

Back Through The Pages

Compiled by Deborah Williams

One Hundred and Twenty Five Years Ago

FRIDAY, 6 JULY, 1866

BROUGHTON

ON Monday last, Broughton Fair came, and is gone! The fair has nearly died out; one or two ginger-bread standings were almost all that were there to celebrate the day. Those who lived forty years ago and attended the fair then, would not recognise it now. The whole village was then crammed with visitors from the neighbouring villages; it was a sort of annual gathering. The farmers always prepared for, and expected friends to tea and to go to the fair; the shopkeepers always prepared to feed their annual customers from the neighbourhood, as it was usual to pay bills on Fair day, &c., &c. The labourer's wife always made a Broughton Fair cake for tea, put on her best bonnet and went to the fair with her old man and children. The children looked forward to Broughton Fair as a saint would to a red letter day in the calendar. No stopping about now after church on Sunday evening to see the ginger-bread carts, roundabouts, and peep shows come in, and to dream of the number counter: no awaking by sun rise, anxious to spend a saved half-penny on a whistlepipe or whip before breakfast! How many pleasing associations are there not connected with the name of "Broughton Fair Monday?" On the Saturday evening previous it was a practice to open bough houses for the sale of beer; and some years ago the farmers used to go round to these houses to taste it. But last Monday proclaimed Broughton Fair defunct. *Sic transit gloria mundi*. The original purpose for which fairs were held has been set aside, and we think it is well that the fair to all intents and purposes is dead.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX