



Coal Merchants

One Merchant was Eli Bailey

Mr Eli Bailey

A Wigston farm flashback of 80 years ago. The late Mr Eli Bailey is holding the horse reign while his father, the late Mr Eli Bailey (grandfather of Mr Jack Bailey 105 Central Avenue Wigston Magna) stands by the haystack. On the right of the picture is Mr Jack Bailey's uncle the late Mr Tom Bailey.



Extract from Wigston Paper Friday June 12th 1964

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A little bit of railway history in Wigston

I have been contacted by Peter Clowes, the curator at the Framework Knitters Museum, in Wigston Magna, who says he always looks forward to reading this page.



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One of the recent items that struck him as particularly interesting concerned the signal box at Wigston.

He has sent me this photograph of the earlier signal box at Wigston, which stood slightly further south than the one I featured.

"This not only looked after the line signals, but also operated the level crossing gates on the road between Wigston Magna and South Wigston," Peter says.

"With the ever-increasing coal traffic to London, the Midland railway had to increase the capacity of the route, resulting in two extra slow lines being laid from Leicester to Kilby Bridge.

"Both Wigston Magna Station and the crossing were swept away and a long embankment to the new bridge was built with earth from the Navy Pit, a mile along the line towards Kilby Bridge.

"This new road was soon nicknamed 'Spion Kop' by local folk after the recent battle in the South African war.

"Behind the box can be seen 'Twenty Row' – Midland cottages built for the railway employees working at the extensive junctions and the nearby shed and wagon repair workshops.

"My grandfather, Eli Bailey, lost his allotment in the foreground to the embankment, and his horses had the additional pull up the new road to the bridge when carting coal to Wigston Gas Works from the railway yard, where the Tesco car park is now situated.

"This was a task that four generations of our family did, including myself, commencing in 1857 when the works opened, until gas production ceased in 1955, when the local system was connected to the national grid.

"The family cartage firm of Eli Bailey must have carried many, many, thousands of tons along this road during the 98 years of local gas production."

Leicester Mercury 2012

End

Listed in Kelly's Directory 1916

Bailey Eli, carter, 5 Bushloe End

Bailey John, cab propr, 1 Bushloe End

Facebook Comments



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[Julie Taylor](#) Eli Bailey was the coal merchant, my cousin David Clowes recently posted a picture of him. My grandfather Charles Clowes and my Dad Peter Clowes continued the family coal business and my brother Michael, 4 generations. My mum and dad, Peter and Shirley Clowes were the owners of the Magnet Stores on Bushloe End.

Name and Contact Detail of Person Supplying The Information

Text of information found

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