THE HASTINGS MANUSCRIPTS
Sources for Leicestershire History in California

by

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After the death of Mr. Reginald Rawdon Hastings of Ashby-de-la-Zouch the Hastings family manuscripts were sold in 1926 to Henry Huntington, the American railway and real estate magnate. Before he died Mr. Huntington built a private library in the extensive grounds of his mansion in San Marino, a suburb of Los Angeles, to contain his large collection of rare early English printed books and his subsidiary collections of English documents. These were primarily four great accumulations, the Battle Abbey Manuscripts, the huge Stowe Collection, the Egerton Papers, and the Hastings Manuscripts, next only in size to the Stowe Collection. Through the generosity of the American Association of University Women in awarding me an international fellowship I was able to spend the academic year 1961-2 working through the Hastings Manuscripts in the Huntington Library. Since the publication of a catalogue or descriptive list of these manuscripts does not seem to be likely in the near future, a brief account of the extent of the collection may interest Leicestershire historians. As an earnest of the untapped riches of the collection, transcripts or summaries of four documents illustrating the management of Hastings estates in Leicestershire and Rutland in the sixteenth century and the restoration of the Leicester Assize Hall in the early seventeenth century have been added to this short description.

In time the Hastings Manuscripts cover a period from the twelfth to the end of the nineteenth century. As the collection is virtually unsorted, even forming an estimate of its extent is rather laborious. I intended specialising in the Elizabethan part of the collection only but found it necessary to go through practically the entire collection to make certain of not missing relevant documents. Other historians, whatever the period on which they were working, would probably find that they had to do the same. The collection could be divided into four chief sections: correspondence, deeds, estate papers including manorial documents and maps, and family papers. It is by no means confined to Leicestershire, for at different times the Hastings family had estates in Yorkshire, Sussex, Dorset, Wiltshire, Somerset, Devon, Cornwall, Middlesex, Buckinghamshire, Derbyshire, Rutland, as well as in Scotland and Ireland. Since at least from the time of William Lord Hastings, Lord Chamberlain to Edward IV, the heads of the Hastings family held offices of importance in the state, these manuscripts are of national as well as local significance. Nevertheless, by the fifteenth century the Hastings family was firmly established at Ashby-de-la-Zouch and it is to Leicestershire that the bulk of the documents relates.
It was while the Hastings Manuscripts were being transferred from Leicestershire to California that the four volumes of the Historical Manuscripts Commission's Report on the Hastings Manuscripts began to come from the press. This is a meticulous catalogue of certain sections of the collection but, because of subsequent rearrangements, it is of little use as a guide to the present whereabouts of documents. The editor of the H.M.C. Report commented perhaps on as many as half the documents in the collection: there is no list of the remainder. About half the letters written before 1688 are indexed and this includes most letters touching upon politics, but hundreds of letters concerned with estate management in this period are not mentioned. The greater part of the medieval Leicestershire deeds are indexed in Volume 1 of the Report: hardly any of the Leicestershire deeds later than 1500 are even summarised. Because of their detailed nature few of the multitudinous estate papers find a place, and naturally, where economies of space had to be made, only a small fraction of the purely personal family papers could be included. In this way the H.M.C. Report gives an incomplete indication of the variety of material on Leicestershire history in the collection as a whole. When a document has been transcribed or summarised in full in the Report it can safely be presumed that nothing of value has been omitted. From the standpoint of this survey, however, it is the documents which are not mentioned in the H.M.C. Report which are important.

A Summary Report on the Hastings Manuscripts was published by the Huntington Library in 1934 in the Huntington Library Bulletin, No. 5. Off-prints of it can be had from the Library. This is the only means of approaching the collection. The twelve chapter headings in the Summary Report—Accounts and Inventories, Correspondence, Papers relating to the conveyance of land, Manorial papers, Papers relating to Scotland, Papers relating to Ireland, Family and personal papers, Papers relating to law cases, Parliamentary Papers, Papers relating to local affairs in Leicestershire, Maps and Plans, Miscellaneous papers relating to the Band of Gentlemen Pensioners, America, Literature, Repton School and Etwell Hospital, Education, Religious and Ecclesiastical affairs, Forests, and Various—correspond to the classifications into which the manuscripts have been divided. There is much overlapping. Nevertheless, it is by its position in one of these sections in the Summary Report that a document can at present be traced: apart from the letters which are numbered no other documents in the collection have individual means of identification. For this reason the Summary Report is essential for historians intending to work on the Hastings Manuscripts, but it should be used with caution, mainly because it gives a misleading impression of completeness. Only a small minority of Leicestershire documents, for example, are contained in the section "Papers relating to local affairs in Leicestershire". In a thorough search for Leicestershire material all the sections in the Summary Report, except for Papers relating to Scotland, Papers relating to Ireland and Parliamentary Papers, would need to be explored. Once a document has been run to earth its reproduction is a relatively simple matter. The Library has a very good photographic department and permission for individual documents to be microfilmed or photostated is usually given.
An impression of the extent of source material for Leicestershire history can best be gained from a brief commentary on the relevant sections in the Summary Report.

**Accounts and Inventories.** There are thirty boxes of documents earlier than 1700: the bulk of those in this section belong to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The description is confusing, for the documents of the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries included are without exception bonds or acknowledgments of satisfaction: there are no personal or estate accounts here before 1598. The Churchwardens' Accounts mentioned on p.7 of the Summary Report are for Castle Donington, not Ashby-de-la-Zouch. After 1620 there are few estate accounts, most of the accounts being household accounts. Very many more accounts and inventories are to be found under Manorial Papers, or Family and Personal Papers.

**Correspondence.** The Hastings collection is very rich in letters, and many relate to Leicestershire. There are approximately 5,000 letters before 1700, twice as many for the period after 1700. The earlier the date the more likely the letters are to have been calendared in the H.M.C. Report, Vols. II or III, but the omissions are numerous. The letters in this section are arranged chronologically; each has a number, and the documents are the most accessible of any in the collection.

**Papers relating to the conveyance of land.** Out of about 170 boxes of deeds more than 100 boxes contain Leicestershire deeds. The majority, but by no means all, of the deeds in the 46 boxes of "ancient" deeds are mentioned in the H.M.C. Report, Vol. 1. Hardly any of the deeds in the 60 or 70 boxes of Leicestershire deeds later than 1500 appear in the H.M.C. Report.

**Manorial Papers.** This section could much more accurately be described as estate papers, since court rolls only form a small part of it. It is here, not in Accounts and Inventories, that most of the estate accounts and rentals can be found, and almost any type of document however remotely connected with estate management may have been included. There is in particular an abundance of information for Loughborough, and, among much else, the Enclosure Act of 1799 for Ashby-de-la-Zouch, a plan of the estate there sold in 1817, a list of the Leicestershire clergy taxed between 1672 and 1675, Interrogatories concerning Leicester Forest in the reign of Henry VIII or Edward VI. There are approximately 110 boxes in this section.

**Family and personal papers.** Here, besides much genealogical information there are several Inquisitions Post Mortem, copies or originals of wills of the Hastings family from the fourteenth century onwards and some very detailed marriage settlements. The 26 boxes contain far more of importance for Leicestershire history than might be expected.

**Papers relating to law cases.** Many of the 27 unsorted boxes in this section contain Leicestershire material. In particular, there was much litigation from the beginning of the seventeenth century onwards between the various Earls of Huntingdon and their Loughborough tenants over the Mills at Loughborough.

**Papers relating to local affairs in Leicestershire.** Far more Leicestershire documents are contained outside this section than in it, and it consists only of five boxes. The Leicestershire documents filed here are very miscellaneous.
and include indentures of 1623 concerning the transfer of the county records from one custos rotulorum to another, an early seventeenth-century treatise on searches to be made by Justices of the Peace, and several papers relating to the reign of James II, including questions to be put by the Lord Lieutenant to the Justices of the Peace on their support of the lifting of the penal laws and the Declaration for Liberty of Conscience and a description of the reaction of the town of Leicester to the King’s Declaration of Indulgence.

Maps and Plans. Considering the size of the Hastings collection there are few maps. The Leicestershire ones are:

c. 1600 or later. “A mappe taken of the Launde in Leicester Forrest with ye charge of making ye naile and when the wood was to be had.” (The Laund by Lubbesthorpe contained 164 acres.)

Early seventeenth century. “A map of the Mills, Islands and ponds att Castle Donnington.”

Late seventeenth century. Map of Donington and parts of Leicestershire and Derbyshire.

Late eighteenth century. Plan of Ashby-de-la-Zouch?

Eighteenth-century map of the Earl of Huntingdon’s holdings in Charnwood Forest, part of the manor of Barrow.

Several maps and plans of proposed canals in Leicestershire and some nineteenth-century colliery plans.

Miscellaneous papers. Forests. Although there is only one box in this section, it contains much on the last years of Leicester Forest from 1604. There is one Commission of 1566 for the Forest of Leighfield, transcribed below, and papers of 1804 on the enclosure of Charnwood Forest.

Very little work has so far been done, either in England or America, on the uncalendared sections of the Hastings Manuscripts. Professor R. W. Greaves has written on “The Earl of Huntingdon and the Leicester Charter of 1684” (Huntington Library Quarterly, xv, 1951-2, p.371), and he included there a series of previously unpublished letters between Theophilus, Earl of Huntingdon, and his agents. In an earlier article Professor F. M. Powicke described the friendship between the same Earl of Huntingdon and Dugdale and printed hitherto unknown letters between them in “Notes on the Hastings Manuscripts” (Huntington Library Quarterly, 1, 1937-8, p.247). This seems to be the extent of the published articles which touch on Leicestershire. As an illustration of the wealth of the material yet unexploited I conclude with four documents relating to the county in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Elizabeth’s reign was a particularly bad period financially for the Hastings family. Partly because of his family responsibilities, partly because of his service to the Queen as President of the Council in the North, the debts of the third Earl of Huntingdon rapidly increased and he was forced to sell and mortgage much land. By the time of his death in 1595 very few estates outside Leicestershire were left. In 1592 on the back of one of the letters he had received from Huntingdon, Sir Francis Hastings, who was then acting as his estate manager, listed his brother’s Leicestershire manors and the income from them for that year: this provides a useful and concise statement of the lands still remaining to the third Earl in the county.
Nothing was coming in from the manors of Bagworth and Thornton since they had been mortgaged in 1589 to Sir James Harrington of Exton: the mortgage was never redeemed. Bosworth was pledged to Sir Wolstan Dixie, and this mortgage also was converted into an alienation. A comparison of this list with the Inquisition Post Mortem taken just over three years later on Huntingdon's death is instructive; the conventional figures from the Inquisition at which the properties were officially valued are given in brackets. In the case of some manors Huntingdon was receiving ten times as much as they were nominally worth. By 1595 Lubbesthorpe was pledged to the Crown for a debt of nearly £2,500. Enderby had been sold to Denis Orme and Gopsal had already come into the possession of Sir George Hastings.

Huntingdon had not fallen into these debts without striving to increase his revenues, and a primary way of doing this was by surveying manors, raising the customary rents and levying fines. In 1587 a very detailed survey was made of the manor of Ashby-de-la-Zouch which is of great interest, not only for the total sum brought in (it considerably exceeded the £300 of 1592) but also for its description of the type of agriculture being followed. One of the surveyors was John Norden.


View of Henry Stone's farm within the manor of Thornton.
His inclosures: 6 closes of pasture containing 90 acres, very sour, worth about 5s. the acre. He has about 30 acres lying dispersed in the three common fields—he sows 20 acres yearly and 10 acres are fallow. His meadow in the common fields is uncertain and is mostly counted in with the arable. The rent is £3 a year besides service, the fine is for 3 lives or 21 years. Not worth above £140 at the most. The yearly value above the rent is hardly above 40 marks. He is agreed for £120 if Huntingdon approves.
Notes touching the estate of Bagworth and Thornton.

Because of two bad seasons the tenants are very poor and most of them unable to deal with the renewing of their estates, yet as many as time permitted them to deal with seemed willing to extend their best abilities. Their customs book has been accidentally defaced and without this their estates are void. For this reason and that some hard clauses in it might be changed they are willing to raise £100 and to have the legal points committed to Huntingdon's and their counsel. The chief point to which they object is that they may not grub up or fell unnecessary briars, bushes and thorns growing in their pastures and enclosures, in consequence the better part of their pasture is unprofitable to themselves and of less value when it comes into the hand of the Lord.

Estates as now stand in Bagworth and Thornton [abridged].

27 tenants have estates for 3 lives.
25 tenants have estates for 2 lives.
10 tenants have estates for 1 life (or less).

62 tenants. Total of rent [per annum] [£36 18s. 7d.]

Ashby-de-la-Zouch. Estates there by indenture.

2 estates of 183 years.
4 estates of 12 years.
6 estates of 6 years.

12 estates. Total rent [per annum] [£7 9s. 10d.]

Ashby-de-la-Zouch. Copyholders there.

1 copyhold for 13 years to come.
2 copyholds of 12 years to come.
9 copyholds of 6 years to come.
1 copyhold of 3 years to come.
1 copyhold of 2 lives.

14 copyholds. Total rent [per annum] [£13 11s. 8¼d.]

Particular observations concerning the same manor of Ashby.

The men are very poor and the most part of them very unable to deal for the renewing of their estates. The estates are some by indenture, some by copy for years (very rare) and some at will. A perfect view of every man's tenure could not be taken because all the tenants did not appear. Many of their tenements wax ruinous and their land barren for want of good husbandry. They have usurped a liberty that every tenant at his pleasure may sell and carry out of the manor the soil which ought to be dispensed upon their own tenements. A great inconvenience grows by letting tenements and cottages to freeholders who then incorporate them into their freehold to the loss of the Lord. The tenements stand on yardlands of 21 acres, worth £26 13s. 4d. The tenants will only give £10 to the Lord with 6 years in reversion. The restraint
of the Nether field, where sundry tenants have land, prevents their absolute proceeding, and also the restraint of other things were to be observed, and so sales hindered.

Memorandum.
If Huntingdon gave the Commissioners power to deal without restraint, in Bagworth, Thornton and Ashby near £1,000 could be raised in a very short time.

Ashby and Browerbie. A brief abstract of the land of Lincll Abbey.
14 estates for various terms of years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estate</th>
<th>Terms of Years</th>
<th>Total Rent [p.a.]</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>£9 14s. 7d.</td>
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3 rents touching the abbey.

In Ashby. A fine granted by Hall, the bailiff, for a message and two cottages. £60.

In Bagworth and Thornton. Estates granted and allowed, but not absolutely in respect of the restraints.
9 fines granted. Total of fines £211 13s. 4d.

[Total of annual rents apparently £68 8s. 0½d.]
Total of fines, for 1587 only £281 13s. 4d.

The survey is incomplete, so that the final year's income is likely to have been higher than this. The annual rents would have remained constant but there could be much fluctuation in the fines taken year by year. Already three-quarters of the land belonging to Henry Stone's farm was enclosed. Huntingdon was thinking of selling Stone's farm about this time and expected to get around £500 for it. He underlined the difference in market value between enclosed land and land lying dispersed in the open fields when he wrote that £100 rent sold in general farms could make £10,000. This enclosure seems to have taken place on the tenant's initiative: there is no evidence that Huntingdon himself was an enclosing landlord.

In 1581 Huntingdon had sold the manor of Leighfield and its appurtenances in Rutland, just over the eastern border of Leicestershire, to Sir James Harrington for £7,000. A survey of the manor had been made some years before the sale. The description given there in such minute detail both of the agricultural holdings within the Forest and of the Forest lodge discloses a vivid picture of life within the Forest in what proved to be its final years.

"The countie of Rutland" A Breff declaracone of ye State & plight of Lee Lodge sometyme beinge the Mannor howse of the Lordshippe of Lee Scytuate within said Countie and also within ye Forest of LecFelde with all such Revenewes, Commodities & proffyttes as at this presente doth apparteyne & belong unto the same Mannor beinge the propro Inherytaunce of ye Right honorable Henry Erle of Huntingdon ... [missing] by Frauncis Samwell gent. Authorised for yt purpose ye First daie of decembre in the yere of the Reigne of our soveraigne ladie Elizabeth by the grace of god of England
Fraunce and Ireland Quene defender of the Faith etc. ye Tenthe in manner & fourme as hereafter enswethe.


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<th>Name</th>
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<td>Lodgeclose</td>
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<td>within ye which ther is one</td>
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<td>Mansione howse called Lee</td>
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<td>Lodge the herbage of which</td>
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<td>said Close one parcell of</td>
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<td>most part therof Fencede</td>
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<td>with a Rayle &amp; ye reste with</td>
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<td>a hedge which grounde conteynethe by estymacone</td>
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<td>worth by the yere............</td>
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<td>Lambyngecrofte conteyninge by</td>
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<td>Thomas Overand Bowbearer of ye</td>
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<td>said Foreste as it hath</td>
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<td>bene accustomed to be in ye occupacone</td>
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<td>of ye Bowberars ther from tyme to tyme</td>
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<td>Moreover ther ar diverse &amp;</td>
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<td>sundrie parcells of grounde</td>
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<td>belonginge unto ye said</td>
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<td>Mannor commonlie namede Lee</td>
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<td>Leez conteyninge in theirselves foure hundredth acres by estymacone or therabowtes, In which viii</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The value of ye said Mannor</td>
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<td>aboutes,</td>
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nothinge, for yt is Reserved yerlie for ye dere within ye same Foreste.

nothinge, for ye cause beforealledgede.
groundes ye Inhabi-
tauntes of ye Towne-
shipps beinge Com-
moners within ye 
said Foreste hath 
Commone of pasture 
for their great Cattell. 
Nevertheless John 
Dyve gent. hath a 
Flock of Shepe go-
inge upon ye same 
Leez and doth paie 
yerlie for the same 

\[ \text{li s d} \]

In lyke manner the 
said John Dyve doth 
paie yerlie for the 
herbage & pannage of 
Riddlington Park the 
somme.............

Payde unto the 
Quenes highnes as 
unto her graces 
Courte of the Ex-
chequer certen rentes 
called Broyles (xl\[\text{i}\])

And also Sart sylver 
(xviiis) by yere.....

The Re-
prisez of 
ye Said 
Mannor

Also paid unto the 
Lorde of Mawnton 
with viid as is the 
pryce of one pownde 
of Comyne by yere 

\[ \text{li s d} \]

\[ \text{xl viii} \]

\[ \text{li s} \]

And yet Remayneth viii viii

M[emorandum] ye Lee Lodge aforenamede conteynethe in Romes as 
foloweth, First in ye midle Storie one Chawmbre called ye great chambre 
with a Chymney of stone: A Inner Chaumbre adiroyninge therunto with a 
howse of Office. One other lytle Rome adiroyninge unto ye said great 
chaumbre which may be usede for a dyninge Chaumbre and therin to 
take prospect into ye Rayle and ye lodge Closse to see & viewe the deare 
within ye same. One other romth adiroyninge to the said great Chaumbre 
sometyme usede for a Chappell. One other Chaumbre havinge a Chymney
of Stone within the same. One other Chaumbre at ye backsyde of the said
great Chaumbre and behynde the Steyar. The great Chaumbre hath a
Floore of plaister wheyn upon for great nede lodgines may be made for
servauntes.

In ye nether Storie ther is a Parlor with an Inner Chaumbre ther is a
Chymney of Stone with another little Chaumbre and a howse of Office.
Nere unto ye said Parlor on ye one syde ther is a litle Romthe to ley wyne
in on the other syde ye parlor ther is a buttrie with another little Inner
Rome to ley in Beare or Ale. Next unto ye said parlor ther is a Hall
havinge a Chymney of Stone through which youe must passe or you can
erenter into ye said parlor. In ye end of which hall ther is a Romthe to
make a Chaumbre of.

The said Lodge is coverede with Slates and nedefull to be repayred in
sundrie places.

Adioyninge unto the said lodge ther is a little house mete to make
a Lardar house with a Chaumbre over ye same and adioyninge unto ye said
lardar house ther is a Kytchyn with a Chymney of Stone and next
adioyninge unto ye said Ketchyn ther is a Rome or little houwse usefed for
a Stable which said three houses are Coverede with Strawe beinge varie
Ruynous and in decay.

Wooddes as Asshes Maples Okes and Thornes growinge within the
lodge close lambe lambing crofte and in sundrie places upon the lees is worth
to be sould one hundreth markes in myne opynyon.”

From this survey, Leigh Lodge with its view from the dining chamber
of the deer feeding in the park stands clearly again in the imagination.
Another mental picture, this time of the interior of a building within the
town of Leicester, can be reconstructed from the account of the repairs
carried out in the Assize hall of Leicester Castle in 1609 and 1610.
It could
act as a verbal preface to the “Illustrated Record of Change in the City”
which appeared in the recent issue of the Transactions.12
The young fifth
Earl of Huntingdon closely supervised the work to be done at the Castle:
his great-uncle, Walter Hastings, had helped draw up the report of the
repairs which were necessary.13

“By authoritie of his Majestie’s Commission under the scale of his
hignes duchie of Lancaster weye convened & assembled our selves at his
heighnes Castle of Leicester the xviii th daye of March 1608 to viewe and
examine the ruyns and decayes of the greate hall their wherein the Assises
and all other Assemblies for his Majestie’s service within that county are
houlden. And for our better direction sent for such experte and skillfull
artificers as weare requisite in such a busines, and by their advise respecti­
vely did and doe finde the ruines and decayes of the said Hall to be suche
as will not be repayred and amended for lesse and other somes of money
then be hereafter particularly expressed.

That is to saye firste it is necessary by the Judgment of the said Arti-
fficers to have thirtie tymber trees to be taken out of his Majestie’s wood
in Beamount Leayes parte & parcel of his Majestie’s said duchie.
Yt is needefall also to have provided twelve lodes of slates every loade worth viii in toto ........... 
Also for slating worke their of lyme 24 loades every loade worth in these partes vii in toto .........
Item. Sand to mingle with the said lyme 40 loades every loade worth xii in toto ..............
Item. Lathes for the same 4,000 every thousand vii in toto ........................................
Item. For the said Lathes of three penny nayles 24,000, every thousand worth 2s. 6d. In toto ..
The workmanshipp and slate pinnes for tilling of Eleaven rodes of the said Hall which must be now Covered after viii for every rode. In toto ........
Item. For pointing xi rodes after iii the rode ....
Item. The Carpenters worke about the said hall to make the same serviceable for his heighnes service their donne ......................
Item. Eight penny nayles for the Carpenters 20,000, every thousand worth vi in toto .........
Item. Lyme for the masons worke 30 loades every loade worth 6s viiid in toto .................
Item. Sand to mingle with the lyme for the said worke 60 loades every loade worth xii in toto ....
Item. The Masons worke by the workmens Judgment ..............................................

Wa. Hastinges
J. Chippingdale
[Total £113 10s. 0d.]

Further accounts show that £200 4s. 10d. was raised from the various Leicestershire hundreds, but expenditure proved to be more than this—£223 9s. 11d.: the timber alone cost £100. Once the money was in hand the Earl of Huntingdon, apparently well familiar with the inconveniences of the Hall, gave precise instructions for its re-edifying.

"My derections for the repaire of the Castell Hall at Leicester. January 27, 1609. Theise thinges underwrytten are to be remembred & to be scene perfected now upon the repaire of the Hall at Leicester.
X Imprimis, that the walls thereof on boath sides and each ende be either builded anewe or repayred & pointed as their shalbe cause.
X Item that the Roofe thereof be newe laid and Lathed yf it neede with as many newe Sparres to be putt in as shalbe wanting.
Item that the Windowes thereof be made biger and sett heigher that the People may not Clymbe upon them, and the same to have either Barres of Iron or Wood which shalbe thought the beste and the lowermost windowes to be lattessed and have wooden windowes to shut.
X Item that their bee either two new dores or else those that are be made sufficient with two Locks upon them, that noe cattell may get in.
Item that the walls be whitned within the Innerside.
Item that the flower throughout be paved with freestone or Brick fit for suche a purpose.
Item that the Benches bee fayer seeld at boath endes and yt there be two fayer Tables that eache of them with the Kings Armes Crest & Supporters may be placed in the midst of the said Benches, & yt the Benche where the Judges sitt upon life and death may be made longer or compassing all of one heighte that the Justices may have more roome.
Item that the hall be Benched rounde aboute the wall for the Country to sitt downe and reste themselves.
Item that the Grann Jurymen may have a place made going up some Tenne Stayers as neere as may be to the heigher Bench that the Jurie may heere the Judges Charge. This place to be made on the further side like unto the Scaffolds in the Churches in London.
Item that the Tables at either Bench where the Clarke of the Assize or Judges Clarkes wryte be covered with the greene cloth being fastened with an Incle lace and Studdes, such as they use for Chaires or Stooles."

That the townsman's cattle might push through the castle doors, adding chaos to the press of people sitting even on the window-sills, is an unexpected sidelight upon the administration of justice at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Innovations carried out 350 years ago in the Hall of Leicester Castle where the Assizes are still held today, Henry Stone's farm already in 1587 carved out of the common fields of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, the spacious lodge standing in the deer park in the now vanished forest of Leighfield just over the county boundary, these are but a very few glimpses of the abundance of Leicestershire history waiting to be discovered from among the Hastings Manuscripts in Southern California.

NOTES

1. Huntington Library, H.A.4626. On reverse of letter from Huntingdon to Hastings, 26 June, 1592. I hope to deal with the activities of Sir Francis Hastings as manager of his brother's estates in another place.
3. P.R.O. C 66/1327. 2 April 1589. Grant by Huntingdon, Sir George and Francis Hastings to Sir Wolstan Dixie and Agnes his wife of the manor of Market Bosworth. In 1593 (?) Sir Francis Hastings was still hoping that Bosworth might be bought back for the family, but Sir George Hastings, another brother and Huntington's ultimate successor, reminded him that he had released Dixie of the time of redemption. The manor was never recovered. H.A. 5275, 31 July, no year. Sir George to Sir Francis Hastings.
5. Accounts of the debts left on Huntingdon's death contained in the sequestration to the use of the Crown of the manors of Lee and Somerford Maudits, Wilts. P.R.O. E 368/486.
6. P.R.O. C 66/1411. 18 Feb. 1594. Grant of manor of Enderby by Huntingdon to Denis Orme.
7. It is difficult to know what interest Huntingdon had in the manor of Gopsal in 1592, for it had been bought by Sir George Hastings from George Langham in 1563. P.R.O. C 54/630. Sir George Hastings, then Earl of Huntingdon, held Gopsal in 1604 when he died. Inquisition Post Mortem. P.R.O. C 142/300/188.

8. H.A. Manorial Papers, Leicestershire, Ashby-de-la-Zouch. The original survey is nine pages long and I include only a summary, though the notes on the manors are given in full. The spelling is modernised; my additions are in square brackets. There seems every reason to presume that John Norden was John Norden the topographer. In the Surveyors Dialogue (1618) Norden shows he has been acquainted with the Hastings estates by casually referring to Huntingdon's manors in Somerset and Hampshire. Norden was also auditing a three years' survey of income from Stoke Poges in 1587. (H.A. Repair Box.) The Dictionary of National Biography states that the earliest public mention of Norden is in 1593 when he is authorised by the Privy Council to travel through England and Wales to make maps and surveys.

9. H.A. 5402. Huntingdon to Francis Hastings. 16 Aug. No year (1587?).


13. H.A. Accounts and Inventories. Box 7. The abbreviations in the documents have been extended. All the three accounts mentioned are in this box.