This walk has been prepared to trace the establishment of Ripley Co-operative Society from its humble beginnings on Butterley Hill to its domination of Ripley Town centre in the early 20th century.

The walk starts outside the Town Hall, built in 1880. Face the Town Hall, turn right and walk across the pedestrian crossing on to Church Street.

All Saints Church on your left was built in 1821, as a response to the Pentrich Rising of June 1817.

Continue along Church Street and turn left at HSBC into Chapel Street. At the Talbot Inn (built 1831), fork right on Butterley Hill.

Approximately 100 yards along this road on the left stands the house where Sir Barnes Wallis was born and spent his early childhood. A red plaque marks the house.

Continue down Butterley Hill for approximately 200 yards.

On your left stands a small detached house , Number 99, where the first of the Co-operative shops was established in 1860.



Turn back up Butterley Hill, and after 50 yards turn up Alma Street on your right. At the top of Alma Street, turn right on to Lowes Hill.

On the left hand side opposite the green painted house stands a terrace of three houses, which is where the second Co-op shop was opened in 1863.



By this time trade had increased considerably and it was decided to embark upon a major building programme to build a suite of shops and offices to serve the growing population of the town.

Turn round, continue up Lowes Hill, on to Pentrich Road and then back on to Chapel Street. Straight ahead you can see the green roof of the main Co-op buildings.

At the end of Chapel Street is the Cock Hotel, a long - established coaching inn built in the early 19th century. Opposite the Cock to the left was a cinema known first as the Electra then the Empire which attracted all the latest films and the occasional personal appearance of famous film stars. When the cinema closed in 1979, the building was taken over by the Co-op and rebuilt as the town's first supermarket.



Continue along New Street towards what has always been known locally as the Co-op Square.

The impressive building on the left (with the green roof) was built as the flagship Co-op premises to house departmental shops on the ground floor and the Head Office and bank on the first floor. To the rear of this building on Booth Street, a workman's hostel was built.

The square was also the terminus for the short-lived tram service to Nottingham, known as the "Ripley Rattler". It operated from 1913 to 1933 and had a reputation as the most dangerous tramway in Britain.



Follow the road round to the left on to Nottingham Road, and continue for about 150m over the route of the former railway to the corner of Nottingham Road and Broadway.



Where Broadway Court now stands was the Victory Hall (above). Originally funded by a group of local businessmen as a ballroom and theatre, it was eventually taken over by the Co-op and converted into a bakery, with a dairy at the back. The ballroom was retained and on the first floor were

facilities for table tennis and billiards and on the ground floor a restaurant.

Walk down Broadway and turn right on to Albion Street. Cross over the route of the railway again and turn left on to Park Street. At the end of Park Street, turn right on to Wellington Street, continuing as far as The Angel pub on the left.

The pub occupies a building built by the Coop as a canteen for its employees. At the rear, on Crossley Street was a slaughterhouse and stables for the horses used to deliver goods .It is now the car park for the new Co-op supermarket.

Continue along Wellington Street back into Co-op Square and turn left on to Grosvenor Road by the Nat West bank.





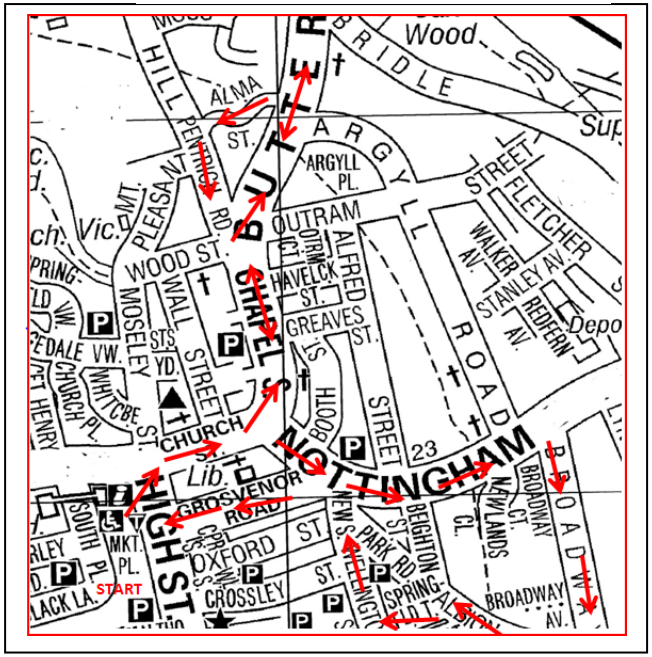
The curved-fronted shop on the right (now a takeaway) was the Co-op provisions and boot and shoe department, whilst next door, at the end of Park Road (now Ripley Glass) was the main butchery department with a Co-operative Hall, an entertainment venue, on the first floor. On the right hand side as you turn into Grosvenor Road was the Co-op fish shop (now a wine bar) with a butchers next door selling imported meats. The building opposite, now a charity shop, was the first of the Co-op tobacconists, which later moved into one of the new buildings in the Square. Next door but one, in what is now a nail bar, was the Co-op radio, television and appliances department, which was, with the supermarket, one of the last departments to be established.

Continue along Grosvenor Road to return to the Market Place.

At its height in the early 1960s, the Ripley Co-op had 75 branches, employed 738 people and had sales of over £61 million. As this walk shows, its shops dominated the centre of the town.

A 1960s travelling shop.





This walk has been compiled by members of the Ripley and District Heritage Trust and printed by Ripley Town Council. We hope the information in it is accurate, but if on completing the walk you find there are errors, or have anything to add, or photographs, newspaper articles or memorabilia concerning the Co-op in Ripley, these would be most gratefully received, and added to our collection.

Walkers are responsible for their own safety at all times and must take the usual care when crossing all roads identified in this leaflet.

Tram picture courtesy of A. P Knighton and Picture the Past; Victory Hall courtesy of The Wood Collection and Picture the Past.

RIPLEY CO-OP

A Walk Exploring Ripley's Rich Co-operative Heritage





An easy one hour walk investigating the history of one of the biggest Co-op movements in the Midlands