

# CHARLOTTE BOND: DRAPER, GROCER, LANDOWNER

She dealt with the sadness of losing many of her children and her husband at an early stage in her life and built up a successful business within the town, prospering enough to retire in her early 50s. So who was this impressive local businesswoman?

Charlotte Bond was born in 1810 in Stockworth, Nottinghamshire. Charlotte was the widow of James Bond of Louth – a draper and grocer and sometime tea dealer. Charlotte and James had married in 1828 and (as was common at the time) she began to work in the business.

In 1838 James died leaving Charlotte with sole responsibility for their two young children (sadly she had lost five children prior to James's death).

The 1841 census lists her as living above the shop in Market Place/King Street premises in Market Rasen. Her occupation is listed as draper. The shop can still be seen today – a building with a distinctive curved façade. In addition to being a successful businesswoman, Charlotte Bond was also the head of a busy household. At this time she had two daughters aged eight and six, and her household also included six draper's apprentices and two house servants.

## PROVIDING EMPLOYMENT FOR MANY – INCLUDING HER BROTHER

By 1851 Charlotte had diversified into the grocery trade. Her shops were now providing sufficient employment for five draper's assistants – including her brother Henry Bird.

Charlotte Bond had two entries listed in the 1856 edition of White's History, Gazetteer & Directory of Lincolnshire, the first as a grocer and the second as a draper:

## LINKS TO DE ASTON SCHOOL

Charlotte was clearly an astute businesswoman and was not content to restrict her activities to retail. At some point following her move to Market Rasen she acquired a parcel of land on Willingham Road. In 1859 the land was selected to be the site of De Aston School, which was to become a prestigious Grammar School. The Market Rasen Mail reported that the Board of

Trustees believed it to be the cheapest land available that was in the right place. The price paid was £100 per acre.

By 1861, aged 51, Charlotte Bond had moved to King Street, leaving her businesses to be run by her brother Henry. The 1861 census records her occupation as a fund holder, so it seems that she had invested some of her profits into stocks and shares, giving sufficient income to support herself and her daughters, who still lived with her. Not long after this census was taken Charlotte left Market Rasen with her unmarried daughter, moving to Newcastle to live near her other daughter, who had recently married.

## TRIUMPH OVER ADVERSITY

A courageous woman who dealt with the sadness of losing many of her children and her husband at an early stage in her life, Charlotte built up a successful business within the town, becoming prosperous enough to retire in her early 50s. When she died in 1873 her estate was valued at £18,500, a sizeable fortune for an independent woman in the 19th century.

White's History, Gazetteer & Directory of Lincolnshire, 1856 (2)



Charlotte Bond (1)



Charlotte Bond's shop was located here, with the distinctive curved façade (3)

## References

Original story created for the Wolds Women of Influence Exhibition, 2018.

Lynn Yates, descendant of Charlotte Bond, and Rase Heritage Society

Rase Heritage Society <http://www.raseheritage.org.uk/tradespeople-of-market-rasen/bond-james-and-charlotte-drapers-and-grocers/>

## Photography credits

- 1) Rase Heritage Society & Bond Family
- 2) White's History, Gazetteer & Directory of Lincolnshire, 1856 <http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/227725/recl/9>
- 3) Ashley Taylor, Push Creativity

