

Fenny Drayton.....

Origins

From Draitone in the Domesday Book, meaning “draeg” – literally to haul an object around an obstruction in a river and “tun”-settlement. The name suggests the influence and presence of water. Apparently, the village was sometimes known as Drayton in the Clay and latterly, Fenny Drayton. With the proximity of the Roman Road – the Fenn Lanes, running through the north of the village, this further emphasises the presence of water.

At the centre of historic changes

*The village has had two notable residents – **George Fox** (1624-1691), one of the founders and leaders of the Quakers, and by legend and repute, the highwayman **Dick Turpin** (1705-1739).*

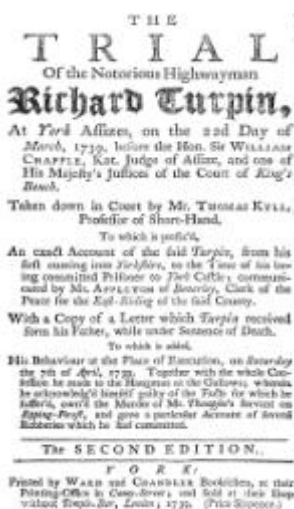
The first's connections with the village are acknowledged with a monument at the junction of George Fox Lane and Old Forge Lane. Not far from here is an area of the village once known as Dog Yard, where Fox's family house stood. In the 1890s it was mooted that the house might be demolished and rebuilt in the United States but nothing came of the idea. It was demolished in recent years.



George Fox

Much has been written about Fox but he himself said little about his early days. His father was churchwarden and was known as “righteous Christer”. His mother was Mary Lago. It is difficult to sum up George Fox, for his disturbances within Anglican churches against the preaching incumbents earned him a reputation as a troublemaker and he was often incarcerated, wherever he went, for his behaviour.

Of Dick Turpin's connections with the village, we have to look to the writings of the local Vicar who wrote in 1910 that Turpin's parents lived in a house on the northern edge of the village next to the Fenn Lanes. Few writers about the highwayman's exploits and eventual trial execution in York, speak of this connection but it is an often-recounted story in local folklore.



*It is not surprising that with its proximity to the **Battle of Bosworth** (1485) that the Derby Spinney in a layby near the village is said by some to be the site of the denouement of that battle. Others say it is the site of a well with curative properties for failing eyesight.*

*The church contains monuments to the **Purefoy family** of nearby Caldecote whom J Tom Burgess, antiquary of Hinckley, writes in his *Bygone Warwickshire*, were besieged by he forces of Prince Rupert in the English Civil War but one of whom survived the ordeal to become a*

signatory to the death sentence of Charles I.

Close to the village, near Lindley Hall Farm, is the geographical centre of England, as defined by the Ordnance Survey organisation. Robert Hartley in the “Medieval Earthworks of South-West Leicestershire” suggests that to the west of St. Michael’s church in the village there are remains of several fishponds, probably associated with a deserted manorial site. Aerial photography of the area has revealed traces of old enclosures to the south but these are being lost in village expansion.