

The name of the village describes the 'new settlement by the ford where the lime trees grow'. It did not exist at the time of the Domesday Book in 1086, but was colonised from Groby, probably during the 13th century. For 500 years, until 1925, it was part of the Bradgate Estate owned by the Grey family. After that date ribbon development took place along the roads to Anstey, Groby and Markfield but large scale building has been resisted. The parish is very large (4388 acres) and includes outlying areas of mainly 20th century settlement as well as the 860 acre Bradgate Park and part of Swithland Woods.

A TIME LINE FOR NEWTOWN LINFORD AND BRADGATE

1241 First documented reference to Bradgate Park. The Earl of Winchester is given the rights to take deer with nine bows and six hounds.

1280 Newtown Linford mentioned in an Itinerary. It is included collectively as one village with Rothley, Swithland, Anstey, Bradgate and Cropston.

1293 First mention of rate-paying tenants in Newtown Linford

1349 Black Death reaches Leicestershire. No further colonisation into Charnwood Forest.

1377 Poll Tax: 62 liable in Newtown; 41 in Bradgate (but only 29 pay).

c1400 Earliest parts of Newtown church

1436/7 Dendrochronology dating for felling of earliest timbers used in construction of No's 11

and 13 Main Street (built as one house).

1445 The Manor of Groby, including Newtown Linford and Bradgate Park, pass by marriage from the Ferrers to the Grey Family.

1457 Sir John Grey marries Elizabeth Woodville.

1460 Sir John Grey killed at 2nd Battle of St Albans (Wars of the Roses), leaving two young sons.

1461 Edward IV (Yorkist) is proclaimed king. The Greys (Lancastrians) lose their estates.

1464 Edward IV secretly marries Elizabeth Woodville.

1475 Thomas Grey (son of Sir John and Elizabeth Woodville) becomes Marquis of Dorset.

1483 Thomas Grey flees to continent.

1485 Battle of Bosworth Field. Richard III killed. Henry Tudor crowned Henry VII. Thomas Grey returns to England.

c1500 Thomas Grey enlarges Bradgate Park and starts building of modern brick mansion. The dispersed hamlet of Bradgate (mainly in area of present reservoir) is cleared and residents moved.

1501 Thomas Grey dies, being succeeded by his son, also Thomas, 2nd Marquis of Dorset. He completes the building of the house and his household are the first people to live in the mansion.

1508 Carbon dating (+ or - 20 years) for the felling of timbers used in the crucks of Vine Cottage, 9 Main Street.

1520 Thomas Grey appears before Chancery to answer for his father's depopulation of Bradgate village. Some of the tenants are rehoused at the extremity of Newtown parish, at Field Head.

1530 Thomas Grey dies, succeeded by his son Henry, who is married to Frances, daughter of Henry VIII's sister Mary. They have 3 daughters, Jane, Katherine and Mary.

1537 Lady Jane Grey born. The first known minister of Newtown church: Mr Cook.

1539 Dissolution of Ulverscroft Priory. The oldest of the 6 bells in the church tower, inscribed Tomaset, is believed to have been brought from the Priory.

1547 Death of Henry VIII, succeeded by frail 10 year old son, Edward VI.

1551 Henry Grey, 3rd Marquis of Dorset, is created Duke of Suffolk. Lady Jane Grey is married to Lord Guildford Dudley.

1553 Edward VI dies of consumption; Lady Jane Grey is Queen for 9 days before being supplanted by Mary Tudor. Jane is confined to the Tower of London. The Grey estates, including Bradgate, are confiscated. Until at least 1575 rents are paid to Crown agents, some of whom live locally.

1554 Lady Jane Grey and her father are beheaded. Her mother marries Adrian Stokes and they live at Beaumanor.

1558 Death of Mary Tudor; accession of Elizabeth I

1564 47 families are living in Newtown Linford; 27 on Bradgate Park.

1575 Groby Manor, including Bradgate Park, returned to the Greys.

c1580 Glazed windows begin to appear in Leicestershire.

1603 Queen Elizabeth dies, succeeded by James I
Sir Henry Grey of Pirgo (Essex) is made Baron Grey of Groby and moves to Bradgate House.

1608 First church registers kept at Newtown.

1614 Henry Grey dies, succeeded by grandson Henry, who in 1628 becomes 1st Earl of Stamford.

1633 West gallery erected in church (removed in 1894)

1642-9 Civil War. Lord Stamford and son Thomas are active for Parliament.

1670 Hearth Tax paid by 48 households in Newtown; 1 at Bradgate.

1683 Date on oldest gravestone in churchyard. It bears the inscription HIC JACET JOHN BONI & HIS 5 WIFS.

After an attempt on the life of Charles II Bradgate House is searched for arms.

1685 Silver chalice presented to church by widows Mary Milcome and Anne Ranworth. Still used on occasion, but no longer kept in the church.

1696 Visit of William III to Bradgate.

1706 Slate sundial erected on south wall of church tower.

1716 Thomas Grey, 2nd Earl of Stamford, dies without direct heir. A cousin, Henry Grey of Enville, Staffordshire, becomes 3rd Earl, but does not live at Bradgate.

1736 Harry Grey, heir of 3rd Earl, marries Lady Mary Booth of Dunham Massey, Cheshire Rents and profits on Bradgate estate = 1968.18.2.

1737 George Harry Grey, future 5th Earl of Stamford, baptised at Newtown Linford church. His parents appear to have been living at Bradgate House at this time.

1739 Mary Grey, brother of George Harry, baptised at Newtown church. On the death of the 3rd Earl of Stamford, Harry Grey inherits title and Enville.

1740 Bradgate House is boarded up and never lived in again. It soon falls into disrepair. A flock of sheep is kept within the 22 acre enclosure around the house and gardens.

1762 Rents and profits of Lord Stamford's Leicestershire estates = £3743.8.1.

1781 A trout is caught in the River Lyn weighing 9.5 lbs and measuring 3 feet 1 inch long.

1784 The windmill on John Hill stops working and is removed. A windmill is erected on Lent Hill, Newtown Linford. Old John Tower is built by Sketchley of Anstey on the site of a windmill.

1786 Celebration bonfire on 'Old John' for coming of age of George Harry, future 6th Earl of Stamford.

1790s Commonest names for babies baptised in Newtown Linford are Sarah and William.

1800 About 60 houses in the village.

c1800 Windmill on Lent Hill stops working. Ulverscroft Water Mill takes over grinding Newtown grain.

1801 First official population census. Newtown Linford: 377. Population of England and Wales is 9 million.

1816 The Newtown Linford Sick Club has its HQ at 'Mr Kinton's, the sign of the Bradgate Arms'.

1818 Lenthill Farm, also known as the Buck's Head Inn, is rebuilt by Benjamin Rudkin.

1822 Sunday School built for 6th Earl of Stamford. Also used as day school accommodating 100 pupils.

1829 Charnwood Forest Enclosure Award. William, son of Henry and Hannah Adams dies on the 30th May aged 22 whilst assisting to drag a fishnet through the culvert which runs under the road by the Church. The son of a gamekeeper to the Earl of Stamford had ten brothers and sisters.

1831 Newtown is described by Rev J Curtis as having 1600 acres, 549 inhabitants and 74 houses. 'The inhabitants of Leicester are permitted to enjoy Bradgate Park and relax there by favour of its noble owner. Old John Tower is furnished with tables and chairs and the key is never refused to persons of respectability.'

1833 After years of neglect, 6th Earl of Stamford begins a programme of repairing and building houses at Newtown.

1834 New Poor Law. Instead of obtaining Parish Relief, indigent Newtown villagers will henceforth be accommodated in the Union Workhouse at Mountsorrel.

1841 Population of Newtown is 495.

1851 Ecclesiastical census on Sunday Marsh 30 reports an afternoon congregation of 136, with 110 children in the Sunday School.

1856 7th Earl of Stamford builds new house near Field Head, called Bradgate House.

1860 Church porch added along with other restoration work.

1870 The death of Rev Robert Martin, Vicar of Ratby and Groby and Minister of the Donative Church of Newtown Linford and Perpetual Curate of Breedon on the Hill brings to an end the Ecclesiastical Peculiar of Groby. Newtown Linford becomes part of the Diocese of Peterborough.

1880 School attendance made compulsory. Parents pay 1d a week until 1891.

1886 On Halloween an estate retainer named Old John was killed when the central pole of a huge bonfire burnt through and fell among the revellers celebrating the 6th Earl of Stamford's coming of age. The Earl named the tower Old John and in memory of his liking for ale he ordered the handle to be erected to.

1892 Chancel and north Aisle added to the Church at a cost of £ 650.00 and consecrated on the 6th September 1894 by the Bishop.

1893 The pulpit, of carved Caen stone, is given to the church.

1894 The chancel is enlarged and the north transept extended to form a north aisle.

1898 A branch line linking Newtown and Thurstaston to the Great Central Railway is projected. Comes to nothing.

1900 Average attendance at village school is 50, with 2 teachers.

1901 Population 361

1902 58 Newtown men are on the payroll of Groby Granite.

1905 Death of Lady Stamford at Bradgate House. The estate passes to the family of her late husband's sister. The house is rented by the brewer Mr T W Everard.

1907 Present school built.

1906 a new tubular pneumatic organ was installed in the Church and dedicated on Friday the 9th February. The cost of the organ was £297. 10s. It's dedication was performed by the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Leicester. The Vicar of the Parish at the time was the Rev. L. Bradyll Johnson.

1911 Population 419

1914 Gas is brought to the village. Outbreak of First World War. All the village horses, except the very old and lame, are requisitioned for the army.

1915 Vestry and organ recess added to church and organ rebuilt.

1916 Present altar put in church. Conscriptio

1919 Cricket Club formed on present site. First car in village (Model T Ford) bought by pub landlord, Harry Beck.

1921 Population 395. Church lychgate added. 53 children on school roll. (3 teachers, reduced the next year to 2) Sale of outlying properties of estate, including Ulverscroft Priory.

1925 Sale of Bradgate Estate (excepting Bradgate Park) November 17-19, at the Bell Hotel, Leicester. Some villagers are able to buy their own land and houses; some have their homes sold over their heads. Sale raises £226,110 for Mrs Grey. The Bradgate Hotel (the only property containing a bathroom) is sold to Everards for £6,400. Newtown Linford Women's Institute formed.

1926 Newtown Linford becomes part of new Diocese of Leicester.

1927 Measles epidemic. School closed by Medical Officer. Foot and Mouth Disease at local farm. Johnscliffe Restaurant built.

1928 Sale of Bradgate Park to Charles Bennion for nearly £16,000. He presents it to the people of Leicester and Leicestershire for their quiet enjoyment for all time.

Late 1920s First motor bus service, Warners of Markfield, takes people to work in Anstey.

1930 Bradgate Hall built by Lindsay Everard to replace wooden restaurant used for village events. During the

There were 13 working farms in the village. There was no television only accumulator or battery operated radios and gas lighting and cooking in the houses.

1931 Population 621. Mr. Edward Haslegrave, the Bradgate Estate 'Agent lived in Linford House number 6 Main Street. He became the agent for Mrs Katherine Grey in 1913 and then the Ranger for the Bradgate Trust in 1928. He was a village resident for 50 years. When Agent for the Estate village his work included what later became local government matters:- Housing, social services, environmental health and employment exchange. His motto was 'Early rising, hard work and brisk exercise'

1933 Water laid on to school.

1935 Village school no longer takes children till 14. They now transfer at 11 to South Charnwood, except for a handful that 'pass the scholarship' and attend Secondary (Grammar) Schools in Leicester.

1936 Electricity brought to village. As there were never any gas street lights, this brings the first outside illumination.

1937 WI banner made by Marjorie Lowe took first prize at the County Coronation WI competition.

1939 Outbreak of 2nd World War. Conscription. Evacuees arrive in village, mainly from Sheffield and London. Much of Bradgate Park is closed to the public, with over 100 soldiers living there under canvas and Commandos camped in the Ruins enclosure. The Home Guard uses Old John as its guard post. The military are all over the village. Newtown is associated with highly secret work at Beaumanor and Garratt's Hay. An axe is kept at the Village Hall so that equipment can be smashed in the event of German occupation. Officers are billeted in local houses; other ranks in Nissen huts in Main Street. There is a First Aid Post at the Sunday School and a searchlight on Markfield Lane. The British Legion club is used as a workshop for aircraft parts, staffed by local women.

1940 Army camp in Bradgate Park. ATS camp at the back of the Bradgate Arms. There were Petrol pumps in the village on the front of the cottage opposite Bradgate main gates owned by the Naylor family.

1941 Bombs fall near Cropston Reservoir and in Whitcroft Lane. There are at least 6 small tea rooms in the village, as well as other cottages selling jugs of tea to summer visitors.

1944 School kitchen added and hot meals served daily to 35 children. The WI fabric tablecloth was embroidered with the names of the 53 members during 1938 to 1944. In 1980 it was badly damaged and had to be cut down to the size of a table runner.

1945 End of war.

1947 Planning permission for new buildings introduced. The Parish Council fought and won not to become part of the City of Leicester. The Chairman of the Parish Council for 10 years was H Stopper. E. Haslegrave had been a member for 35 years (10 as Chairman). George Snartt had 29 years of service. A.J. Gray was elected in 1946 and F.N. Upchurch also in 1946.

1951 Population 901

1953 Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. A programme of festivities, financed partly by a 2d rate, includes a tea party and souvenir mugs for the children, while the old folk are given a lunch and a coach trip to see the Coronation decorations in Leicester and Loughborough. There is a competition for the best decorated house, and on the Saturday a Fancy Dress Parade, with tableaux on lorries, followed by a dance at the Village Hall and a firework display on the Cricket Field. Church clock installed at cost of £550, with proceeds of 1951 and 1952 productions of Jack Ayling's Pageant of Bradgate.

1954 All Saints Annual Church Meeting was attended by 50 people. Jack Ayling was elected Vicar's Warden and Mr. Haslegrave People's Warden. 133 were on the Electoral Roll, 50 members of the Bible Reading Society, 62 in the Sunday School and 29 in the choir. The Annual party was held in the village hall with a Maypole in the centre. The committee dressed as gypsies and Jack and Rose Ayling produced the games and sketches.

1957 The Alphabet Stone is moved into the Church. A Young Wives Fellowship (later the Newtown Fellowship) is started.

1959 Last burial in the churchyard, on a snowy day in January: Miss Sally Hardy, aged 90. The new cricket pavilion is opened. Plans are afoot to route the M1 motorway close to the village. Bob Bown rallies opposition and 33,000 people sign petition against it. Large fire at the foot of Old John ravaging 2,500 sq. yards of bracken and bush. The new Cemetery on Groby Lane was consecrated by the Bishop of Leicester in arctic weather conditions in January. Sixteen people attended including the Vicar the Rev. Hargreaves, Mr. H. Stopper, the Chairman of the Parish Council, Raymond Moore the Bishop's legal Secretary and Mrs. Stopper who provided the tea.

1960 Boundary changes. Bradgate Park, Chitterman Hills and Johns Lee Wood are added to the Parish. The road from Roecliffe to Swithland Triangle moves to Swithland, and on Bradgate Road the land between the Wide Piece and Twenty Row is ceded to Anstey.

1961 Population 850. Death aged 84, of Mr Edward Haslegrave, Agent of the 9,000 acre Bradgate Estate from 1913 till 1925 Sale, remaining Ranger of Bradgate Park till shortly before his death. Chairman of the Parish Council for many years. Public Inquiry at the Bradgate Hall regarding proposed development by Jelson Ltd of

land belonging to Field View Farm (opposite the hall). Planning permission for large scale building was refused. Planning permission for demolition of Workhouse Row and replacement by a modern house is refused and a Preservation Order made.

1963 Barn conversion at Village Farm (now corner of Grey Crescent). November 30: Post Office hold-up foiled by Postmistress Kitty Brown. In this winter you could skate on Groby Pool.

1964 Parish Council endorses County Council plan to renovate Workhouse Row. Owner starts to pull it down. Parish Council considers plan to retain site as Open Space next to churchyard, but decides against it. Permission to build 200 houses on Markfield Lane is refused. Groby Bypass opened.

1965 Field View farmhouse, cottage and outbuildings, are redesigned as 4 modern homes. Workhouse Row is demolished. M1 opens.

1966 St John's Ambulance hut in Bradgate Car Park is opened.

1968 11th February the Bishop of Leicester dedicates a new table bell weighing 2 1/2 cwt. and cast by John Taylor. The bell is inscribed "in memory of the Smith family" many of whom had been regular bell ringers in the past. The other five bells are: - 2nd bell cast in 1903. 3rd bell inscribed 'Tomasat' and is said to have come from Ulverscroft Priory at the time of the dissolution in 1593. 4th bell cast by John Taylor and given by the Earl of Stamford. 5th bell cast by Watts of Leicester and inscribed 'Cerorium Christe Platiat Ibe Iste. 6th bell the 7 1/4 cwt tenor bell cast by John Taylor in 1842.

1971 Bradgate Park Trustees consider, but turn down, the possibility of compulsory car parking charges, suggesting voluntary contributions of 10p. Car access to Park (previously open to all on two days a week) is limited to disabled.

1972 Bradgate Hall leased from Everards. Village Hall Committee formed. Lydia Knott is appointed Clerk to the Parish Council in succession to Connie Stopper.

1973 Eric and Wilf Buthaway give up the paper round started by their father 49 years ago. News agency taken over by Dennis Scupham at the Post Office.

1974 Death of Marion Richardson of Park Cottages, which she had rented from the Bradgate Trust. The Trust now uses them as a cafe and information centre.

1976 'Marion's Cottage' opened. The Pageant of Bradgate is performed by villagers in the Bradgate Park ruins. The hot weather and drought results in closure of most of the Park, except for areas adjacent to the main drive, because of fire danger.

1978 Estimated population 1,011. Newtown Linford Fellowship founded.

1979 Newtown Linford, Ulverscroft, Anstey, Cropston and Thurcaston twinned with Plateau Est de Rouen. Jack Ayling resident since 1940 dies. A County Council employee in different departments subsequently qualifying as a Solicitor he spent much of his spare time active in Church affairs and writing and producing the famous Lady Jane pageants.

1980 A 'Wedding Anniversary' display is staged in the Church to raise funds for the badly needed wall repairs. On display was a framed telegram sent to Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Fantom of Groby Lane by the Queen on their diamond anniversary and a pearl and silk wedding dress made by Worth in 1902 for the mother of Margery Lowe of Bradgate Road.

1981 Monthly Saturday afternoon Village Walk initiated. Old Charlie, a horse belonging to Bradgate Woods, and a landmark in his own right, dies aged 46. The Bradgate Twinning Association is formed with the Charter held by Anstey Library.

1982 Newtown Linford is twinned with Bradgate, Iowa.

1983 Lady Jane Turnbull aged 84 speaks to the Women's Fellowship. She was the last Lady Jane Grey as the eldest daughter of the Earl of Stamford had always been named. The title lapsed because the Earl of Stamford (her brother) died childless.

1986 The Bradgate Trust opens Old John Tower to visitors to celebrate its 200th anniversary.

1987 George Grass retires. He was the head keeper at Bradgate Park and had looked after the deer for 26 years. He received the MBE in the Queen's Silver Jubilee birthday honours list. The Rev. Harry Fletcher dies whilst Vicar of All Saints Church.

1988 Neighbourhood Watch scheme set up, with Arthur Gibson as organiser. For the first time the church is locked when unattended, with the key available at the Post Office.

1994 A weight limit for lorries is imposed on Markfield Lane, Groby Lane and the Main Street towards Anstey.

1998 New ecclesiastical parish of Ratby cum Groby with Newtown Linford is set up.

1999 The WI produces their first Village Guide, containing useful information, and delivers it to each house. This is the forerunner of the Village Welcome Pack now produced by the Neighbourhood Watch Team.

