

Historical Notes

Early Anglo-Saxon Settlement in Leicestershire and Rutland—the place-name and archæological evidence—by *Victoria Barrow*

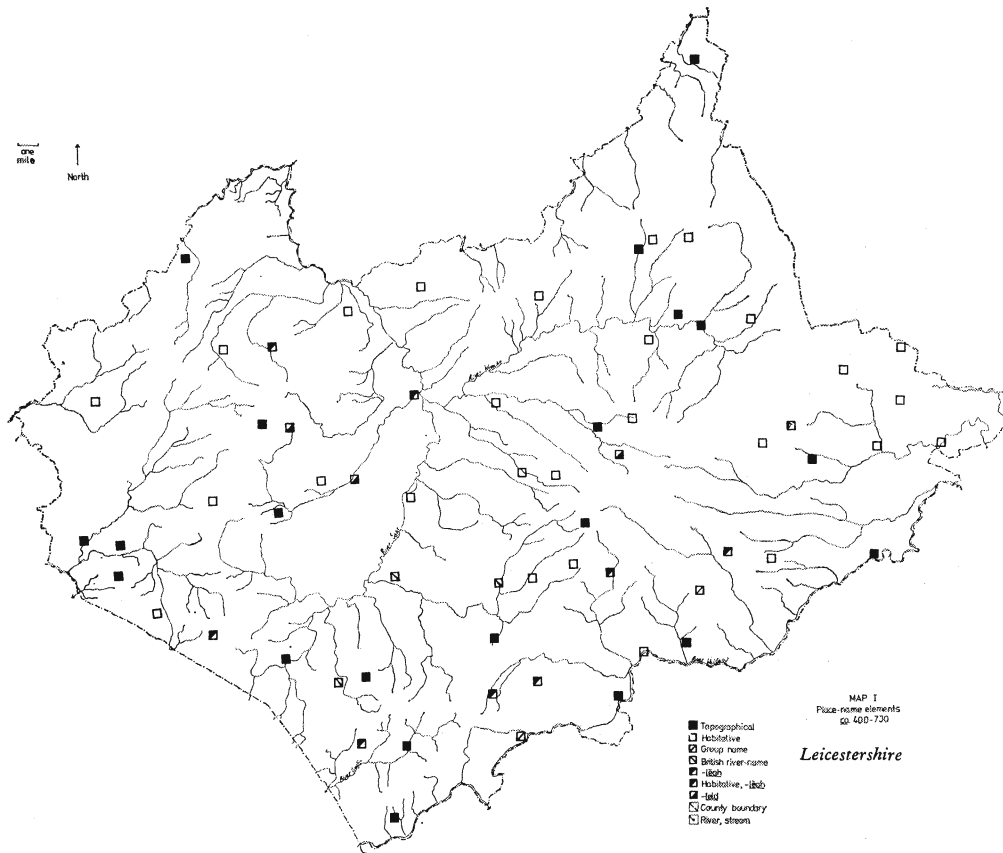
In the *Journal of the English Place-Name Society*, VIII, 1975–76, B. H. Cox gave a list of the elements used in those place-names which are found in authentic charters dating from 672x4–731. The presence or absence, in any quantity, of certain words enabled him to draw up two lists of elements which may have been common in place-name formation *ca* 400–730, and *ca* 730 onwards. The charters do not, of course, have an even geographical distribution, and this may lead to local distortion of the date of certain elements. It is unlikely to invalidate the dating suggested by the charters' place-names, however, and so it is possible to test them against the archæological evidence of one county. The aim of this project, carried out at the Leicestershire Museum, was to see what, if any, correlation exists between these elements and the early Anglo-Saxon settlement within the new county of Leicestershire.¹ This necessitated comparing the elements' distribution with the main Roman sites, and also, briefly, considering the pattern of settlement during the period of Scandinavian settlement and by the time of Domesday.

Settlement in the Early to Mid Saxon Period—ca. 400–730 (Map I)

<i>burna</i> (1 example)	<i>-ingas</i> (1 example)
<i>dūn</i> (9)	<i>-inga-</i> (2)
<i>ēg</i> (3)	<i>-ingaham</i> (2)
<i>ford</i> (8)	<i>wīc</i> (2, incl. one post-Conquest)
<i>lēah</i> (9)	<i>ceaster</i> (2)
<i>feld</i> (3)	<i>burgh</i> (8)
British river-names (2)	<i>hām</i> (13, incl. one post-Conquest)
	<i>wīchām</i> (1) ²

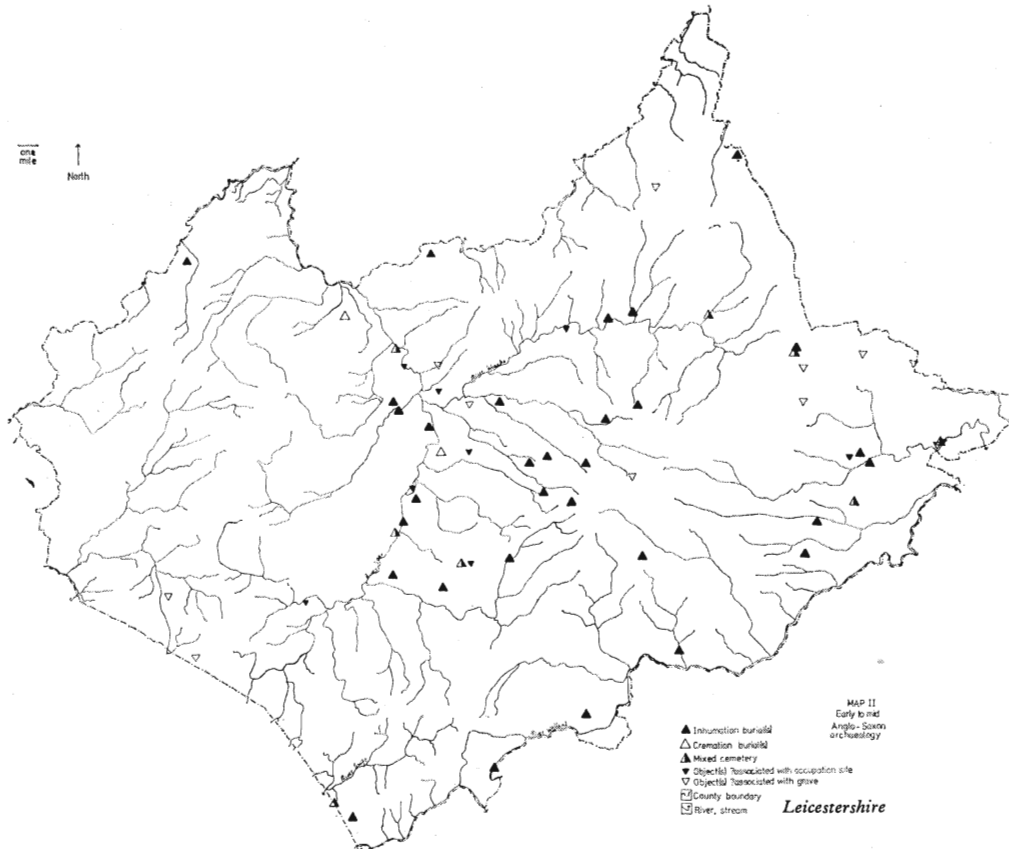
Places are named by neighbours rather than by the actual inhabitants: a topographical feature of the landscape will probably be known to people over a relatively wide area by a common name, and it is therefore not surprising if its name gets transferred to a nearby settlement. A habitative element, therefore, might post-date a topographical element, arising at a time when the number of settlements to which a man might refer exceeded the number which could conveniently be described by reference to the landscape. To test this theory would be very difficult, especially as such a relative dating might actually be a question of only a quarter or half a century.

The overall pattern of settlement, as seen in the early place-name elements on Map I, seems to have been predominantly in river valleys in the south of the county, *i.e.* especially the Swift valley and parts of the Soar valley. The only habitative element to be found in any considerable number (*hām*) is



found throughout the county; the more concentrated distribution of certain of the topographical elements is no doubt due largely to geography. *Lēah* and *feld* are important, however, since their date appears to vary in different parts of the country.

Lēah appears to have been used throughout the Anglo-Saxon period, but with a change in meaning. In the earlier part of the period it seems to have meant either a wood (perhaps distinctive because it is a wood found in a lightly wooded area), or a clearing in a wood—clearly the meaning must depend in part on the extent of surrounding woodland. The distribution alone (six of the nine lie south of Leicester, and only two [in the north-west of the county] are at all remote from other early place-names) does little to elucidate the meaning in Leicestershire, since the place-names are found in an area where settlement seems to have taken place from the early Saxon period onwards. It seems likely, however, that they refer to an unusual feature in the landscape, since other woodland elements in place-names are very rare in that small area, and little wood is given for the manors there in 1086. This suggests that, in this part of the country, *lēah* is an early place-name element, found in largely unwooded, early settled, areas.

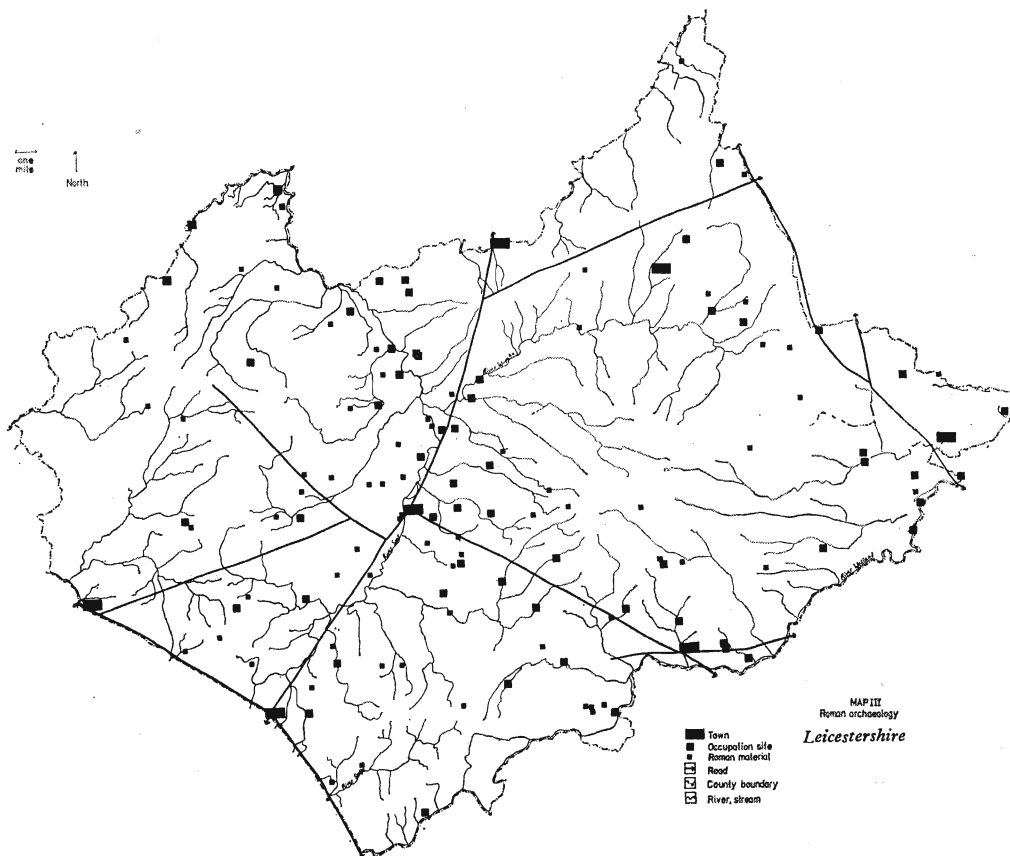


The reverse is true of *feld*. Scarfe argues that it is an early element, and indeed in Suffolk this may be so, since several of the thirty parishes with names in *feld* contain evidence of Romano-British settlement. Gelling argues that it is late in east Berkshire.³ Several names in *feld* are found south of Reading, where there is ample evidence to suggest that the poor soil indicates the western extent of Middle Saxon settlement. Although there are only three examples in Leicestershire, two (Markfield and Glenfield) are remote from other elements dated to *ca.* 400–730. Even by Domesday, settlement was not heavy in this marlstone area, so it seems unlikely that *feld* is an early element in this county.

Despite the chance nature of the discovery of many archaeological sites, those known for the early-mid Saxon period indicate that early settlement took place in the valley of the Soar and in the valleys of its eastern tributaries (Map II); this is supported by evidence from aerial photographs. There is also a scatter of sites around the county boundary in the south. A notable lack of archaeological evidence occurs on the clay in the region of the old Leicestershire-Rutland boundary. A gap of archaeological evidence in the west, away from the boulder clay regions, is paralleled by the scarcity of early place-names.

Early elements and Anglo-Saxon archæology, then, occur in the same areas, but they do not coincide to any marked degree. The large number of Roman sites (Map III) in the county makes it surprising that the Anglo-Saxon burials in the tributary valleys of the Soar do *not* appear to have taken place in an area of Roman settlement; this is not necessarily an argument against continuity from the Romano-British period, but it does argue that some early Saxon settlement took place in areas previously sparsely settled or unsettled altogether. Few of the early place-names are far from Roman sites, however, though there is no marked bias towards habitative or topographical elements. The only linguistic hint of continuity occurs in three place-names: Medburne (*burna*), Great Casterton (*ceaster*) and Leicester (*ceaster*)—all large Roman settlements whose modern name contains an early element.

The place-names of archæological sites, both Roman and Anglo-Saxon,



contain a variety of elements. A rough comparison of sites and elements gives the following figures:

<i>Elements</i>	<i>Place-Names</i>	<i>Anglo-Saxon Sites</i> (early)	<i>Roman Sites</i>
<i>ca.</i> 400–730 topographical habitative	36	8	15
	30	6	12
	—	—	—
	66	14	27
730 onwards topographical habitative	16	2	4
	35	2	13
	—	—	—
	51	4	17
pure Scandinavian	77	10	4
others	130	21	36

Both the archæological periods coincide with the early elements rather than the later ones, thus supporting Cox's interpretation of the place-name elements. The fourth category, comprising place-names whose elements cannot be assigned to any particular date, is, not surprisingly, the largest, but the figures still provide evidence that archæological remains are found in places thought, on linguistic evidence, to be early settlements, rather than those dated to the mid-Saxon period and later.

Settlement after 730—Anglo-Saxon (Map IV)

wiella (11 examples)

brōc (5)

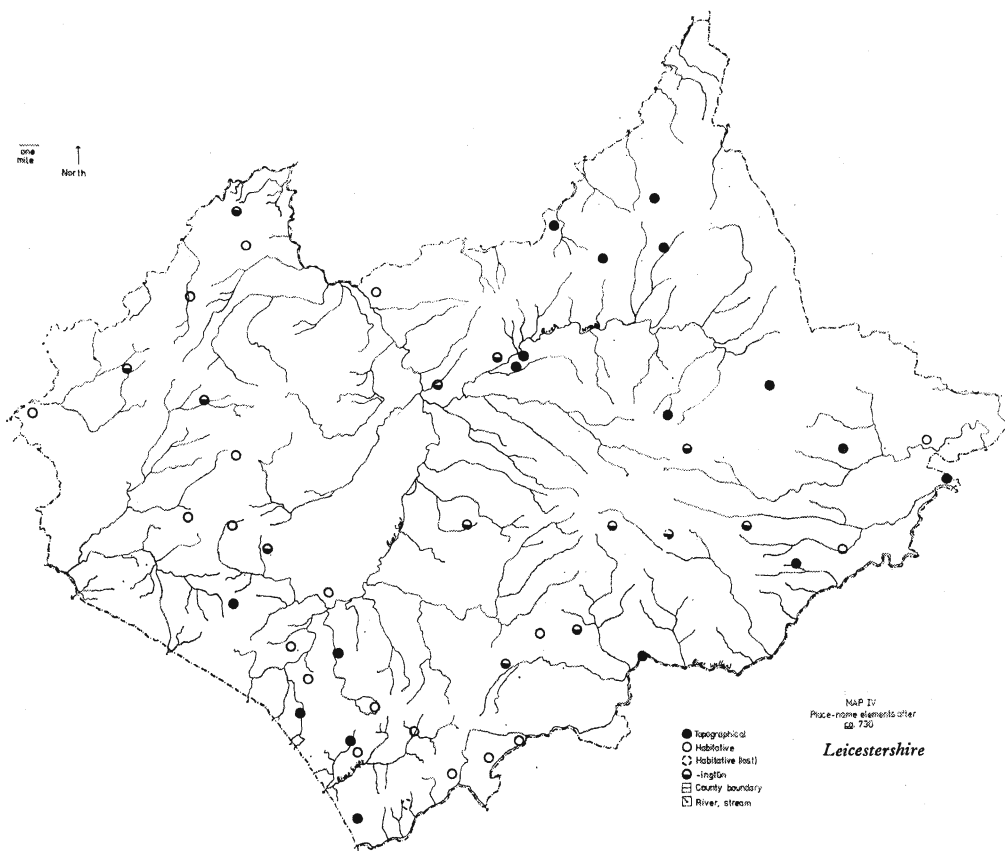
-ingtūn (14 examples)

cot (9)

worth (11)

Once again a distribution map shows the south of the county to be the most heavily populated in terms of these elements. This time, however, the settlement pattern continues northwards to the west of Leicester, where there is no archæological evidence. Names in *-ingtūn* appear to form a separate category in that they run across the centre of the county, dividing the mixture of habitative and topographical elements in the west and south (linked by names in *-ingtūn* to a group in east Rutland), from the purely topographical group in the north-east.

The distribution of all these elements suggests a spread of settlement across the centre of Leicestershire, as well as denser settlement in the area already settled. This is what is to be expected of elements which are common in place-names but hardly found in charters before *ca.* 730. The table in the previous section shows that this category of elements has the smallest coincidence with early archæological remains—in the Saxon period having fewer examples than the Scandinavian place-names—which supports Cox's conclusion that they are elements used more in the mid-late Saxon period than before *ca.* 730.

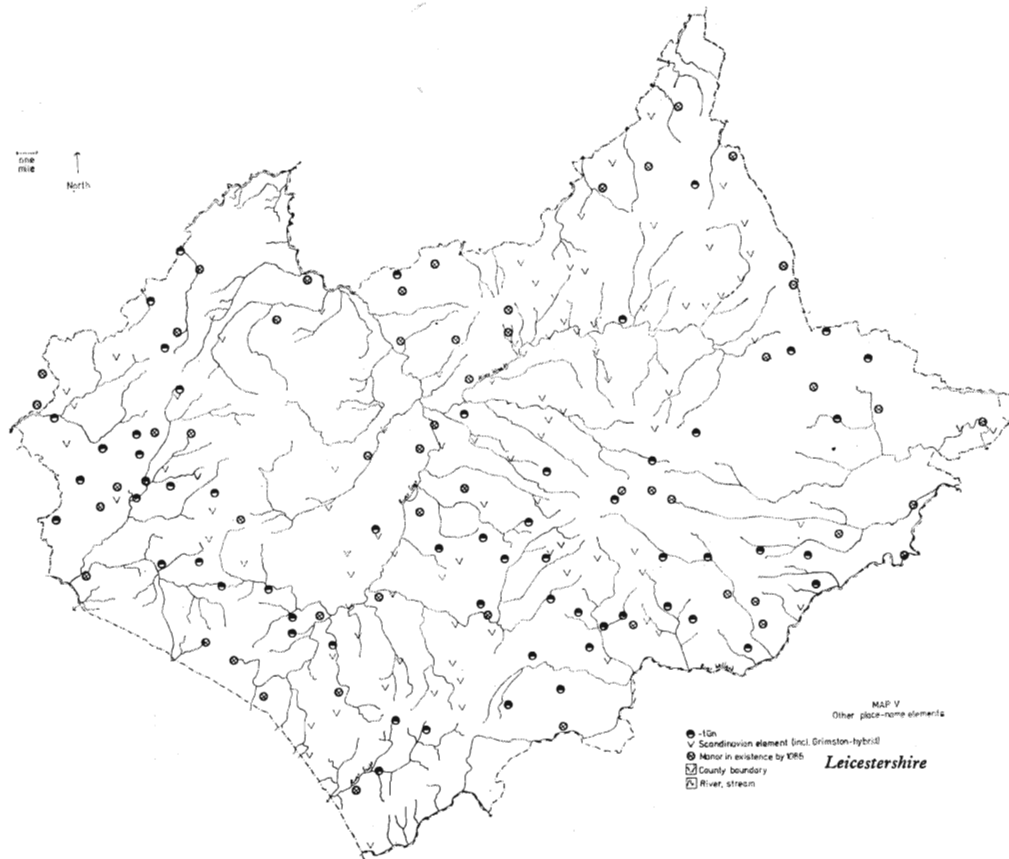


Settlement after 730—Scandinavian (Map V)

The evidence for Scandinavian settlement in Leicestershire and Rutland comes largely from place-names. Though these are found throughout the county, there is a noticeable concentration of pure Scandinavian names in areas where there is little evidence of earlier Saxon settlement; this gives support to the view that *-bý* and *thorpe* indicate settlements which arose as the result of a peaceful migration of Scandinavian settlers after the Viking raids and the creation of the Danelaw.⁴

Settlement after 730—Domesday manors (Map V)

The distribution of all place-names found in or before 1086, other than those which can be dated with some confidence to the mid-Saxon period at the latest, indicates fairly uniform settlement over the county. The two gaps are to the west of Leicester (a gap on each map, save for the two names in *feld*) and in the west of Rutland and east of old Leicestershire. This latter gap may be enhanced by the fact that named Domesday manors in Rutland are few,



though there are large numbers of unnamed berewicks (*e.g.* Oakham 5, *Hameldune* 7, Ridlington 7; *cf.* Uppingham: mentioned in 1067 but not in Domesday).⁵

Tūn is an extremely common element, partly because it continued to be used well into the Middle Ages. It was clearly a common element by the ninth century too, since it is so often combined with Scandinavian personal names. Despite its ubiquity, it often appears in the greatest numbers in areas where elements held to indicate early-mid Saxon settlement are scarce, as happens west and east-south-east of Leicester. It is also compounded with early elements, *e.g.* with *ceaster*; this may be a later addition, but in any case it is still possible that the bulk of names in *tūn* are late, occurring in areas which were previously relatively unsettled.

The archæological evidence of the late Saxon period (not illustrated) which consists largely of stone crosses and church fabric, is not as plentiful as that for the early-mid Saxon period, but once again the bulk of the evidence comes from the Soar valley. It clearly bears no relation to the elements listed by Cox, and thus, in a negative way, adds support to his conclusions regardless of the

difficulty of the geographical bias of the charters themselves. In the western half of the county archæological evidence of Saxon settlement is virtually non-existent.

Conclusions

A comparison of the place-name elements with archæological sites suggests that the list extrapolated by Cox from charters earlier than 731 is a valid one in terms of indicating settlement in the early and mid Saxon period. While there is no outstandingly close correlation between the early Saxon material evidence and the place-names elements of the charters, it is more marked with them than with any other category of elements (see table above).

Settlement in Leicestershire and Rutland seems, on the basis of those early elements, to have taken place largely in the southern part of the county (*i.e.* in and near the Welland valley) at all periods; before *ca.* 730 in east Rutland, to the north-east and perhaps immediately west of Leicester; from *ca.* 730, northwards from the Welland valley, through the extreme west of the county; and by Domesday, there is uniform occupation throughout the county, apart from the Leicestershire/Rutland border and the area immediately west of the Soar valley. The middle Saxon period seems to have seen a spread of population in the west of Leicestershire and in the Vale of Belvoir which, together with Scandinavian settlement, resulted in the fairly even distribution of Domesday manors.

It is not possible, without going into considerably more detail than has here been possible, to see if there is any evidence to suggest that some elements, or types of elements, are in fact slightly earlier than others.⁶ It seems clear though, that in Leicestershire *lēah* is an early element and *feld* late; *tūn* appears to be late, at least where it is found in concentrations, and *-ingtūn* also seems to be late, in view of the fact that its distribution is markedly different to that of other elements common in English place-names.

The haphazard nature of the discovery of many of the archæological sites in Leicestershire and Rutland makes the relative similarity of distribution maps of Anglo-Saxon or Roman sites and the early elements significant. While few sites actually coincide absolutely with place-name evidence, it seems clear that the charters we have for 672x4–731 give a fair sample of the type of names in existence by that time. Despite the geographical bias towards some parts of the country, the implication is that, even if the use of an element spread from one area to another, its spread took place within a relatively short period of time. Thus, by the eighth century, changes in the name-forming vocabulary are reflected in the distribution of different elements all over the country.

Notes

1. Leicestershire refers to the new county, comprising the former Leicestershire and Rutland, unless otherwise stated. Historically this is inaccurate, since at Domesday *Roteland* was associated with Nottinghamshire, while the much more densely settled eastern part of modern Rutland was a hundred in Northamptonshire; however, as the purpose was to test Cox's list of elements as indicators of date, rather than to establish settlement patterns, it was felt that the new county should be the basis of the study

I should like to thank the staff of the Leicestershire Museum and Art Gallery for the use of the Sites and Monuments Records, and for their general assistance. The study was made in September 1977, and the accompanying maps of the archæology of the county may now be slightly out of date

2. M. Gelling, 'Place-names derived from the compound *wic-hām*', *Medieval Archæol.*, XI, 1967; 'Latin loan-words in Old English place-names', *Anglo-Saxon England*, VI, 1977
3. Root meaning of *feld*: open tract of country *Elements I, Engl. Place-Name Soc.*, (1956), XXV, pp. 166 *sqq.* N. Scarfe, *The Suffolk Landscape* (1972), pp. 184 *sqq.* M. Gelling, *The Place-Names of Berkshire III, Eng. Place-Name Soc.*, LI, 1975, p. 808: *feld* may have been used to denote unsettled land used for a time as common pasture
4. K. Cameron, *Scandinavian Settlement in the Territory of the Five Boroughs: the Place-Name Evidence* (Inaugural Lecture, University of Nottingham, 1965), p. 20
5. *Domesday Book*, f. 293b; *Index to the Charters and Rolls in the British Museum* (1900), 1912
6. Cf. J. McN. Dodgson, 'The Significance of the Distribution of the English Place-Name in *-ingas, -inga-*, in S.E. England,' *Medieval Archæol.*, X, 1966, pp. 1-29; M. Gelling, 'Place-names derived from the compound *wic-hām*,' *ibid.*, XI, 1967; 'Latin loan-words in Old English place-names', *Anglo-Saxon England*, (1977), VI; B. H. Cox, 'The Significance of the Distribution of English place-names in *hām* in the Midlands and East Anglia', *Engl. Place-Name Soc.*, V, 1972-1973; R. M. Huggins, 'The Significance of the place-name *weald-hām*', *Medieval Archæol.*, XIX, 1975

Hemington Hall, Leicestershire by T. H. Rickman

Hemington is a small village of about 120 houses lying under the steep slope that leads up from the plain of the River Trent to Castle Donington, some seven miles N.W. of Loughborough. The village lies on either side of a single street running northwards and is bordered on one side by a small stream. There are a few old timber-framed buildings but the most curious feature of Hemington is the ruined church at the southern end of the village.

This church was presumably founded in the thirteenth century since there was a Leicester Abbey record of that date granting Thomas Menil of Hemington and Alice, his wife, as long as they live, licence to hear divine services in his oratory, built in his court within the village of Hemington by his chaplain, without beat of bell saving in all things the rights of the mother church of Lockington.¹ Pevsner describes the 'slim west tower as late thirteenth century with single cusped bell opening—it has a broach spire and the chancel windows are reticulated'.²

The church has long been in a ruinous condition. In 1590, a Mr. Wyrley recorded that 'Here is a fair church but the glass all ruined and the church not in use to that end it was builded'.³ Perhaps the church was no longer a consecrated place. In 1780 a member of the Harpur family, landowners for the past two centuries, died unmarried in London and requested in his will that his body 'be buried in Hemington in a decent and private manner'. His body was indeed brought to the church at night by his house-keeper and two others, but they were persuaded eventually that his intention was illegal and

he was interred finally at Lockington church. From directions he left it is supposed he was a Catholic and sought burial where no reformed service had ever been held. This suggests that the services in the church were finally abandoned at the Reformation.⁴ An engraving of 1792 shows a brick chimney abutting the chancel's east window, it clearly was in use as a very humble cottage.⁵

This old engraving of the church confirms that it had a three-bayed double aisled nave but this has now gone. Pilasters each side of the chancel arch suggest the nave pillars and capitals were octagonal, each face of the octagonal pilaster is $5\frac{3}{4}$ inches wide the total width being just over 14 inches. The moulding of the 11 inch high capital is shown on Fig. 10. The pilaster bases were buried so their style could not be determined. The chancel is now a roofless shell with shrubs growing where the altar stood. These also hide a Gothic arched piscina in the south wall, this has a roll and frontal fillet moulding flanked with hollow chamfers; the piscina interior is cusped.⁶ Two buttresses support each chancel wall, the latter has a quarter roll string course with a straight chamfered underside. Two double light windows each side and a large east window originally lit the chancel, now little of the tracery remains.

Hemington Hall standing some 40 yards north-west of the church has been modified and re-arranged many times. The first was probably built by the Thomas Menil who was granted a licence to hear services in the church, but exactly where this stood is uncertain. Perhaps the only remains of this original manor are two late thirteenth century doorways, one of these some 12 yards east of the present Hall, is 8 foot 6 inches high and set in a wall varying from 4 feet to 6 feet in thickness (Fig. 10). This wall supports a stone corbel

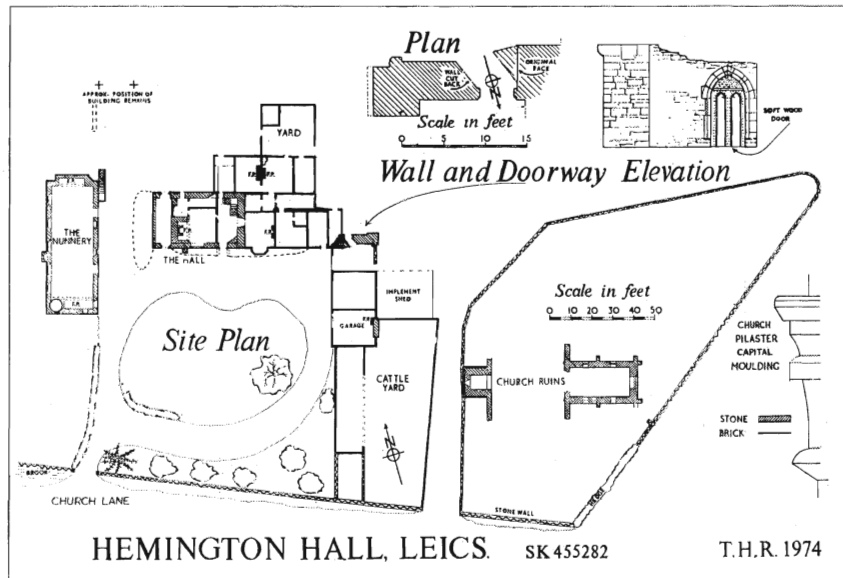


Fig 10.

12 feet above ground level and also has what may have been a chamfered jamb of a large stone window on the south face. The other doorway is preserved in the present Hall and was once the north doorway of a cross-passage. It shows no signs of insertion and was presumably part of the original building. Other probable remains include part of a stone wall about 2 feet thick 12 yards south of the possible window jamb mentioned, and another stone wall passes through the centre of the brick extension east of the Hall. Granite paving was found in 1950 below the present front lawn and a trial excavation in 1960 uncovered stone foundations about 50 feet north-west of the Hall.

There appears to be evidence that much rebuilding took place at the Hall during the sixteenth century, a time described by M. W. Barley as 'a period of new developments in domestic building and social activities'.⁷ The manor of Hemington with land and property in the village around, was acquired by Jane, widow of Richard Harpur of Swarkestone in 1576. She was probably responsible for the rebuilding and appears to have made it her residence. The status she maintained is implied in her will of 1588, when she left 'to her beloved son John all beds, bedding, napery, Quishions, carpets, brasse, pewter, Ironware, woodware, and other ymplements of howshold stuffe and husbandryware—in and about our mansion house of Hemington in the countie of Leicester'.⁸ This son Sir John Harpur also inherited the family seat at Swarkeston and it is possible his second son, John, or his family lived at Hemington since a piece of stained glass with the crest of a boar passant, associated with his wife, has been preserved by inclusion in a ground floor window of the Hall.

The Hall, facing south and running east to west, has a sixteenth century doorway Fig. 11. This was a main entrance, access to the hall on the right was via the cross-passage and through a doorway on the north side of the hall fireplace, a window now blocks this entry. Perhaps a stairway existed left of this giving access to the chambers above. Over the main entrance is a small two light stone window with a flat splayed mullion, inside this window are traces of a Tudor wall painting. The front and back walls of the building are about 2 feet 6 inches thick built with local ashlar sandstone. The east wall is 3 feet 6 inches thick up to the first floor and where it joins the front the angle inside is blocked. The front too shows signs of rebuilding here. A stone rubble wall west of the cross-passage fills the gap left when the service area was destroyed. The front wall is supported in the centre by a 15 feet buttress with a bevelled plinth 2 feet 6 inches square, it is similar to those supporting the church walls. To the right of the buttress and also right of the present front door are the remains of two earlier ground floor windows (Fig. 11).

The hall, including the fireplace, had a maximum length of 30 feet with a width of 21 feet. Both hall and passage were ceiled; three 12 inch floor beams spanning them transversely with joists 5 inches wide spaced about 1 foot apart. Two rail and stud partitions formed three chambers above, one 7 feet 6 inches from the east wall had a door near the front wall that has been blocked in recent times, it gave entry to a chamber over the hall. The other rail and stud partition stretches from the chimney stack to the rear wall, the lower

studs are now cut away but some remain in the loft. Joists above the central first floor chamber appear to be original, reeds and gypsum plaster form the loft floor.

The paired rafter roof trusses of oak rest on double 8 inch \times 6 inch wall plates, their spacing and pitch of just over 45° suggest that it was designed for weight; samples of Charnwood slate were found in the loft although red tiles now form the covering. A squint butted scarf with what seems a pegged

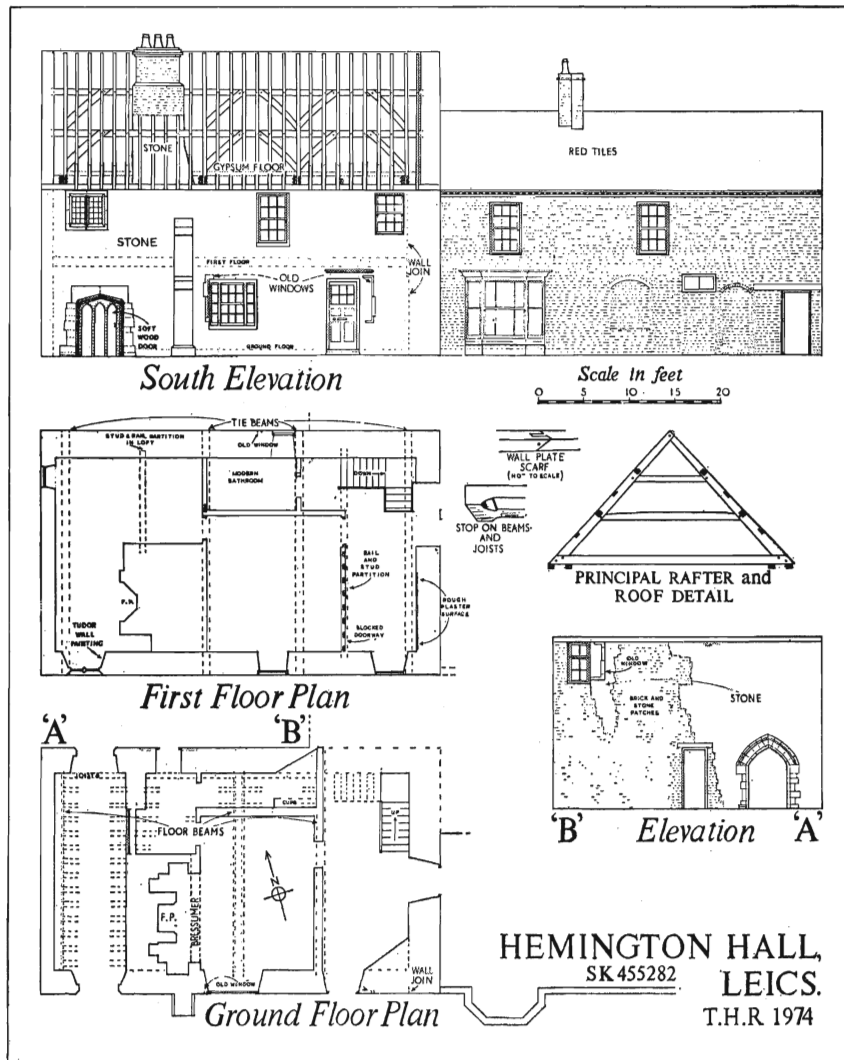


Fig 11.

secret bridle join the wall plate sections.⁹ Ashlar pieces halved to the inner wall plates support the common rafters. The tapering principal rafters are 12 inches wide at the base and 9 inches at the ridge, their halved bases slot into the bridled ends of the 9 inch × 12 inch tie-beams. Two collars complete the trusses; the lower one cambers from 9 inches in the centre, the upper ones are 8 inches × 3½ inches; both are tenoned into the rafters and pegged. Squint butted scarfs join the chamfered purlins as they pass through the principal rafters, there secured by a peg. Two tiers of windbraces are halved on to the purlins and tenoned into the principal rafters.

Standing 26 feet beyond the west wall of the Hall but running at right angles to it, is another building known to the villagers today as the 'Nunnery' although no record is known that it was ever used as such. In fact, the relation between it and the Hall is open to conjecture and the purpose it originally served not even clear. Mr J. T. Smith suggests that it was probably a separate domestic unit similar to those described by him in *The Archaeological Journal* in 1970,¹⁰ possibly serving as a home for a kinsman of the Harpur family resident at the Hall. It was probably built by Sir John Harpur, grandson of the Jane Harpur who rebuilt and modified the Hall, who was High Sheriff of Derbyshire in 1636. Estate plans of 1740 and 1846 show the 'Nunnery' joined to the Hall forming an integrated L-shaped building but the small scale of the plans leave doubt as to the exact form of the structure.

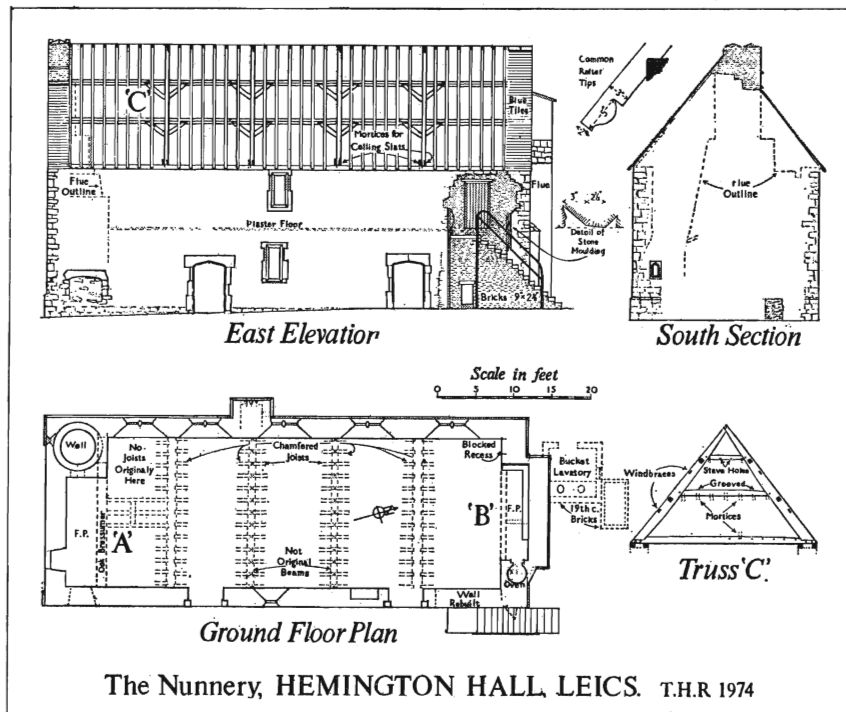


Fig 12.

The remaining building is 63 feet \times 24 feet 6 inches and is built of local sandstone except for two gritstone doorways on the east side; these are spaced 22 feet apart and between them are two small windows, one above the other, the only light for each floor on this flank originally it seems. The ashlar walls are from 2 feet 6 inches to 3 feet 6 inches thick and stand about 19 feet high, only the east side is without a bevelled plinth. There are two fireplaces on the ground floor, the largest to the south adjoining the east wall is 14 feet wide and over 5 feet deep. A fuel door in the east wall is now blocked. To the right of the fireplace was a shallow well, now filled in. An oak bressummer 15 inches thick with a total depth of 2 feet spans the front of the fireplace and well. Stone blocks form a jamb 2 feet wide between them. Both well and fireplace fronts are chamfered and shaped Tudor style. A small internally splayed stone window in the south wall lights the well. The 12 feet 6 inches wide north end fireplace is central with an external flue. A small bread oven on the right side appears to be a later addition. The stone shallow arched front is finished with a chamfer and bell-shaped stop. The ground floor is sealed forming a large chamber above: two of the original transverse floor beams survive, joists and beams are chamfered with a straight cut stop. Gypsum plaster forms the first floor which had a garderobe in the centre of the west wall and a small Tudor fireplace at the north end, chamfered with a bell-shaped stop (Figs. 12 and 13).

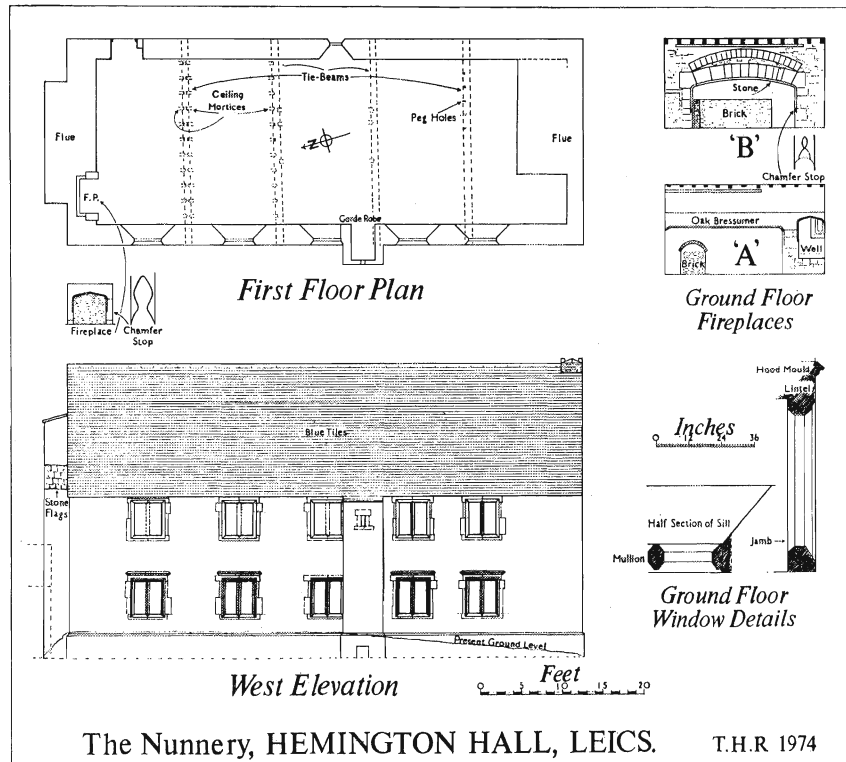


Fig 13.

The west wall has five double light windows on each floor. They are 5 feet high and 4 feet 3 inches wide on the outside with wide splays on the inside. Their stone mullions are flat splayed and the lower windows have ogee hood moulds except the one adjoining the garderobe.

The paired rafter roof now covered with tiles, has a pitch of 53° . The four principal trusses spaced about 10 feet 6 inches apart rest on double wall plates each side, they are oak and similar but more substantial than those in the Hall. The tapered principal rafters have 15 inch \times 6 inch bases; here the halved base is secured in the shouldered bridle of the tie-beam. Two tenoned collars tie each truss; the lower one is slightly cambered, two purlins and two tiers of windbraces each side tie the trusses, squint butted scarfs joining the purlins are pegged as they pass through the principal rafters, the gable ends are stone. Several of the common rafters with ogee ends have survived. Mortices in the collars of the south end truss suggest this was closed.

Mr. J. T. Smith suggests that the south end fireplace may have served a kitchen and the other provided heat for a hall, with a stairway on the east flank using the windows there and a passage dividing it from a small chamber at the garderobe base, providing access between kitchen and hall.

Brick was used to repair part of the east wall of the 'Nunnery' immediately facing the west end of the Hall. Adjoining this brickwork are the remains of a vertical stone flat splayed moulding, 7 feet above ground level and in line with the north wall of the Hall. It may be all that remains of a stairway or some former connection between the two buildings. Alterations during 1976 uncovered stone foundations 4 feet 6 inches wide extending 45° from the N.E. corner of the "Nunnery".

The Hall and church has remained in possession of the Harpur family and is at present administered by Mr. C. A. R. Harpur-Crewe of Calke Abbey, Derbys. It seems likely however, that it has been occupied by tenants at least since the early eighteenth century and most of the alterations that have taken place since are probably attributable to them. On the 1740 estate plan, the Hall appears to be a farmhouse occupied by a Mr. Bently, the present front lawn is shown as a fold yard.

In 1784 and 1789, the village and portions of the estate were enclosed by Act of Parliament. The Hall was probably remodelled at this time with a brick extension to the east which appears to have provided storage for meat and dairy products plus a workshop, with extra bedrooms above them. In 1808 Sir Henry Harpur of Calke Abbey whose grandmother was a daughter of Thomas lord Crewe of Stene, obtained a licence to use the name of Crewe.

About 1860, the Fritchley family appeared to have become tenants of the Hall and continued so until 1900. They are recorded as farmers of Hemington in Slater's Directory for 1862. Cut in the top left side of the sixteenth century doorway is the date 1864 and the initials E.F. and A.F. Also on a panel of the rail and stud partition of the hall loft is the name James E. Fritchley 1885. During this period the Hall was modernised extensively. The old front entrance was abandoned for a new one and a staircase installed to face it. The hall was partitioned to form perhaps a parlour, and a bay window added to the new room east of the entrance hall. An extension north of the eighteenth century

addition provided a kitchen with gun room adjoining it and two heated bedrooms above. Cellars are said to have existed this side of the Hall but nothing now can be seen of them. A new west wall was built to tidy the now obsolete cross-passage and service rooms west of it. The hall entry from there was blocked with a window and the old stairway adjoining it demolished. After 1900, Mr. W. F. Bromley held the tenancy. He was followed by his grandson, Mr. Porter, about 1950. The present tenant is Mr. Sam Hardy.

This record of Hemington Hall and the remains nearby leaves many questions unanswered. In Pevsner's words, 'it deserves closer archaeological examination'.

Acknowledgments

I am indebted to Mr. Sam Hardy for his help, and Mrs. Mrs. Bompas-Smith in making available to me material collected by her late husband, Mr. John Bompas-Smith; and also Mr. J. T. Smith and Mr. H. Collins for their help and advice with the text.

Notes

1. J. Nichols, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester* (1795-1818), Vol. I, Pt. II, p. 880
2. N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England, Leicestershire* (1960), p. 119
3. Nichols, *op. cit.*
4. Rev. C. Kerry, *Derbyshire Archaeol. J.*, XII (1890), pp. 140-161
5. Nichols
6. H. Forrester, *Mediaeval Gothic Mouldings* (1972), p. 12
7. Barley, *The English Farmhouse and Cottage* (1961), p. 57
8. Kerry, *op. cit.*
9. C. A. Hewett, *The Development of Carpentry 1200-1700* (1969), p. 185
10. Smith, *Archaeol. J.*, CXXVII (1970), pp. 156-69

The Picturesque in Leicestershire by J. D. Bennett

The cult of the Picturesque—originally the wish that a landscape or building should look as if it came out of a picture in the style of artists like Claude or Poussin—might be said to have had its beginnings in the castles of Sir John Vanbrugh and the landscapes of William Kent, who in the words of Horace Walpole, 'leap'd the fence and found that all Nature was a garden'. Though it was carried a stage further by the work of the landscape gardener 'Capability' Brown, it was not till the 1790's that the movement was really established by the writings of its theorists and exponents—Richard Payne Knight, Sir Uvedale Price, the landscape gardener Humphry Repton, and the Rev. William Gilpin—who tried, not always unanimously, to define its aims and ideals, particularly the relationship of architecture and landscape. Buildings and the landscape they were in had to be made to conform to a strict set of principles, in order to achieve the desired effect. The resulting fashion for asymmetrical houses, chiefly in the Gothic, but also sometimes the Italianate, or occasionally the Oriental, styles, *cottages ornées*, wild landscapes, and fake ruins to lend an air of antiquity, had reached its peak by the Regency Period.

It produced such compositions as Brighton Pavilion, Windsor Castle, Blaise Hamlet near Bristol, and Bayons Manor in Lincolnshire (now destroyed), and was not an entirely spent force even by the 1840's.

What effect did this have on Leicestershire? At first glance not very much, but in fact a closer examination reveals more evidence of local interest in the Picturesque than one might suppose.

Among country houses, the best example is undoubtedly Belvoir Castle. Rebuilding of the present castle for the 5th duke of Rutland (whose statue is once again in Leicester Market Place) started in 1801, under the direction of James Wyatt, in a mixed Norman and Gothic style. John Britton, the antiquary, came here when compiling the Leicestershire volume of *The Beauties of England and Wales* (1807) and wrote: 'When a large building is enveloped with scaffolding, mortar, loose stones, etc. and masons and carpenters are daily making alterations, it would be absurd to describe it in the real state, as presented to the eye; and equally, or more absurd, to specify what it is intended to be . . . The building surrounds a quadrangular court; and by the alterations now making, from the elegant designs of James Wyatt, Esq. it will assume a majestic, castellated appearance. The situation and aspect partly resemble Windsor'.¹

The south-east and south-west fronts had been completed when Wyatt died in 1813, and the work was continued by the Rev. Sir John Thoroton, the duke's domestic chaplain and Rector of Bottesford, who was an enthusiastic amateur architect.² Progress was interrupted by the disastrous fire of 26 October 1816, which destroyed a good deal of Wyatt's work. Restoration and completion of the castle was in the hands of Thoroton, and after his death in 1820, the 5th duchess, also an architectural enthusiast. Wyatt's sons, Benjamin Dean Wyatt and Matthew Cotes Wyatt, were also employed on some of the interior work. Before her death in 1825 the duchess was also responsible for laying out the gardens, which include a dairy and a rustic temple, complete with thatched roof and tree-trunk supports, both very much in keeping with the spirit of the Picturesque, and a grotto. Work was completed about 1830.

In 1846 William White described Belvoir Castle in the first edition of his *Directory of Leicestershire* as 'by far the most superb architectural ornament of which Leicestershire can boast'. The Picturesque strove for variety and effect, and at Belvoir the effect is very spectacular, particularly when seen from a distance.

Donington Hall, over on the north-west side of the county, was built for the 1st marquis of Hastings in 1793-1795 by William Wilkins, the elder, in the Gothic style, its façade rendered asymmetrical by the addition of the chapel. Comparison of a modern photograph with a print published in 1809 shows the exterior is unchanged, though it appears more closely surrounded by trees then, possibly planted as part of the landscape gardening improvements of the late eighteenth century. 'The Park, containing 300 acres, is highly picturesque and beautiful: at the western extremity the precipice called Donington Cliff, which overhangs the river, is universally and very justly admired for its bold and romantic scenery', wrote the Rev. J. Curtis in 1831.³ The paper and plaster-grinding mills at King's Mills were also rebuilt in the Gothic style at this time,

and there are several cottages in Castle Donington which reflect the lord of the manor's architectural tastes.

George Dance, the younger's, designs for Coleorton Hall, completed in 1808, have been considerably modified since by the addition of a picture gallery in 1848 and a second floor in 1862. Originally a fairly small house, meant to blend with rather than dominate the landscape, in a classicised Gothic style, it was built for Sir George Howland Beaumont, collector, landscape artist, patron of the arts, and one of the founders of the National Gallery. His friends included the Wordsworths, Coleridge, John Constable, Joseph Farington, David Wilkie and two of the leading, though opposing, exponents of the Picturesque, Richard Payne Knight and Sir Uvedale Price; the latter visited Coleorton in 1804 to advise on the layout of the garden before construction of the house started.⁴ In 1806 William Wordsworth, staying at the Home Farm, planned the creation of a winter garden in a small disused quarry, incorporating two ivy-covered, decaying cottages already in situ.⁵

Several other houses, three of them now destroyed, deserve a mention. Little Belvoir, half a mile north of Wartnaby on Broughton Hill, was originally called Wartnaby House, or sometimes Wartnaby Castle; it was given its present name by the members of the Quorn Hunt. Built in 1839 for Thomas Johnson, it was subsequently enlarged around mid-century, and again altered in 1906.⁶ In spite of this, it retains its castellated, stuccoed, late Regency appearance, complete with corner turret. Wigston Hall, at Wigston Magna, is no longer in existence. Captain Charles Holland Baddeley of the East India Company built it about 1834, a three storey, stuccoed house in a mildly Gothic style; it had clearly been added to several times, and was demolished in 1962. The Stony Gate, 227 London Road, Leicester was also destroyed in the same year. Originally a seventeenth century farmhouse, it had been recased in brick c. 1780 and enlarged, a modest early example of domestic Gothic.⁷ About the time that the Stony Gate was being transformed, Stoughton Grange, the Keck family's Elizabethan house, was also being gothicized. Much of this was later submerged in the extensive rebuilding carried out in 1882-3, and the entire house was demolished in 1926. Wistow Hall was built in the early seventeenth century but its present appearance dates from after 1814, when Sir Henry Halford, physician to George III and the Prince Regent, succeeded to the estate. The house was probably already stuccoed, but among other alterations he added the octagonal towers at the front and along the south side (they are rather like the ones at Coleorton). Improvements in the park included the lake, made about 1815.⁸ Another seventeenth century house, Langton Hall at West Langton, was given its medieval appearance at the beginning of the nineteenth century, apparently in 1802.⁹

The only example of the *cottage ornée* style in Leicestershire seems to be at Stapleford Park. The thatched entrance lodges there possibly date from about 1820, when the early eighteenth century bedehouses were enlarged and thatched to give them a Picturesque look.¹⁰ There are several Gothic lodges in the county. 'Thimble Hall', at the junction of the Tilton-Queniborough and Twyford roads, was originally a small cottage attached to Lowesby Hall Farm, called Porter's Lodge (and still called this on larger scale Ordnance

Survey maps). The story is that it was given a Gothic façade in 1816 by Sir Frederick Fowke of Lowesby Hall, to celebrate the birth of an heir.¹¹ Two of the stuccoed lodges of Stoughton Grange dated from the early nineteenth century. The one on Gartree Road which is still in existence, is quite plain, with Gothic windows and blank arches. The more interesting one on Stoughton Lane was unfortunately demolished in 1958. It too had blank Gothic arches, but was much more elaborately decorated, with winged cherubs as rainwater heads and the arms of the Keck family.

The Picturesque is not usually thought of in terms of commercial or industrial buildings, but two are worthy of comment. The first was Bow Bridge Works on King Richard's Road. It was originally built for the brothers William and Samuel Kelly, elastic web manufacturers, about 1825 and taken over by Messrs. Archibald Turner in 1844 for the same purpose. It had a quite remarkable façade—castellated, stuccoed, a nice selection of Gothic windows, some ogee-headed, and quatrefoil recesses. Over the main entrance there was a clock, and a cupola on the roof. In the grounds at the front there was a delightful double-bayed, stuccoed Gothic villa, originally used by the owners, and later by the managers; this predated the factory. What was not generally realised was that everything to the left of the main entrance was not built till after 1881, as a plate in Robert Read's *Modern Leicester* makes abundantly clear.¹² The late Victorian extension was a careful continuation of the original asymmetrical façade, and seventy years later no one could tell that it had not all been built at the same time. The destruction of this building in 1967 was, to say the least, regrettable. Pevsner in the Leicestershire volume of *The Buildings of England* devoted six lines to it, while another writer described it as 'architecturally one of the most interesting industrial buildings in the East Midlands'.¹³

The Wharf House Hotel, formerly the George Inn, at Welford Bridge, two miles south of Husbands Bosworth, is fortunately still with us, a castellated, red brick building with a portico, thought to date from c. 1800. It is on the Welford arm of the Grand Union canal, opened in 1814, and included a private wharf, where the tenant also built up a trade in coal and lime.¹⁴

Notes

1. J. Britton, *The Beauties of England and Wales* (1807), vol. IX, p. 514
2. A tablet to his memory in Bottesford church states: 'Of his architectural talents, the new buildings erected at Belvoir Castle will be a lasting monument, for he participated in every plan connected with them from their commencement in the year MDCCCI, and during the latter years of his life he had the chief direction both in the design and execution of them'.
3. J. Curtis, *Topographical History of the County of Leicester* (1831), p. 39
4. *Sir George Beaumont of Coleorton, Leicestershire* (1974), p. 13
5. M. Greaves, *Regency Patron* (1966), p. 135
6. *White's Directories of Leicestershire 1846 and 1877*; Knight, Frank & Rutley, sale catalogue 1963
7. *Victoria History of the County of Leicester* (1907-64), vol. IV, p. 444 (Henceforth VCH)
8. *Ibid.*, vol. V, p. 337

9. *Ibid.*, p. 195
10. N. Pevsner, *Leicestershire and Rutland* (1960), p. 237
11. C. D. B. Ellis, *Leicestershire and the Quorn Hunt* (1951), p. 205
12. R. Read, *Modern Leicester* (1881), p. 268
13. D. M. Smith, *Industrial Archaeology of the East Midlands* (1965), p. 52
14. P. A. Stevens, *The Leicester Line* (1972), p. 130; VCH Leicestershire, vol. V, p. 29