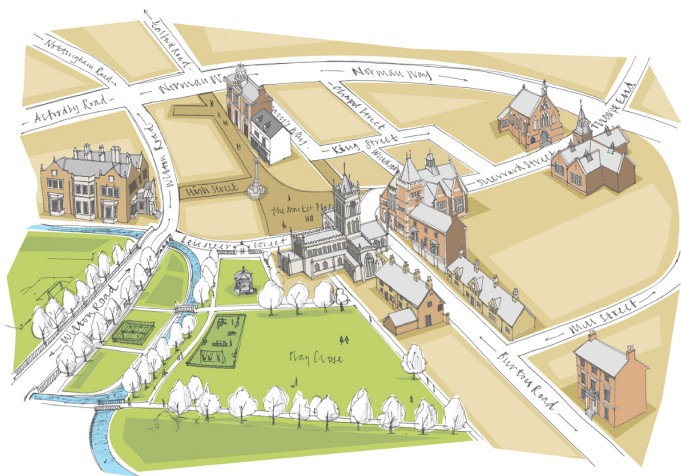




MELTON MOWBRAY ROYAL MILE TRAIL

**850 Years -
In the Footsteps of Kings**



**Follow the 19 monarchs who have
visited Melton Mowbray since 1194.**

Discover[Melton.com/heritage](https://DiscoverMelton.com/heritage)



Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire launching Melton's 'Royal Mile' in 2022 alongside Dr Matthew O'Callaghan (OBE) and Michael Cooke (Melton Sports)

INTRODUCTION

For almost 300 years between 1194 and 1487, 11 of England's 15 medieval Kings visited Melton Mowbray. In the last 250 years every monarch since George IV except one has also visited the town.

What brought them to Melton Mowbray?

Even 1,500 years ago, Melton was an important town and a royal mint in the reigns of King Aethelred II and King Canute. The market was recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086.

In the Middle Ages, for 300 years, the 'Kings Highway' between London and the North passed through Melton Mowbray. This prompted the Royal Visits and boosted trade. Local wool also added to the town's wealth providing the funds to build the magnificent Cathedral-inspired St Mary's Church.

Fox Hunting in the early 1800's led to the visit of George IV and several of his successors as well as a boom in the town's fortunes through to World War II.

Start your walk at the bottom of King Street, next to Market Place.



KING STREET

From 1194-1487 for at least 300 years, 11 out of the 15 Kings of England travelled along King Street most choosing to stay overnight with the Lord of the Manor of Melton, Lord de Mowbray. The de Mowbray's were a powerful family in medieval England and had a Castle in Melton Mowbray.

In 1313 John de Mowbray built a new manor house set back from the Market Place where his royal guests would lodge. The manor house still exists at the top of King Street albeit with a Victorian Shop front. This medieval house is best viewed from the back.

The first King recorded was Richard I, the Lionheart, in 1194 on his way back from Nottingham where he had successfully captured the Castle and so ended the rebellion of his brother John.

Richard was accompanied by King William of Scotland pleading unsuccessfully for the restoration of the counties of Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmoreland and Lancashire to the Kingdom of Scotland.

Richard I was followed by Kings John, Henry III, Edwards I, II and III, Henry IV and VI, Richard III and finally Henry VII in 1487.

The 4 kings not recorded formally as having visited Melton Mowbray are Richard II, Henry V, Edward IV and finally Edward V who reigned for only 2 months being murdered aged 12 years old in the Tower of London.

It is not known if there were any other royal visits after Henry VI until some 300 years later when Melton became famous throughout Europe as the capital of fox hunting.

Prince Regent later George IV visited Melton for

the hunting season encouraged no doubt by his friend Beau Brummell who was a member of the Old Club on Burton Street in the town.

For over 260 years, except for George V, every monarch has visited Melton; George III, George IV, William IV, Victoria, Edward VII, George V, Edward VIII, George VI, Elizabeth II, Charles III and Prince William.

During the Melton Hunt, the future Edward VIII began a relationship here with Wallis Simpson, a liaison that led to his abdication.



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MARKET PLACE

From King Street cross the Market Place. Over 1,000 years old, the market is the third oldest in the country and the only one in Leicestershire and Leicester recorded in the 1086 Domesday Book. By letters patent 700 years ago, Edward II granted the Tuesday market to the Lord of the Manor of Melton, now the Melton Mowbray Town Estate.

On the South side of the Market Place is the **Swan Porch**. It was at the Swan Porch that the drunk Marquis of Waterford from Ireland on 6th April 1837 found a bucket of red paint and used it to daub this and other buildings (including the Toll House). His drunken antics are said to have coined the phrase 'Painting the Town Red', he was fined £100 at Derby Assizes.



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CHURCH STREET

Going along Church Street on the left side is the **Old Court House** and underneath are the prison cells. The notorious murderer 'Peppermint Billy' was held here before his trial and public execution. More than 25,000 people watched him hang outside Leicester Prison – the last public execution in the County.

The walk continues past the West Door of the magnificent **St Mary's Church**; "The stateliest and most impressive of all churches in Leicestershire". The current building, on the site of a Saxon church was started 800 years ago and has some of the features of a cathedral.



PLAY CLOSE (GREAT NORTH ROAD)

After the Church walk down towards Play Close. To the left, an old medieval wall marks the eastern boundary of the London Road used by medieval kings and the only route between London and the north until the late 15th century. On the right, Play Close one of Melton's Parks owned and managed by the Melton Mowbray Town Estate. The Melton Mowbray Town Estate, founded in 1549 was created for the benefit of the Town's citizens, today retains responsibility for the Town Parks and Street Market.





BURTON STREET

At the bottom of the path turn left along Mucky Lane which leads onto Burton Street.

The exit of Mucky Lane onto Burton Street used to be a major canal basin linking the Oakham Canal to the Melton Mowbray Navigation to Leicester, hence the **Boat Inn**.

The building opposite with a porch and columns is the former hunting lodge of James Thomas Brudenell, 7th Earl of Cardigan, who led the Charge of the Light Brigade (October 1854) which he survived. Walk along Burton Street on the left-hand side, from here observe the buildings opposite.

The **Harboro Hotel** was a famous lodging for the aristocracy and others when the nobility and aristocracy flocked to Melton Mowbray in the hunting season during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Famous guests at the Harboro include Elizabeth Empress of Austria and Queen of Hungary who along with 21 horses and several noblemen, visited Melton to hunt. She gave the proprietor of the Harborough Hotel only a day's notice of their impending arrival. The Maharaja of Cooch Bejar was another hunting guest of the Hotel.

The **Manor House** on the corner of Mill Street was owned in turn by Prime Ministers Melbourne and Palmerston both of whom were Lords of the Manor of Melton and stayed in the House. The famous conductor, Sir Malcom Sargent, lodged there when he was the organist at St Mary's Church.

Further up is **Bede House which has 'Maison Dieu 1640' above its door**. Built by Robert Hudson in, it was an almshouse which provided accommodation for 'six poor old bachelors or widows'.

The white building with the upper bay windows is the **Old Club**. Established in 1810 by Beau Brummell, 'King of the Dandies' and others. It was the first hunting club in Melton Mowbray and was an exclusive members club which housed only four guests. Beau Brummell introduced the Prince Regent (George IV) to hunting in Melton where they would dine at the Club.

The famous painting "The Melton Breakfast" by Sir Francis Grant was painted at the Club. On one occasion a wager between members bet that a horse could not be persuaded upstairs at the Club. The bet succeeded but the horse would not go down the stairs, so the bay window had to be removed and the horse winched down.

In front of the church made of yellow ironstone is the **Anne of Cleves** pub. Built in 1384 for the monks who serviced the Church, this former priory was confiscated and owned after the Reformation by Richard Cromwell, Chief Minister to Henry VIII.

When Cromwell was executed for his bad advice in persuading the King to marry Anne of Cleves, she received the building in her divorce settlement. There is no record of the Queen ever having visited her pub!





SHERARD STREET

Continue to the junction and turn right to start down Sherrard Street. Sherrard Street goes all the way to Thorpe End, famous for the Midnight Steeplechase on 10 March 1890 where the aristocracy raced through fields and over hedges by moonlight dressed in their nightshirts.

Along the way, as in the rest of Melton, many of the buildings have large archway entrances for the coaches of lodgers who would rent the building for the hunting season. Among these were the Duke of Montrose and Duke of Beauforth as well as Prince Demidoff, who was related to Napoleon's family, all of whom stayed in apartments at the Old Post Office.

Near the end of Sherrard Street is the old library now the **Carnegie Museum** gifted by Carnegie to the town. The museum has an extensive local collection from the bronze age onwards. The street ends with Tuxford & Tebbutt the last producer of Stilton Cheese in the town.

Cross to the other side in front of **St John's Catholic Church** which was started in 1839 to a design influenced by Pugin the architect of the Houses of Parliament.

On the way back along Sherrard Street turn right into Windsor Street. **The Melton Cheeseboard** sells cheese from across Europe but most notably Stilton Cheese™ which originated in Melton Mowbray. You can taste different Stilton and Red Leicester cheeses made by local producers.

WITH THANKS TO

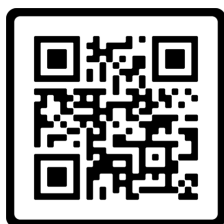
Our thanks to The Royal Melton Project, Dr Matthew O'Callaghan (OBE) for creating the Royal Mile Trail and uncovering the heritage stories.

ROYAL MELTON - A PROJECT TO CELEBRATE MELTON'S ROYAL CONNECTIONS.

This project celebrates these historic visits and the heritage of Melton Mowbray. The aim is to have an annual weekend of activities to celebrate Melton's Royal Connections.

For more information on this visit the Royal Melton website: www.royalmelton.com

This publication has been brought to by the Royal Melton Project in partnership with Melton Borough Council, Melton BID and Melton Town Estates. Accreditation for the trail map Leicester Shire Promotions and photography Copyright © Matt Short Photography.



Discover more about the rich history and stories behind our beautiful market town. Visit www.discovermelton.com or scan this handy QR code.



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