castle at Mountsorrel, was at one time the most powerful subject in the realm and it is said that he had a grant of the Manors of Loughborough and Beaumanor from Henry III. He died in 1294.

1295

Hugh Le Despenser, son of John and grandson of the above-mentioned Hugh, saw the Barony restored to the family in 1295. He was created Earl of Winchester in 1322 but, along with his son, Hugh "the Younger Despenser", was executed and attained in 1325/6. Edward III, when Duke of Lancaster, granted the Manor of Loughborough to Henry, Lord Beaumanor and Alice, his wife. He confirmed this grant in 1327 on his accession to the throne. In the 1380s Lollard preachers visited Loughborough and Richard II visited the town in 1387, the same year John Wycliffe preached here.

1460

John, Lord Beaumont, who espoused the Lancastrian side in the civil war was slain at Northampton in 1460. His son William, Viscount Beaumont who

succeeded him was taken prisoner at Towton Field in the following year. He was later attained* and sentenced to forfeit his title and all his Manors and lands, including the Manor of Loughborough.

1464

In this year King Edward IV granted the Manor and Lordship to Sir William Hastings, whom he had recently created Baron Hastings. The grant was confirmed in 1467 but in 1483, having offended Richard, Duke of Gloucester (later Richard III) Hastings was sent to the Tower of London and beheaded.

1485

William, the last Lord Beaumont was restored to the Manor in 1485. Henry VII visited the town in 1486 and spent the night in a house standing just outside the gates of the Parish Church. The town's sympathies were with the Crown during the Civil War and both Charles I and Prince Rupert came here during that period.

Loughborough was rapidly increasing in prosperity with the wool trade an important feature in the life of the district at this time. Textiles became a massive area of development and several merchants earned their fortunes including Thomas Burton, a member of the Company of the Staple at Calais. Burton died in 1496 bequeathing legacies for both the upkeep of the town's road bridges and for other charitable purposes.

William, Lord Beaumont died in 1507 and in 1509 his widow married John de Vere, Earl of Oxford. Upon her death in 1527 the Manor of Loughborough was granted to Thomas Grey, Third Marquis of Dorset, in exchange for certain Manors in Northamptonshire. Grey was the father of Lady Jane Grey of Bradgate Park and Jane's mother Frances, was the daughter of Princess Mary the younger sister of King Henry VIII. Lady Jane Grey was crowned Queen of England on the 10th July 1553. There was little support for her from the people who rightly considered that Princess Mary was the rightful heir to the throne and she was executed at the Tower of London on 12th February 1554.

Her husband, Guilford, the son of the Duke of Northumberland who was agent to King Edward VI was executed on Tower Hill.

1554

The Manor and Advowson of Loughborough were granted to Sir Edward Hastings, second son of George, first Earl of Huntingdon. Sir Edward was created Baron Hastings of Loughborough in 1557 and in the same year obtained a confirmation of the said grant. He lived at the Manor House on Sparrow Hill. On the death of Queen Mary he retired to a hospital at Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire, which he had founded. He resided there until his death.

1575

In 1575 Queen Elizabeth I granted the Manor and Advowson to Henry, third Earl of Huntingdon, nephew of the preceding owner. In 1595, on his death, his estates passed to his brother, Sir George Hastings who became the fourth Earl of Huntingdon. Sir George had resided at Loughborough as early as 1568 and in 1579 one of his children, Dorothy, was baptised at the old church. It is uncertain when he ceased to reside at Loughborough but in 1596 he was recorded as living in Gopshall. He died in 1604 and was buried in Ashby.

1600s

The Hastings family continued to possess the Manor and a large portion of the town of Loughborough until the beginning of the 19th century. The town was hit by plague in 1609 which lasted over a year killing many people. A skirmish was fought at nearby Cotes in 1644 by the opposing sides of the Civil War and in 1666 a great fire swept the town.

1700s

By the beginning of the industrial revolution agriculture in the district had undergone vigorous improvement, and a major contribution to national prosperity came from the work of the agriculturalist Robert Bakewell (1726-1795), who farmed at Dishley. As a centre for transport Loughborough benefited from the turnpikes of the early eighteenth century and in 1776 local enterprise led to the canalising of the River Soar fostering both trade and local manufacturers.

1800s

Loughborough's woollen industry came to specialize in hosiery and knitwear, but both lace and cotton were produced in the town. Luddites attacked John Heathcoat's factory for machine-made lace in 1816 because of the unemployment it generated in the hand-worked trade.

In 1818 the Manor was purchased by the great foxhunter Thomas Denning.

In the 1830s the local prosperity saw the population increasing rapidly. The availability of local engineering skills and favourable transport, as well as a big order for bells for the parish church, brought Taylor's Bell Foundry to the town in 1839 and the Midland Counties Railway opened its station on Nottingham Road in 1840.

Lord of the Manor Thomas Denning died in 1846, and by his will reportedly left the Manor to Thomas Cradock.

In 1850 the first Roman Catholic convent formed in England after the Reformation was established, and in the same year a local Board of Health was set up to

address the lack of drainage and pure water, which was causing an abnormally high death rate and limiting the town's growth. Further unelected Local Boards with statutory duties were established including the Schools Board, the Burials Board and the Lighting and Watch Board.

The textile trades required bleaches, dyestuffs and machines and to meet these needs engineering and chemical industries were developing. William Cotton's patents of 1864 gave the town a world wide reputation for taking the lead in the development of knitting machinery.

Towards the end of the century the Charnwood Forest Railway terminating at Derby Road and the Great Central Railway off Leicester Road came to Loughborough, and Thomas Cook organised his first excursion bringing day trippers to the town for a temperance rally.

1880

It has long been believed that in 1880 Thomas Cradock sold his rights as Lord of the Manor to the local Board of Health for the sum of £1000, although the legal papers relating to the sale show the vendor as being a lady, possibly his mother!

1888

At the request of 1274 ratepayers to the local Boards a petition was submitted to the Crown which saw Loughborough granted a Charter of Incorporation. This established an elected Council which took over the responsibilities of all the Boards. The population of the town at this time was 18,000. Elections were held within a few weeks of receipt of the Charter and with a poll of 88% a Liberal Council was returned. Local businessman Joseph Griggs was chosen by the Council to be its first Mayor and he accepted the responsibility of "sorting out the town". The 1888 Charter remained in force until the reorganisation of local government in 1974 saw Loughborough subsumed into the newly created Borough of Charnwood.

3. Buildings and Monuments

❖ Loughborough Town Hall

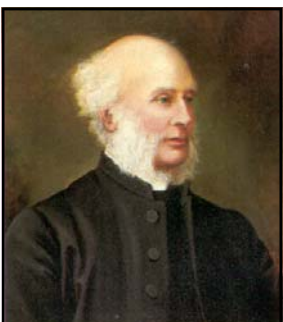
The Town Hall and Corn Exchange in the Market Place, Loughborough, was erected in 1856 by a company of local business people, at a cost of about £8,000. They form a building of two storeys in the Italian style, with a balustrade parapet. The central portion of the front, which contains the entrance, is slightly advanced and relieved by pilasters and has a projecting balcony.



An illuminated clock, erected with £200 left by E B Farnham Esq. of Quorn House, overhangs the upper storey and above it rises a rectangular turret, with a high-pitched roof and vane and contains one bell. The new corporation purchased the building and extensive alterations were made at a

cost of £3,000 to include the provision of a Mayoral Suite and Council Chamber.

❖ Water and Sanitation in Loughborough



Archdeacon Henry Fearon was born at Grayfield, Sussex, where his father was rector, and he was educated at Winchester where he gained an open scholarship to Emmanuel College, Cambridge. Ordained as a priest in 1826, he showed no enthusiasm for the Church and for the next twenty years he taught Classics and Divinity at Cambridge.

At the age of 46 he gave all this up and accepted his living — that of All Saints Church, Loughborough. His pastoral duties brought him into close contact with the townsfolk of Loughborough and the poverty and misery he found aroused deep compassion in him. Rejecting the usual Victorian attitudes of piety and sympathy, he turned his attention to the practical issues of the time, in particular the appalling housing, deplorable drainage and the poor

physical health of his flock. Godliness and cleanliness went hand in hand in Fearon's eyes.

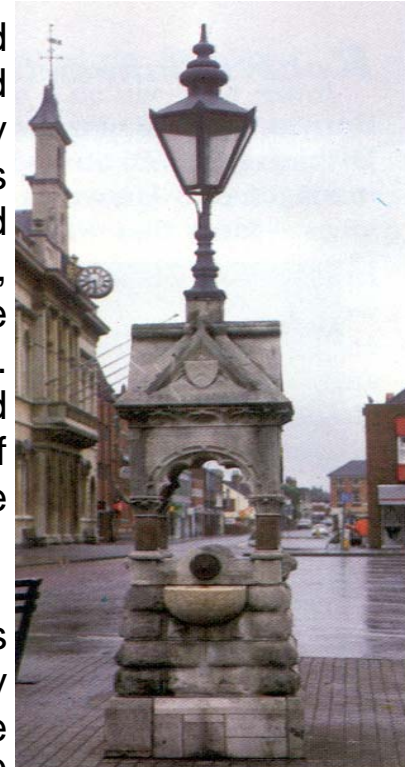
In Fearon's Day, the science of sanitation was little understood. Cholera and typhoid diseases were rife and it was obvious to him that lack of drainage and fresh water was the only substantial cause of much of this misery. Cesspools were the only receptacles of sewage and were often close to the wells from which the townsfolk drew their water. The town was filthy and the stench at times unbearable. Industry stagnated because of the lack of water supply and the town's population actually fell between 1851 and 1861 censuses. The 1849 outbreak of cholera resulted in Fearon and his supporters petitioning the General Board of Health in London requesting the establishment of a Local Board. An Inspector was sent to hold an inquiry and he recommended that the authority of Guardians and Surveyors in sanitary matters was not sufficient and that a Local Board should replace them.

Fearon persevered against bitter opposition and, supported by one lone medical man, Dr John Palmer, he promoted a campaign for a Local Board of Health. The Board first met in March 1850, but it proved timorous in its approach to the sanitary condition of the town and fearful of the wrath of ratepayers in defence of their own pockets. Despite the outbreaks of epidemics, the Board proved apathetic in the first twelve years of its existence. Finally, in exasperation, Fearon promoted a Company to supply water from the Blackbrook. This galvanized the Local Board into supporting the alternative Woodbrook scheme. However, the majority of the Local Board still refused to take action and five out of the twelve members resigned. The 1867 election was fought on the issue: the resigning members were restored and eventually an Act of Parliament was passed in 1868 authorising the Board of Health to construct a reservoir, piped water supply and drainage. In 1870 the first water supply was laid through the town from the newly constructed Nanpantan Reservoir, using the Woodbook source from the Charnwood Forest.

A fountain was erected in the Market Place at the sole expense of Archdeacon Fearon. It was unveiled on the 31st August 1870, when the forest water first flowed officially into the town and the Local Board of Health accepted the gift in trust for the town. The Venerable Archdeacon drew the first draught of water expressing wonder that it was necessary to have such a formal ceremony for so trifling an event. A vote of thanks to the Archdeacon was moved by the President of the Loughborough Temperance Society, who expressed the Society's view that... *"while they cannot but regret the increased facilities in the town for procuring other beverages not so innocent in their character, they rejoice at the opening on this occasion, of a water fountain, which will afford to the inhabitants and every passer-by a refreshing draught of pure water."* Fearon was a great supporter of Working Men's Clubs and championed the right of

working men to their glass of beer against the powerful temperance movement at that time.

The implications of providing a fresh water supply and adequate drainage were profound. Between 1866 and 1882, the population of Loughborough increased by nearly 40%. The incidence of sanitation related diseases decreased dramatically and new industries, particularly those dealing with dyeing processes, were attracted to the town by the abundant water supply. Within 10 years the Nanpantan Reservoir proved inadequate for supplying the increasing requirements of the town and design work was re-commenced on the Blackbrook scheme.



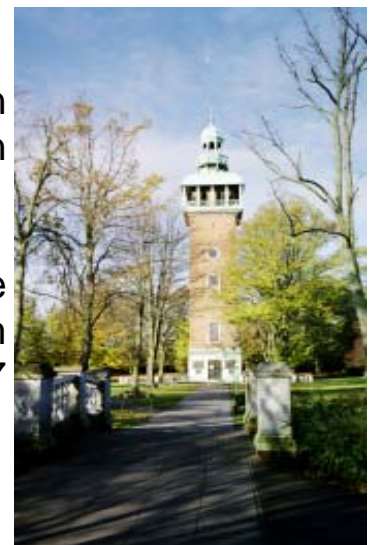
Archdeacon Fearon survived until June 1885 and his tolerance, humility, intellectual vigour and generosity made him a much loved and influential figure. Despite the many changes in the town centre over the last 150 years his fountain has maintained pride of place in the centre of the market.

The fountain was the work of a Mr Forsyth and was constructed at an original cost of £160. It was restored to its original appearance in 1981 and re-inaugurated by the Mayor of Charnwood Councillor F. J McKeown. It was restored once again after the pedestrianisation of the Market Place and was again re-inaugurated by the Mayor of Charnwood Councillor Ida Thurlby on 23rd February 1999 after the original inscription had been re-cut as the erosion of the years had made it illegible.

❖ Loughborough War Memorial Tower and Carillon

Construction of the tower in Queen's Park began in November 1921 and following the installation of the Carillon the Memorial was dedicated in July 1923.

The full height of the tower, from the ground to the top of the cross, is 46 metres (151 feet) with a climb of 138 steps from ground level to the viewing gallery. The Carillon consists of 47 bells, the heaviest weighing 4.27 tonnes (4 tons 4 cwt).



❖ The Memorial Baths and Queen's Hall

1898 - 1975

Before 1897 Loughborough could boast of having its own public baths – unheated of course, but then the baths were only huts at the edge of the canal. Making use of the canal water. Mr. J Griggs offer to build a public baths for the town was gratefully accepted as a permanent memorial for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, at a



cost of £3000. The Marquis of Granby formally opened the baths on 10th August 1898. The facilities included: baths with a laundry at the back with three large wash tubs, a “large, revolving washing machine with wringer” and a hydro-extractor to spin dry the laundry and a 70,000 gallon swimming pool. It was not until 1934 that a chlorination and infiltration system was installed. In 1975 the new Loughborough Leisure Centre was opened with a new swimming pool and the memorial baths was closed.

1975 – 1998

The old swimming pool was covered over and used for storage purposes. In January 1980 it was purposed to convert the hall into a “general purpose hall” and the Mayor Councillor J Abell opened it on the 15th July 1980 and renamed it Queens Hall. In 1998 it was decided to turn Queen's Hall into a Museum and the hall closed for renovation.

1999

The Museum opened to the public in April 1999 and on the 11th May 2000 HRH The Duke of Gloucester officially opened Charnwood Museum.

4. The Fair

The earliest known document relating to Loughborough's markets and fairs is a Charter granted by King Henry III in 1221 to the Lord of the Manor, Hugh le Despencer. Despencer was granted another Charter in 1228 to hold a fair each year on the 1st November. In 1881 the Local Board of Health obtained an Order from Parliament moving the opening date of the fair to the second Thursday in November, and in 2006 it was changed to the 2nd Wednesday in November and the fair extended to four days.



Loughborough Fair is one of the oldest and largest of the street fairs in England. Many fair charters were granted in the 13th century with some of the most notable being:

Bromsgrove – 1199
Loughborough – 1221
Brigg – 1235
Ilkeston – 1252
Scarborough – 1253
Nottingham – 1284

The King sold Charters to the Lords of the Manors throughout England to raise money for the crown. Between 1199 and 1350 over fifteen hundred charters were issued granting the rights to hold markets or fairs although this just regulated many which had already existed for many years

❖ **Special Fairs**

Some fairs became famous for one particular aspect of their activities and became known as Horse Fairs, Cheese Fairs, Onion Fairs or Goose Fairs. The Goose Fair in Nottingham was where all the geese in the area were assembled and bought and sold by dealers who then drove them to the London markets in time for Christmas. The local women made little leather cover for the Geese's feet to protect them on the long walk to London.

❖ The Hiring Fair

Loughborough was a Hiring Fair. This is where farmers seeking workers for the next year would hire men and boys for the farm and their wives and daughters for the farmer's house and dairy. Contracts would be agreed for a day short of a year and wages were arranged verbally, often including accommodation for the workers living in the farmhouse or out- buildings. The workers would carry all their possessions with them to the fair in a small wooden or tin trunk so that once a deal was struck they could be transported to their new place of work on the farmer's cart as he returned home.

If no work were found the man and his family would have to move on to another parish and contracts for hired workers were kept to "a day short of a year" because by a years undisputed residence in a Parish a worker became "settled" legally in that Parish and chargeable on its Poor Rates. The Parishes used to prevent as many people as possible from claiming residency by moving them on thus avoiding having to give financial assistance to people who had no work or money.

❖ Early Fairs

Early fairs would have attractions such as clothiers selling finished goods like gowns, jerkins and hose. Merchants from all over England, Flanders, and Germany would offer luxury cloths, silks, fine wines, rare preserved fruits and from Venice, Cyprus and Syria fancy wares from the east, such as sweetmeats, spices and candies.

Entertainment in the early fairs would come from jugglers, acrobats, fire-eaters, strong men and minstrels. Storytellers would bring news of places and events in other parts of the country.

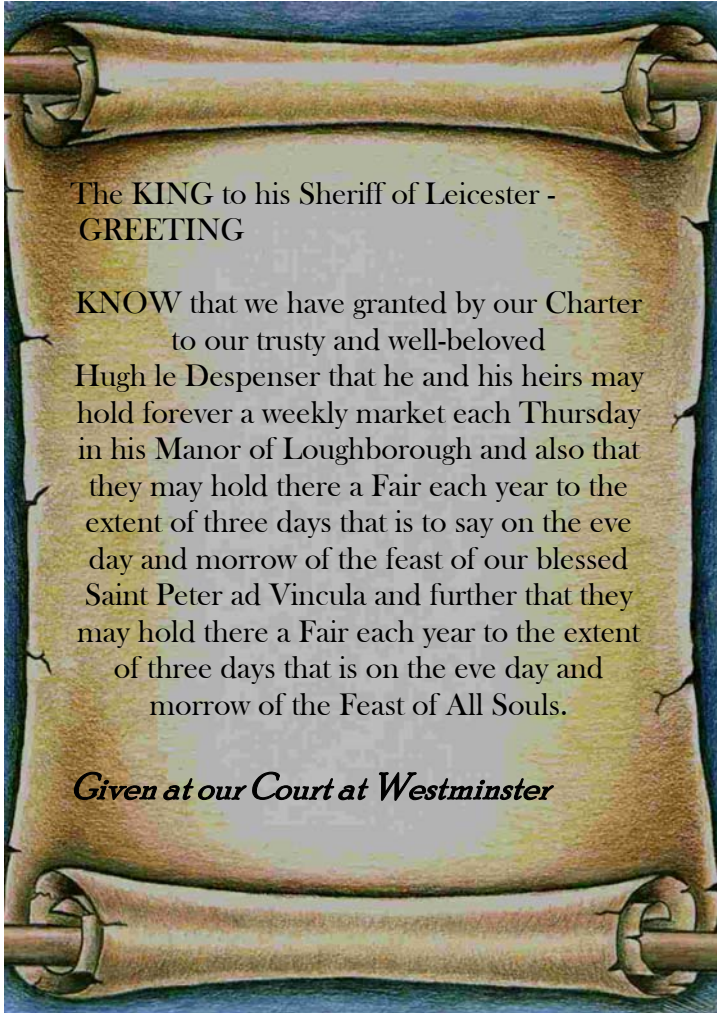
The introduction of steam engines changed fairs forever, with the invention of the dynamo in 1890 bringing electric lighting to make small powered roundabouts more exciting, and in time bringing enough power to make the rides bigger and more thrilling.

❖ How Fairs Introduced Cinema to the Towns

The traveling fairs introduced cinema into the towns. Early moving pictures were shown inside large tents with dancers and entertainers on wooden platforms outside to lure the crowds. The early films were crude and simple and were often footage of horses galloping towards the camera or railway engines moving quickly. Audiences who had never seen a moving picture before often fled the tent in fear of the horses trampling them when they came through the screen!

As the films became longer and of a better quality the showmen realized that there was a huge public demand for this new form of entertainment. In time permanent picture houses were built which have evolved into the giant multi-screen complexes we know today.

❖ The Opening Ceremony



The first official opening of Loughborough Fair by the Mayor took place in November 1932. Councillor Dawson stood on the steps of a roundabout outside the Town Hall and read a speech, although it was reported in the Loughborough Echo that “no one could hear what was being said because of the noise from the children and the ride.” On declaring the Fair open the children joined the Mayor on the rides courtesy of The Showmen’s Guild who at that time gave every school in Loughborough two free tickets for each child for use.

For many years the opening was then carried out from the Town Hall balcony with speeches by the Leader of the Council, a representative of the Showmen and the Mayor, accompanied by the Chief Executive of the Council.

Now the tradition of opening the fair from the steps of a ride has been re-introduced using the showman’s PA system and includes fanfares played by local music-school pupils, the reading of extracts from the charters from 1221 and 1228, and the singing of the National Anthem.

5. Communities across Charnwood



Anstey

A large village in the south of the Borough, containing a small industrial and large residential community, which has good shopping facilities and is better known for its 15th century arched pack-horse bridge, which is only 5 feet wide. The Church dates from 1846 and is built with Mountsorrel granite. The Parish of Anstey borders Leicester City.

Barkby

A small attractive village situated in the Wolds, which is mainly farming and residential. The ironstone Church dates from the 18th century.



Barkby Thorpe

This small mainly agricultural hamlet is situated on the edge of the Wolds and borders onto Leicester City. It contains within its parish the remains of the medieval village of Hamilton.

Barrow upon Soar

A mainly residential community situated on the bank of the River Soar just above the flood plain, 3 miles south of Loughborough. Most of the industry within the village lays alongside the London Midland Railway. The village recently had its rail link with Leicester restored. The Church was rebuilt between 1862 and 1870 and the Victorian almshouses of 1825 are of particular interest. The village has good shopping facilities and the river Soar provides a valuable leisure amenity for the residents. There is evidence of Roman occupation in the village.



Beeby

This tiny hamlet is found in the south east of the Borough and is a wholly farming community. The Church includes some 13th century work and screen from the 14th century. The tower and

chancel date from 1819. In the 14th century the village lost most of its inhabitants due to the Black Death.

Birstall

This large mainly residential commuter village is in the south of the Borough and borders Leicester City. The village stands beside the River Soar. Evidence from parts of the Church date from Saxon times and the ironstone church tower was rebuilt in 1860. In the old part



of the village are several examples of timber framed cottages. The village has good shopping facilities but little industry. The village is also the southern terminus of the preserved Great Central Steam Railway. The Wanlip Country Park close to Birstall provides a valuable leisure amenity for the village.



Burton on the Wolds

A farming village situated in the Wolds area of the Borough. In the centre of the village is the 18th century Burton Hall, once the home of the Countess of Huntingdon, which later became a nursing home for the NHS and is now a privately

run nursing home

Cossington

Situated between the River Wreake and the River Soar it is a quiet attractive residential village, which includes several old cottages along its main street. The Church is a mixture of the 13th and 14th century architecture. The



Village Pound has recently been restored and it is thought to be the only village to stage a "Midsummer Pound Ceremony".



Cotes

Consists of a few houses, which straddle the main A60 road running between Loughborough and Nottingham and crossing the River Soar at Cotes. This bridge crossing was the site of a skirmish during the Civil War in 1645. Between the bridge at Cotes, which originally had 13 arches and was

rebuilt in 1797 with 8 arches, and Loughborough was a raised causeway under the control of the Bridge Masters who were responsible to the Lord of the Manor of Loughborough for the upkeep of the bridges. On a raised mount at the side of the river is the site of the old Manor House. The Old Water Mill, which stands to the south of the bridge, is now a public house.

East Goscote

East Goscote was named after a medieval hundred and until 1965 contained only a few houses. Most of the new addition to the village was completed by 1976. The village, which was built on a former Minister of Defence site, stands along side the Leicester to Melton road and contains little industry.



Hathern

The village straddles the A6 trunk road 2 miles to the north of Loughborough. Hathern once was a centre of the hosiery and framework knitting industry and many of the old cottages of the frame workers are still in evidence around the village. In the 19th century a resident of Hathern, John Heathcote, invented a device for making lace, which led to riots, forcing him to move away from the area. The March Phillipps De Lisle families all have connections with Hathern, in particular the Church, which was built in the 14th century and has a Saxon font. In 1698 Dame Mary Phillipps the wife of Ambrose Phillipps presented the church with a Silver Chalice, which is still used today. Edward Thomas March Phillipps became Rector of Hathern church in 1808. On arriving in the village he described it as “a barbarous place” and in 1850 said, “Verily Hathern is a cage of every unclean beast. What is to become of it?” The Rectors comments have gone into folklore because the village is now referred to as “Wicked Hathern”. Hathern has a very successful Brass Band, which supports local charities through their concerts.

Hoton

Situated on the A60 Loughborough to Nottingham road, 4 miles north of the town on the Nottinghamshire border. It is a mainly farming community and Hoton has several timber framed and Georgian houses. The church was rebuilt in 1837.





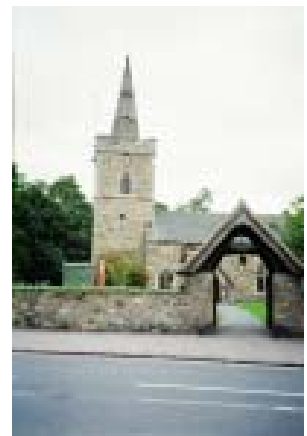
Mountsorrel

The village stands on the line of the old A6 trunk road, which has now been bypassed. This has led to some of the historic building in the centre of the village being restored to improve and enhance the area. The River Soar, which is also part of the Grand Union Canal, flows just to the east of the village and when in flood, makes access over the river impossible. A very narrow bridge, which crosses the Mountsorrel lock, provides access to the village from the Soar Valley. The river provides a

valuable leisure amenity for the village. In the centre of the village is a domed Butter Market erected in 1793. Overlooking Mountsorrel is Castle Hill, the site of a Castle. It is reputed that King John slept in the Castle. Brian de Insula who quelled an insurrection of rebellious Barons took the Castle. It is said that he was a granted the manors of Loughborough and Beaumanor from Henry III. Mountsorrel is a large commuter village. In the parish of Mountsorrel is the largest granite quarry in Europe.

Newtown Linford

A most attractive village situated in the Charnwood Forest. The name means “new town on the ford”. The River Lin flows through the village into Bradgate Park and then on to the River Soar. The church was built in the 14th century and contains a stained glass window to Lady Jane Grey, the nine day Queen of England. Newtown Linford is the main entrance to Bradgate Park which extends over 850 acres and was created



from the Charnwood Forest over 700 years ago as a hunting and deer park. It looks today much the same as it did in the middle ages. In the Park are the ruins of Bradgate House, the brick mansion built by Sir Thomas Grey, 1st Marquis of Dorset and the great grandfather of Lady Jane Grey. Bradgate Park attracts over one million visitors each year.



Prestwold

This village in a very quiet rural location is just over a mile east of Loughborough. It is also the home of the historic Prestwold Estate, home of the Packe family since the mid 17th century. In the estate is Prestwold Hall built by the family in the 18th century. The Church, which is also part

of the estate, was rebuilt around 1890. Opened in 2000 is the Prestwold Natural Burial Ground, which is within the estate. These burial grounds are cemeteries managed along ecologically sound principles and are open to all. Instead of headstones, trees or shrubs are planted to serve as natural living memorials.

Queniborough

A mainly residential village with modern housing built around the older timber framed houses. This attractive village lies to the east of the Borough and is surrounded by farms. The Church with its crocketed spire is described by Pevsner as one of the finest in Leicestershire and features a brass plate to Margaret Bury dating from 1633.

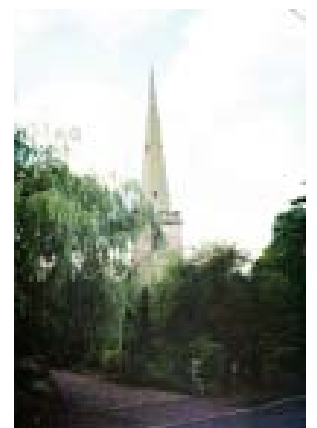


Quorn

The village stands on the old A6 now bypassed and is mainly residential. Its original name was Quorndon, which was a hill where querns were found. A quern was a millstone. It seemed to indicate an area where granite is found. Built of granite, St Bartholomew's Church dates from the 12th and 13th centuries. Quorn Hall, one of the finer buildings in the village, was built for Thomas Farnham around 1430. Hugh Maynell remodelled the hall in the 17th century when he lived at the Hall. The Farnham Family has lived in Quorn since the 13th century and moved to Quorn House which is now is now a Diet and Fitness centre. Hugh Maynell was considered to be the Father of English Fox Hunting and established the Quorn Hunt at the Hall. The Quorn Hunt is widely known throughout England. Quorn has good shopping, a Community College and other leisure facilities. The River Soar flows through the centre of Quorn and is an important leisure amenity for the village with walks, boating and canoeing. The village was once an important centre for the manufacture of elastic textiles and hosiery. The canal/river used to bring coal to the Gas works, which have long since gone. Quorn is also one of the main stops on the Great Central Railway.

Ratcliffe on the Wreake

This is a very attractive village, which is mainly farming and is situated to the east of the A46 road (The Fosse Way) and close to the River Wreake. The church is 14th



century with a needle spire. To the west and alongside of the A46 are Ratcliffe College, a fine Georgian building and the first Catholic College to be established in England since the reformation.



Rearsby

The village is located on the main Leicester to Melton road and is a residential community in a farming area. A tributary to the River Wreake flows through the village and is crossed by a medieval packhorse bridge five feet wide. It often

floods in the winter and access to part of the village is over the modern bridge and through the farmyard built by the farmer for his own use.

Rothley

The village developed from the Middle Ages as a market for the forest area and like many of the villages in Charnwood the industry included knitwear. In recent years the village has expanded with new housing and is a very popular residential area close to the forest and Bradgate Park. Rothley stands on the old A6 trunk road now bypassed. William Wilberforce worked here in the 19th century on his parliamentary bill to abolish slavery. In the churchyard is a 9th century Saxon Cross. In the grounds of nearby Rothley Court is the 13th century Chapel of the Knights Templar, which is open to the public. Rothley Court became a hotel in 1960.



Seagrave

Situated on high ground between the Wreake and Soar Valleys, the village is residential and surrounded by farms. It has some new housing, but little development has taken place in the village. Parts of the Church date from the 13th and 14th century and it contains a musical

instrument from the 16th century called a Serpent, which was used before organs were installed.



Shepshed

Situated to the north west of the Borough, close to the M1 motorway and other large towns and Cities, making Shepshed an attractive commuter town. Shepshed means a hill where sheep once



grazed. It has a medieval market place. St Botolph's Church, built between the 13th and 15th centuries, which, surrounded by old cottages, some of which are thatched. Shepshed has grown into the second largest town in the Borough and is an industrial town, attracting employment because of its central location. The Church has close associations to the March Phillipps De Lisle family, who are large landowners in the area. The town has good shopping, sports, and social facilities. The Charnwood Forest Railway, which ran between Loughborough and Coalville, passed through Shepshed. This railway opened in 1883 and was closed in 1963. Just outside of Shepshed is the Fenny Windmill, one of the last to grind corn in the area. The mill is now a private residence.



Sileby

Located on the east of the Soar Valley just off the A6 trunk road and above the flood plain. Modern residential development has extended around the old village where once hosiery and footwear were the main industry in the village. Recently it has managed to attract modern industries into the village. Some of the old framework knitter's houses still survive. Sileby has had its rail link between Loughborough and Leicester restored with the introduction of the Ivanhoe Line, which is supported by Leicestershire County Council. The Grand Union canal is close to Sileby and boats can be hired from the Sileby marina.

South Croxton

A mainly farming community, this attractive village lies in the east of the Borough on a hill. The Church, made of ironstone, stands at the top of the hill on a former Saxon site and is from the 14th century. Every two years the village holds the South Croxton Arts Festival of painting, sculpture, music and the performing arts. At the bottom of the hill on Main Street is the village pub.



Swithland



Situated in Charnwood Forest, the village has been a site for quarries from Roman times until the 19th century and Swithland slate is a much sought after roofing material for housing. Swithland, meaning land cleared by burning, is an attractive village and because of its location any

development is restricted. The Church is 13th century and was added to in the 17th century. It stands at the end of the village close to Swithland Hall, the ancestral home of the Earl of Lanesborough.

System

The town of Syston is situated in the east of the Borough, 3 miles to the north of Leicester on the Melton Mowbray road. The small historic centre of Syston has been recently redeveloped and the town has good shopping facilities. Industry is attracted to the town because of good road and rail links. The town has a



community college, a swimming pool, good sports and leisure facilities, and a number of parks. Syston is linked to the M1 motorway by the recently opened A46 dual carriageway.

Thrussington

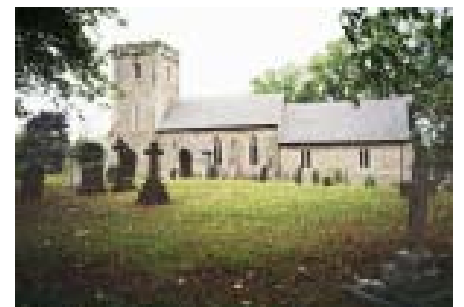
Thrussington is a small farming village hidden away in hilly countryside and situated in the east of the Borough just off the Fosse Way (A46). In the centre of the village is a green surround by houses, two pubs and an ironstone Church part of which is 13th century. At the edge of the village is the River



Wreake crossed by a raised causeway over the flood plain, leading to Rearsby.

Thurcaston

A small residential village situated to the west of the Soar Valley, it has joined with Cropston to form one parish. All Saints church has a 12th century tower, which was improved in the 15th century and contains a very early slate headstone dating from 1641. The village has a pub/restaurant and an infant school.



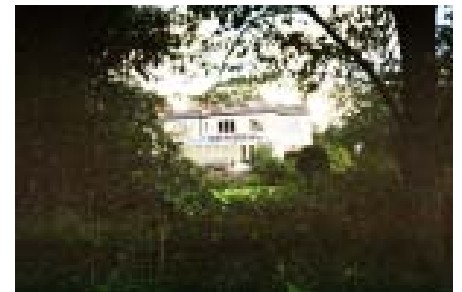


Thurmaston

Thurmaston, which borders Leicester City, is a large industrial village and is situated in the Soar valley in the south of the Borough. Watermead and Wanlip Country parks lie to the west of the village and provide many walks and water activities for visitors. The Grand Union Canal and the River Soar pass through the parks, bringing many tourists into the area. Although very close to Leicester, the village retains a strong independence within the community, even though the village is split in two by the A46 carriageway. Thurmaston has good sports and shopping facilities and the road and rail links make the village attractive to industry.

Ulverscroft

Ulverscroft, meaning where Ulf farmed his croft, is unusual in that it has no village centre. This parish is situated in the heart of the ancient Charnwood Forest, and the houses and farms are scattered in a very attractive part of the Borough. Ulverscroft Priory was founded in 1154 by the Earl of Leicester and closed in 1539 during the dissolution of the monasteries. The ruins of the Priory are still visible, but are not open to the public. Ulverscroft Grange and Ulverscroft Manor are two distinctive properties which are part of the Shuttleworth/Clarke Foundation and are used for day visits by the elderly and disabled where lunch and entertainment is provided, enabling them to enjoy this beautiful part of Charnwood.



Walton on the Wolds

Walton is situated to the east of the Soar Valley high in the Wolds area of the Borough and is mainly a farming and residential parish. The Church dates from the 18th century and has a brick tower. The small village green is surrounded by attractive properties.

Wanlip

Wanlip is situated alongside the River Soar in the south of the Borough. This is a small farming and residential village, which will remain so because of its position within the Soar Valley. Close to the



village is a major sand and gravel extraction works and a resource and reclamation water treatment plant.



Woodhouse

Woodhouse, meaning house in a wood, is situated in Charnwood Forest close to Beacon Hill, which is open to the public and is one of the highest points in the Borough. Within the village is Beaumanor Hall and Estate, originally the home of the Despencer family in the 13th century. The present

Hall dates from the 1840s and was built the Herrick Family. The estate is now owned by Leicestershire County Council and is available for conferences and to schools and youth groups for residential visits. The village is mainly residential and farming and it is in a conservation area. The Church is 14th century.

Woodhouse Eaves

Woodhouse Eaves, meaning houses on the borders of a wood, is a residential village and is a popular stopping point for walkers from the Beacon and Bradgate parks. Because of the number of visitors the village attracts, there are a number of pubs and eating-places to be found. The village, and in particular windmill hill, the site of a windmill which burned down in 1945, offers great views across the Soar Valley towards the Wolds.



Wymeswold

The village is situated to the north east of the Borough and is mainly farming and residential. Some industry is found to the south of the village on a disused RAF airfield but it does not disturb the peace of the village.

The Church is 14th century and was restored by Pugin in 1844. The village contains some very fine Georgian buildings and over thirty listed buildings.

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