

THE FIRST CHIPPING SHOW

Traditional Chipping Fair days were Easter Tuesday and St Bartholomew's day (August 24th). These gave farmers an opportunity to sell local produce, including cattle, sheep and horses.

From 1857 an extra day was added, the first Wednesday of October, which became the Annual Chipping Fair. The first October fair was held on the Talbot Meadow (the present playing field), but fairs were also held near the Talbot itself. In the case of the October Fairs, prizes were offered for various classes of horses, cattle and sheep, but the main function was the sale of stock; in the earlier years on a private basis between individuals, later by public auction. There were also stalls and sideshows. As time went on the showing and prize-giving element of the Annual Fair declined; by the end of the last century the October Fair was chiefly a sheep sale.

The following report, based on an account in the Preston Guardian, 9 Oct 1920, relates how the first Chipping show was held on the first Saturday in October --- thus reviving a lapsed tradition.



"The village of Chipping, nestling at the foot of Farlick Pike, some five miles from Longridge, which is as far as the railway constructors have deemed it expeditious to penetrate this picturesque country, achieved distinction on Saturday by holding an agricultural show for the first time in its hoary history. The success that attended this inaugural gathering was remarkable considering that only three weeks have elapsed since the suggestion to form an agricultural society assumed definite shape, and that the exhibits were drawn from a comparatively limited area (represented by the townships of Chipping, Leagram, Little Bowland, and Bleasdale) and from the stocks already on the farms. Animals exhibited were to have been in the exhibitor's possession for at least six months so that a ban was placed on the practice permissible in a number of shows, of scouring the country in search of 'plums' with which to gain a temporary advantage."

"The commendable object of the Chipping enterprise is to stimulate the breeding side on the upland farms of a district well adapted for the rearing of vigorous stock. In no part of the county could an exhibition of this character be more appropriately planted, for it is to the isolated areas remote from railway communication one must look to strengthen the dairy herds of the country, in numbers as well as quality and robustness". The judge of horses remarked at the luncheon that "Chipping might be made the centre of agricultural activity in the hill country, and attain a position corresponding with that of Great Eccleston, which is often referred to as the agricultural metropolis of the lowlands of the Fylde."

"Capt. J. Berkeley J.P., Leagram Hall, accepted the presidency, and gave a generous and enthusiastic lead".

The committee consisted of Messrs. H.J. Berry (Chairman & Treasurer), W. Hayhurst, R. Holden, J. Holden, T. Procter (Joint Sec.), J. Whalley, C. Billsborough, J. Procter, H. Rich, G. Fox, J. Gorst, W. Forshaw (Joint Sec.), R. Ellison, R. Dobson, H. Marsden, A. Ross, R. Ross, W. Sefton, J. Dewhurst and J. Milner."

Miss Knowles placed at the disposal of the committee a field on her farm adjoining the Chipping Dairy (Goose Lane), a short distance from and on the Longridge side of the village.

"The showground was picturesquely set between two lines of hills in which Farlick and Jeffrey were bold features, and when the sun had dispelled the morning mists the fell slopes above the emerald fields and rich belts of timber were revealed dressed in an autumn garment of amber, cinnamon, and purple. These bold shoulders of the Pennines hold some of the gems of rural Lancashire."

"After luncheon, the President, Capt. Berkeley (of Leagram Hall), proposed 'Success to the Agricultural Show', and stressed that the Chipping Society must in the future keep in mind the fact that this was to be a breeder's show. He pointed out some changes taking place in local agriculture. It was important that breeding should be encouraged. The increased facilities for road transport were effecting a great alteration in certain types of farming. Milk was now being carried away by motor from a great many farms remote from the railroad for despatch to the big towns and cities, and as the dealers required the whole of the dairy it meant that the rearing of stock was now left very largely to the smaller farmers in the hill districts, and it was up to them to help to supply the deficiency in their own as well as the national interest."



HOW TO SPOT A GOOD SHORTHORN: IT CAN BE ANY COLOUR EXCEPT BLACK, AND IF IT DOES HAVE HORNS THEY DON'T NEED TO BE SHORT.

