

Dave Postles, *A Town in its Parish: Loughborough, Origins to c.1640*

*Errata et corrigenda*

- p. 8, line 5 influence
- p. 10, line 15 To the east,
- p. 14, line 15 particularly
- p. 39, line 4 Loughborough
- p. 69, line 4 collected
- p. 83, line 28 requested
- p. 95, line 15 45 years
- p. 118, line 16 from Magnus Barfote
- p. 159, n. 41 *County*
- p. 178, line line 25 25 years
- p. 183, n. 6 *Molendinariii*
- p. 192, line 27 can thus be
- p. 206, line 28 £5,500

*Addendum*

The westward expansion of medieval Loughborough

[This is an addendum without, as yet, footnote references to Dyer, Conzen, Beresford, Sawyer, *et al.*]

The topographical development of Loughborough reflects both organic and planned aspects, a hybridism not unusual in small unincorporated towns. The original *locus* was focused, as might be expected, near where All Saints church is located. The focal point, however, was not just the church, but also the fortified manor which is contained within the place-name Loughborough (*Luhhede's burg*). This site is the confluence of two rises above the flood plain of the Soar, Toot Hill and Sparrow Hill, the lookout and the little hill. The medieval origins of Toothill and Sparrow Hill are confirmed by the mention of *Tothul* and *Sparuhul* in a fragmentary survey or rental of the manor in the 1370s (Huntington Library, San Marino, Hastings Manuscripts Box 20, folder 4). This higher position had importance because of the low-lying marshy environment of the place, not only the flood plain and meadows of the Soar to the east, but also the flat land to the west dissected by small streams such as the Wood Brook.

By the thirteenth century, however, this last location had become the western-most perimeter of the small town. The official charter which permitted the market and fair at Loughborough also promoted the extension westwards. It is possible, of course, that unofficial or informal trading existed in Loughborough before the formal establishment of the market during 1221-1222, but the introduction of a formal marketstead demarcated a new western-most perimeter of the town, constrained by the Fishpool to the west. The town thus became

polyfocal between church, organic centre, and market place, ostensibly a seigniorial formation, but possibly also an accretion by the townspeople as informal traders.

The consequence, however, was that the market was situated at some distance from the church and from the original focus of the town. Whereas markets developed outside, or even in the churchyards, of parish churches, in Loughborough the market place was not adjacent to the church nor connected to Sunday trading. Instead, the market, set out on the flat land to the west of the hill-site of the original manorial and ecclesiastical centre, extended the town westwards.

A complementary phase involved the development of the street pattern between the church and the market place, although this again displays hybrid aspects, both the regularity of planning and informality of organism. The focal point of this transition was the angular place at the Bigging. From here, Churchgate extended up to All Saints. The new Highgate ran transversely across the Bigging. The extension of Sparrow Hill from the church southwards resulted in new streets running from Highgate to Sparrow Hill, Baxtergate (up to the common oven at Sparrow Hill) and Hallgate (now Pinfold Gate). So was produced a rectangular street pattern which looks planned, but no doubt included organic elements too. Although not conclusively apparent until the survey of the 1370s, this topography must have been established during the thirteenth century.