



Greater Wigston Historical Society
White Gate Farm, Newton Lane, Wigston Magna Leicestershire

BULLETIN 31



PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS OCTOBER 1991 TO FEBRUARY 1992

Wednesday 16th October 1991

Talk on Thomas Cook, this year being the 150th Anniversary of his first excursion - Bernard Elliott (Member)
7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

Wednesday 20th November 1991

Recent work in Leics. Archaeology - Peter Liddle.
7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

Wednesday 18th December 1991

Christmas Party with Quiz organised by Jim Colver.
7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

Wednesday 15th January 1992

History of the Fire Fighting Service - John Warden (Member)
7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

Wednesday 19th February 1992

A.G.M. & Members Evening. Your chance to talk for approx. 10 minutes, show slides etc.
7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

The Bulletin is published three times a year. 1st February, June and October. Articles etc. to either of the Joint Editors three clear weeks before publication date please.

Joint Editors

Mrs. Chris Smart, Firtree House, Broad Lane, Markfield.
Mrs. Tricia Berry, 7 Wensleydale Road, Wigston.

June meeting

On Wednesday the 19th of June the Society visited St. Luke's Church at Gaddesby. Approximately 50 members met in the Liberal Club Car Park to await the coach. On our arrival at Gaddesby we were ushered into the church where David Parsons, Senior Lecturer in Architecture, Department of English Local History at the University of Leicester, was waiting to start his talk. Members of the congregation were also present.

He gave us a brief history of the church and its foundation. St. Luke's is one of the largest and most beautiful village churches of Leicestershire. Historically the detailed development is not easy to trace, though most of what is to be seen dates from the 13th and 14th century.

We then proceeded outside to view the exterior which quite exceptional. It is both limestone and ironstone faced, with elaborate carvings particularly on the west end of the south aisle. There are also numerous masons' marks. Unfortunately we were

unable to hear all of Mr. Parson's talk on the exterior as our meal at the Carrington Arms, Ashby Folville had been booked for 9.00 p.m. After a most pleasant supper we boarded the coach to return to Wigston.

Many thanks to Stella Tweed who organized a most interesting and enjoyable evening.

AUGUST 1991 MEETING

Members spent a most enjoyable evening looking around Kibworth Harcourt with Ian Varey.

He explained that the three villages of Kibworth Harcourt, Kibworth Beauchamp & Smeeton Westerby have always been linked & until the daughter church at Smeeton was built all shared the same parish church. The name Kibworth is derived from a Saxon Christian name Kybe & worth meant surrounding homestead. The Harcourt part of the name dates from C1202 after Robert de Harcourt of France, who built the castle, now just a mound in a small field. The Parish was enclosed in 1779, rather later than was usual for the area.

We started the walk at Kibworth Windmill. The present one, a post mill with a 'post' nearly 2ft sq., dates from 1711, but a windmill is known to have been in the village, probably on the same site, since C1200. It last worked just before W.W.I. & was derelict by 1913. Merton College, which had owned the mill for 680 years, together with most of the village, gave it in 1936 to a charitable trust who were responsible for the restoration. The first miller in 1711 was Daniel Hutchinson & he & subsequent millers have carved their names inside. Each miller was permitted to keep 1/16th in weight of the flour produced as payment for his work.

We then looked at the narrow village streets with sharp right angle bends which was once the route of the main Leicester/London Road.

There are some very interesting buildings - notably The Old House built in 1678 probably by the Phillips family. This is a Renaissance/Classical style in brick & stone with hipped roof & Swithland slates. Another is The Manor House built in a typical H shape which would originally have had an open hall in the centre with one wing for the family & one for the servants.

Kibworth was a strong centre of dissenter worship & the first Presbyterian Chapel was founded in 1662. It was replaced in 1759 & had its own school & burial ground. A notable minister was Dodderidge the hymn writer.

There was not time to see the Grammar School, founded in 1490, so as the light began to fade Ian was thanked for sharing his knowledge with us. Those who wished to concluded the evening with a drink at the Three Horse Shoes.

September meeting ...

On Wednesday the 18th of September the Society met to hear Mr. Gil Jackson speak on Three Indian Cultures, Aztec, Maya and Inca. Our Chairman began with an apology from Mr. Jackson for restricting his talk to the Incas only; to have covered all three civilizations in the time available would have been impossible.

Mr. Jackson began by explaining that he was a veteran of several long distance journeys. The talk would be about part of a 59,000 mile trip that he and his wife undertook to travel the length of the Americas, taking over 16 months in total.

This part of the trip started in Panama where their vehicle was shipped across to Equador it being impossible to actually drive across the swamp land in between. After a lengthy period getting through customs and an interesting sea journey to the Galapagos Islands, they eventually started South taking in the ancient Inca settlements on the way.

The Inca culture began in about 3000 B.C. and it developed simultaneously with the other South American cultures with no apparent contact between them. They lived at an altitude of about 9000 feet and as a result developed enormous chests. The men were masons and road builders, the women potters and weavers. They worshipped the Sun and the Moon, were small in stature and they dressed in a garment called an onka. The women wove the cloth with a back strap loom and the cloth was dyed with dyes from vegetables grown in the fields, this tradition is still carried out today. They used a pyramid system for control of the people with at the apex the Inca or Man God. Babies were not weaned for three years and not named until after puberty and a special ceremony had taken place.

The Inca civilization ended in 1532 when, during a period of instability involving which of the Inca's twin sons should inherit, the Spaniard Pizaro took over the Empire and pulled down most of the buildings.

Mr. Jackson then proceeded to show us some slides to illustrate his talk and these were most interesting and showed many fascinating aspects of South American civilization and culture including the famous Nasca lines.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Jackson for a most interesting talk and invited him to return to talk to us about the Aztecs and the Mayans. After notices the evening finished at 9.05p.m. This was a well supported meeting with 42 members present.

Front cover illustration ...

The cover for this edition of the Bulletin has been prepared and drawn for the Society by Jim Colver. It is a sketch of the Durham Ox Inn, Long Street, now demolished.

A search of local trade directories for landlords of the Durham Ox has given the following names:-

Directory	Date	Landlord
Whites	1846	Johnson, John
Drakes	1861	Johnson, John
Barkers	1875	Cleveland, Alfred
1877	Cleveland, Alfred	
1881	CollinCgls, Charles	
Kellys	1888	Collins, Charles
Kellys	1895	Boulton, Jn. Thomas
Wrights	1895	Boulton, Jn. Thomas
Wrights	1899	Clark, Job
Kellys	1916	Harrold, William Edward
Kellys	1922	Gill, Alfred
Kellys	1925	Gill, Alfred

OADBY AND WIGSTON MAGNA IN 1881.

The population of Oadby in 1881 was 1,731 and that of Wigston Magna at the same date. 4,229. The population of Wigston Magna was now growing much faster than that of Oadby. In 1871, Oadby's population had been 1,250 and between 1871 and 1881 it had risen by some 38% .

As for Wigston, the population had been 2,678 in 1871 but between 1871 and 1881 it had risen by some 63 %.

Some interchange of population took place in these years between people in Oadby and Wigston Magna. For example, six men born in Wigston came to live in Oadby. They included Thomas Forryan, 62, a farmer who married Maria from Thorpe Acre . The couple lived for some time in Leicester where four of their children were born : William, Elizabeth, Lilian and Florence. But c. 1877 they moved to live in main Street, Oadby and there they had another son, John Eldridge, who was baptised in St. Peter's Church, Oadby on 14 October 1877. Two years later, they had another son, Thomas, who was born in Oadby.

Another Wigston man who came to live in Oadby was Thomas Hurst, 37, a framework knitter. He married Harriett, a sock stitcher who had been born in Oadby and the couple came to live in Main Street ,Oadby where their five children were born : Caroline, Isaac, Frank, George and Frances, who was only one month old in April 1881.

Another Wigston man who came to live in Oadby at this time was Comfort Bowles. He and his wife, Elizabeth, lived at first in Wigston and in 1871 their first child, Elizabeth was born. Three years later they had a son, Charles, and son after his birth the couple came to live in Hill's Yard, Oadby. Here three more children were born: Sarah, Henrietta and John who was only five months old at the time of the 1881 census. Soon after John's birth, Comfort's wife died and so at the age of 30 Comfort found himself a widower.

William Kirby, aged 30 in 1881 a shoe rivetter, was born in Wigston and married Mary Coleman of Great Glen on 7 November 1871. They lived first of all in Wigston where their daughter, Sarah was born, but c. 1875 they came to live in Cross Street, Oadby where two more daughters, Elizabeth and Ada, were born, both girls being baptised in St. Peter's Church, Oadby on 5 February 1884.

Another Wigston man who came to live in Oadby was Mark York, aged 50 in 1881, an agricultural labourer who married Mary of Littlethorpe. They lived first of all in Wigston, where their four children were born: Selina, James, Arthur and David, but soon after David's birth they came to live in Main Street, Oadby.

Isaac Hurst, 49, the licensee of the Black Dog in Main Street, Oadby, was born in Wigston Magna. He married Caroline, a Wigston girl. They had a daughter, Anne, who was born in Wigston, but c. 1880 the couple came to Oadby to become the licensees of the Black Dog, near to the Church.

Thus, about 1881 six Wigston men came to live in Oadby and ten Oadby men came to live in Wigston. One such man was Henry Smith, 27, butcher, who lived in Bell Street, Wigston. His wife, Mary, 24, also came from Oadby, but soon after their marriage they came to live in Bell Street, Wigston, where their daughter, Alice, was born in June 1880. Henry had an apprentice, Thomas Harris, 18, who also came from Oadby. Another Oadby man who came to live in Wigston was Thomas Smith, 50, a master shoe-maker, who employed three men one boy and one girl in his factory in Bell Street. His wife, Eliza, had also been born in Oadby. They lived in Oadby at first and their first two children were born there, Martha and Anne. But about 1868 Smith fancied his prospects were brighter in Wigston than Oadby, so the family came to live in Bell Street Wigston where their three youngest children were born, Thomas, Walter and Edgar, who was 7 in 1881.

Thomas Posnett, 24, gardener, was born in Oadby, but his wife, Louisa, came from Cheltenham. They lived in Oadby Road, Wigston and had no children at the time of the census in April 1881.

James Voss, 64, sock framework knitter, was born in Oadby and so was his wife, Anne. They lived at first in Oadby and then c. 1859 moved to Oadby Road, Wigston where their two children, Henry and Sarah, were born. Joseph Preston, 58, framework knitter was born in Oadby and so was his wife Anne, 58. But c. 1861, the couple came to live in Burgess Street, Wigston, where their daughter, Ellen, was born in 1862.

William Norman, 64, railway servant, was born in Oadby and so was his wife, Elizabeth, 63. The couple lived at first in Peatling Parva, but c. 1873 they came to live in Oadby Road, Wigston, where their three sons, Thomas, Alfred and William were born, being 8, 6 and 2 in April 1881.

Isaac Baker, 62, waggoner, was born in Oadby. His wife, Sarah, came from Leicester and in 1881 the couple were living in Leicester Road, Wigston and their grand daughter, Mary Baker, 11, born in Wigston was living with them.

John Smith, 29, shoe-maker, was born in Oadby and his wife, Caroline, had been born in London. Caroline's father, James Goode, a grazier, lived in Newton Lane and John Smith and Caroline lived with him. They had a daughter, Lilian, born in 1880,

Andrew Ross, 70, was a baker living in Moat Street, Wigston. He had been born in Oadby and in 1881 was a widower who employed a housekeeper, Harriet, aged 30.

Bernard Elliott.

A USEFUL CALCULATION

Have you ever wondered what day of the week a certain even occurred? The date may be well known, your birth date for instance, but was it on a Monday, Tuesday..? I found the following method of calculating this described in a newspaper article.

I have checked it on several known examples and it really does seem to be accurate. It proved useful recently in dating an old photograph. The scene portrayed was a factory with a calendar on the wall. With the help of two magnifying glasses it was possible to discern the days and dates and the month as April, But the year, in smaller type, could have been 1924 or 1929. By applying this calculation I was able to positively date the picture as 1929.

Method

- 1) Take the last two digits of the year.
- 2) Add a quarter of this number, neglecting any remainder.
- 3) Add the day of the month.
- 4) Add according to the month: January 1 (or in leap year 0), February 4 (or in leap year 3), March 4, April 0, May 2, June 5, July 0, August 3, September 6, October 1, November 4 and December 6.
- 5) Add for the 18th Century 4, 19th Century 2, 20th Century 0 and 21st Century 6.
- 6) Divide the total by 7 and the remainder gives the day of the week as follows: 1 = Sunday, 2 = Monday, 3 = Tuesday, 4 = Wednesday, 5 = Thursday, 6 = Friday, 0 = Saturday.

Tricia Berry

MOAT STREET, WIGSTON MAGNA . 100 YEARS AGO.

Its name most probably taken from the moated homestead, the site of which used to be visible to the rear of All Saints Church in Newgate End, Moat Street presented the familiar Wigston pattern of closely packed houses followed by stretches of agricultural land but none of it far from the noise and bustle of its main industry, the hosiery trade.

366 people lived in the 71 houses in the street at this time, of which 154 had a trade or calling of some sort, including 3 proprietors and 90 other folk in the hosiery industry, 60 of them framework knitters.

Living at No. 10 on the map was a family later to become much better known in that trade locally. That of John Dalton Broughton a 27 year old framework knitter, his wife Ann, a seamer and their five children Lizzie, Ernest, Emma Laura, Sarah and the five month old John Alfred.

By and large, wives and often widows did not claim to have a trade. Only 12 wives and 4 widows from a total of 67 in the census, went to work and most of these had large families to support. As was normal in Wigston at that time, few people worked on the land. Only three men are mentioned, all farm labourers with two of them living as neighbours across the road from Long Lane.

The largest group next to the hosiery folk were the 14 men employed by the Railway Company followed by 10 men described as labourers. 6 were classed as servants of which 3 lived in the home of Edward Miles at No. 2 on the map and later known as "The Cedars". The house is still standing, although much altered and converted into three still sizeable houses. The next largest group were the four seamstresses followed by three people described as managers. Thomas Heard, who arrived in Wigston from Canada and his wife Harriett and their three daughters. One of whom was at the tender age of 13, working as a seamstress. The other two were the husband and wife, James and Sarah Whyatt. He is described as a provision and drapery manager whilst Sarah is noted as the manager of the Co-operative Store. Two bakers lived in adjoining houses, James Allen from Gilmorton at No. 45 and the 70 year old Andrew Ross from Oadby who had a journeyman John Smith of Sileby to help run his bakery at No. 46.

Two young girls were described as Factory Girls and the following callings occupied the time of one person each. Land surveyor, Sawyer, Coal Stageman, Fitter, Telegraph Clerk, Shoemaker, Shoe Stitcher, Carter, Brickmaker, Coppersmith and Errand Boy.

Other business men consisted of a grocer, a pork butcher, a coal dealer and one outdoor beer seller together with John Forryan who kept the 'Old Crown'. He arrived in Wigston from Narborough and was the landlord of the public house from 1882 to 1888.

There were in addition four people not working, 113 scholars, a number of which were but 3 years of " age plus 44 children under school age.

The oldest person at work was the 74 year old widow, Ann Hill, living at No. 3 and described as a seamer. One year younger at No. 17, Samuel Green, still worked a stocking frame.

The youngest worker also was a framework knitter, Fred Moore a 12 year old, one of a family of nine living at No. 24. Other than the aforementioned 13 year old seamstress, one other of the same age Hannah Folwell of No. 10 worked as a mender. Of the 366 people listed, 299 were born in the village, 46 arrived from elsewhere in the county and 20 from elsewhere in the country, plus the manager from Quebec.

J R Colver

While searching for something else, I noticed the following article. It was in the Leicestershire Chronicle date 16/12/1916. I thought perhaps it would be of interest to readers, so it is reproduced here in full.

Tricia Berry.

WIGSTON HONOURS BOULTER-, V.C.

Presentation to a Gallant Hero

Sergt. Wm. Ewart Boulter, V.C. Northamptonshire Regt., was given a public reception at Wigston on Saturday. Boulter, whose parents reside at 9, The Avenue, Wigston, is an "old boy" of the Longstreet school, where the scholars gave him a fine reception on October 30th.

The proceedings began with a procession from Glen Parva Barracks, headed by a military band and a detachment of soldiers. In the first carriage were seated Sergt. Boulter, V.C., Mr. and Mrs. F. Boulter, father and mother; Miss Florence Lusher, fiancée; and Miss May Boulter, sister. In the other carriages and motor cars were Mr. A.E. Hill, J.P. (chairman of the District Council), Mr. J.W. Black, J.P., C.C. (vice chairman), Mr. H.T. Hincks, C.C., Messrs. W. Gamble, A.S. Payne, Oliver Hirst, W.R. Pritchard, J.D. Broughton, A.H. Broughton, J.T. Moore, J.L. Snowden, H.A. Blythe, E. Bailey and Mr. E.F. Bull, the latter having charge of the secretarial arrangements owing to the unavoidable absence of Mr. A.H. Burgess, clerk to the U.D.C. The Great Wigston United and Wigston Temperance Prize massed bands, the Wigston and Glen Parva V.T.C., and a detachment of Boy Scouts, also formed part of the procession.

The route taken by the procession was along Saffron Road, Blaby Road, Station Road, Bushloe-end, Long Street, and Bull Street [sic]; to the Fountain where an open air meeting was held, the chair being occupied by Mr. A.E. Hill. In addition to those already named there were present, Mrs. Preston, Mrs. Shields, Miss Jeeves, Miss Herrick, Dr. Barnsley [sic], Messrs. W. Wyatt, Thornton, Dobson, A.E. Crane, A.G. Sharp, A.M. Dalby, W.G.J. Clark, John Abbott, S.B. Matthews, W.A. Deeming, J.A. Harris etc.

As Sergeant Boulter ascended the temporary platform he was heartily cheered by the huge crowd.

The Chairman said Sergeant Boulter had been in France doing his duty, and not only had he done his duty but he had brought honour to himself and to his native village. (Applause).

He had made a name for himself, and they were all proud of him.

Mr. J.W. Black said it was a record day as far as the history of Wigston was concerned. The valorous and courageous act performed by Sergeant Boulter had not only earned the commendation of the Wigston people, but also the thanks of the King and the nation. (Applause).

In Leicestershire they had only had two V.C.'s during the present war, one given to a Wigston man and the other to a man who had been brought up only about half a mile from Wigston. (Applause).

He wished long life to Sergeant Boulter, and hoped he would be preserved from the dangers and perils of the battle-field, and return to enjoy a life of happiness in the esteem of his fellow-citizens.

Mr. H.T. Hincks, who remarked that Victoria Crosses were never lightly given, presented Sergt. Boulter with a scarf-pin as a personal mark of appreciation of his bravery.

Mr. J.W. Broughton [sic] said they were proud of Sergt. Boulter for the honour he had gained, and Wigston stood in Leicestershire as the proud place where V.C.'s were bred.

The Chairman then presented Sergt. Boulter with a bronze shield, in repousse work, mounted on oak, and intimated that another gift of the value of about £100 would follow. The shield bore the following inscription:-

"Presented to Sergeant W.E. Boulter, V.C. (Northamptonshire Regiment), by the residents of Wigston Magna-his native place- as a mark of admiration for his conspicuous bravery in the field, and to commemorate the honour which has been conferred upon him by H.M. the King-December 1916."

Sergeant Boulter, who was enthusiastically received, feelingly returned thanks, and said he was one of the first to admit that many Victoria Crosses had been earned on the battlefield, but the deeds had not been recognised. He only went out to do his little bit, and he only hoped that a better method of settling disputes, other than by war, could be found. He hoped that there would be a speedy settlement, and that it would be to the benefit of England and the Allies. (Applause).

We quote ...

"

The true history of a nation was not indeed of its wars but of its households
- Ruskin's "Time and Tide"

We quote:

You cannot prosper by discouraging thrift.
You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong.
You cannot help the poor by destroying the rich.
You cannot establish sound security on borrowed money.
You cannot keep out of trouble by spending more than you earn.
You cannot build character and courage by taking away man's initiative and independence.
You cannot help men permanently by doing more for them than they can do for themselves.

Abraham Lincoln's fiscal policy in 1865.

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