



Greater Wigston Historical Society

White Gate Farm, Newton Lane, Wigston Magna Leicestershire

BULLETIN 48



The Bewicke Arms, Hallaton.

J.R. Colver

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS - JUNE 1997 TO FEBRUARY 1998

Wednesday 18th June 1997

Guided tour of St. Mary de Castro & St. Nicholas Churches - Rev. David Cawley.
Meet 7.00p.m. Paddock Street Car Park to share transport.

Wednesday 20th August 1997

Guided tour of Bushloe House, Station Road, by O. & W.B.C. Assistant Chief Executive, Mr. Walker,
with tea & biscuits afterwards.
Meet 7.30p.m. at Bushloe House.

Thursday 18th September 1997

'Richard III, Hero or Villain?'¹ - Thesis read by Colin Towell with slides by Peter Mastin.
7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

Thursday 16th October 1997

'Wharf Street revisited'¹ talk with slides - Cynthia Brown
7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

Thursday 20th November 1997

'Tracing your Family Tree'¹ - Joyce Billings, Leics & Rut. F.H.S.
7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

Thursday 18th December 1997

Christmas Party with slide quiz 'Leicester's Skyline' - Norman Pilgrim
7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

Thursday 15th January 1998

'NOT the resorts in Spain'¹ the Moorish influence in the towns - George Jackson.
7.30p.m Wigston Liberal Club.

Thursday 19th February 1998

A.G.M. plus 'Firewatching during the War'¹ - Stella Tweed
7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

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The Bulletin is published three times a year on 1st February, June & October. Articles etc. (which are always welcome) should be submitted to either of the Joint Editors three clear weeks before the publication date please.

Joint Editors: Mrs. Chris Smart, 197 Queens Road, Leicester.
Mrs. Tricia Berry, 7 Wensleydale Road, Wigston.

February meeting...

On Thursday the 20th of February, forty six members met for the Society's AGM. This was the first Thursday meeting in the ground floor room.

Apologies were received from Bill Ward, Tony Lawrence, Ralph Wignall and Duncan Lucas. Doris read the minutes of last year's AGM and as there were no matters arising they were accepted as a correct record.

Treasurer's report. Brian reported a good year. A healthy balance of over £600 was in hand to carry forward to next year. However, this year expenditure was greater than income, so in future, if this trend continues, financial care will be required.

A debate followed concerning subscriptions and donations. The ground floor room is more expensive, if subscriptions are raised this will help to meet the shortfall. An increase of subscriptions to £6 (£4 concessions) was proposed and carried. A motion to reduce our donations to the FWK Museum and the Wigston Museum was also proposed and carried.

Chairman's report. Edna outlined the reasons for the change of evening and room. Several members had been having difficulty with the stairs and increasing membership meant that the upstairs room was often crowded. The changes are for a trial period only. The matter will be reconsidered later in the year when our indoor meetings recommence.

Some money had been paid back for the Town Crier's costume and the Society no longer has any responsibility for this.

A full programme of talks and outings had taken place and they were all well attended. The Bulletin was well received and the editors were thanked. Tricia Berry, Peter Mastin and Duncan Lucas are about to publish a book of Wigston photographs. In all a very satisfactory year was reported.

Membership secretary's report. The Society has a total of 88 members. Six members had not renewed their subscriptions but six new people had joined. Attendance at meetings fluctuated between 36 and 47 people.

Election of officers. There had been no nominations so all officers were elected unopposed
AOB. There was no other business. Except that we were all reminded that subscriptions are now due. The meeting then continued with a slide show. Edna and Dennis Taylor moved to Wigston in 1954. Compared with "up north" Wigston at this time was bucolic. Farmland, and working farms reached into the centre of the village. Little had changed for many years. The slides represented the period between 1962 and 1965/6. This period was the beginning of the development of Wigston into the busy, populous town that we know today. It hardly seems possible that so many changes have taken place in just over thirty years. The slides illustrated these changes perfectly and provoked many comments and interjections from the assembled members.

Every-one agreed that it was a most enjoyable evening. Dennis and Edna agreed to look out some more of their treasure trove of slides and show them some time in the not too distant future.

March meeting ...

The Society met on Thursday the 20th of March to hear a talk by Diane Courtney. Diane, a Blue Badge guide, showed slides, and spoke about the Follies and curiosities of Leicestershire.

The slides were varied from art, architecture and archaeology to customs, people, monuments and feats of engineering. They included examples of castles, Roman remains and deserted villages. It was a talk of legends, facts and figures, and superlatives.

Many of the more unusual photographs were taken in North West Leicestershire. For instance, there were slides of Ulverscroft Priory, owned by Heathcote and Ball, which is only open once a year. There were several examples of cruck-framed, box-framed with wattle and daub infill, and box-framed with brick infill cottages in little known villages in the North West of the County. A beautiful view of Staunton Harold Church, Hall and lake. This landscape was described by Pevsner as, '... unsurpassed in the country - as far as Englishness is concerned.'

Diane was thanked for a most interesting slide show. After questions the meeting closed at 8.45 p.m. Forty two members were present.

APRIL MEETING

In April the Society welcomed a return visit by Mr. K.F. Day whose illustrated talk 'The History of England on Inn Signs' was really enjoyable. He began by expressing the hope that his subject did not offend any teetotal members & then repeated a little saying:- "It is better to sit in the pub thinking about the Church, than sit in the Church thinking about the pub!"

Most Inn signs are quite detailed, beautifully produced & worth more than a casual glance. In general Whitbreads Brewery he thought the best, this company going to considerable trouble to research & produce accurate examples. 'The Three Swans' at Market Harborough has the finest ironwork decoration of any in the country.

The first sign shown was the 'Ancient Briton' on a Greenalls pub in Shrewsbury. It featured cave men characters in loin cloths with primitive tools. The last ones were the 'Space Ship'¹ & the 'Flying Saucer.'

Other notable examples included -

'The Buthay' in Wickwar, Gloucs, which is the only one in the country which commemorates the Battle of Cressey in 1346. ¹ De Montfort¹ in Wellington Street, Leicester, now renamed the 'Courthouse' recalled the Knights of the Shires summoned to London in 1265.

'Church House Inn'¹ Stoke Gabriel, Nr Paignton. There are several of these, mainly in Devon, which date from the 13th/14th Century church building time when craftsmen arrived from outside the area & first of all built a house to live in. Afterwards these were often turned into pubs.

'Star & Garter' when Joan, Countess of Salisbury, lost her garter in 1348 & it was picked up by the king who placed it on himself. 'Green Cross'¹ in Cuckfield, Sussex. Remembering William the Conqueror, a piece from the Bayeux Tapestry.

'William Caxton' Tenterden, Kent. The first English printer, whose work enabled books to be produced in larger numbers, thus laying the foundations for better literacy in this country.

'The Shrew Beshrewed' showing the penalty for gossip with the ducking stool.

'The Curfew'¹ reminding of events under Oliver Cromwell when the Puritans forbade people to be out after dark.

'Pin & Bowls' the restoration of Charles II & people allowed to enjoy themselves again. Questions afterwards inevitably included, had Mr. Day visited all these pubs? To which he replied most of them, but over a period of many years! And what did he think of the current trend of altering names? To which he answered very regrettable.

Edna Taylor thanked Mr. Day for a really entertaining evening. There followed a number of announcements about forthcoming events & names were taken for our outing next month to Foxton Locks.

MAY MEETING

The Society's summer season started with a visit to Foxton Locks Museum. This had only opened about 6 years ago, in a small way in the old engine house, which itself first had to be restored from a derelict condition. It is now well established & full of exhibits & a great credit to all involved.

We were welcomed by the curator, Mike Beech, who gave a short introductory talk & then allowed us to wander at will & ask any questions we wished.

There were several models & plans on display showing the layout of the site which was opened as late as 1814. This was because plans in 1793 by the Union Canal Company to create a navigation from West Bridge, Leicester, through Aylestone using the River Soar, & on to Saddington, Foxton, East Farndon & Kelmarsch to link up with the Northampton Arm of the Grand Junction Canal failed through lack of money when the work had reached Debdale Wharf. Subsequently the company managed an extension to Market Harborough in 1809, but a new concern, the Grand Union Canal Company, finally took the scheme forward with a route from Foxton via Lubbenham to North Kilworth, Crick & Norton near Daventry with an arm to Welford which was opened on 9/8/1814. There were 10 locks at Foxton constructed to span a height from top to bottom of 75ft 2ins & a boat took 40 minutes to pass through using 25,000 gallons of water.

The lift was opened in 1900 & this used minimal water. There were two tanks 80ft x 14ft which could hold 2 narrow boats or 1 barge each. It took 12 minutes. The engine was powered with a 25h.p. coal fired steam engine & the cost was £1. 4. 6d per day in fuel & wages. It closed after only a short life in 1911 a victim of operational difficulties & competition from the railways.

Other exhibits included life size models in typical canal costume, brightly painted canal wear, a boat, lots of memorabilia & photographs & some unrelated by-gones such as cameras, bottles & coins.

Some of the larger exhibits outside were two icebreakers, the Thomas Holt & Gordon Thomas, named after former canal engineers.

We then continued to the Shoulder of Mutton pub for a lovely supper. Afterwards the Chairman, Edna Taylor, thanked Doris Chandler & the staff for the excellent organisation which resulted in everyone being served the correct meal even though menus had been chosen some weeks previously.

WIGSTON WHO'S WHO NO: 17

STEPHEN FRY

Stephen Fry was baptised on 18/9/1816 at Desford Parish Church. He was the eighth of the nine children of the Rev. John Fry & his wife Martha. The Rev. Fry had been appointed Rector of Desford in 1800 & continued in that position until his death in 1849. He had trained at University College, Oxford, & had been brought up in Tonbridge, Kent where his father, also John Fry, (Stephen's grandfather), had lived in some style being described as a Gentleman.

Stephen trained as an architect & surveyor & was living in St. Martin's Parish in Leicester when, at the age of 25, he married Eliza Sykes Barber at St. Mary de Castro, on 5/10/1841. Eliza was the daughter of Harby Barber a Leicester dyer & fuller with business premises in Northgates & a house in Belgrave. Eliza's brother William had also chosen the Church of England for a career & he performed the marriage ceremony for the couple.

In 1846 Stephen had his own architectural practice at 6 New Street where he was also agent for the Birmingham Fire & Life Insurance Company. Little information is available on his training & work, probably because he did not join the R.I.B.A., an organisation still in its early days, having been founded in 1834. He did however seem to specialise in church work. He was responsible for the restoration of the roof of All Saints' Blaby in 1846, to a design described as "typical of its time" & in 1850 he rebuilt the chancel & restored the north aisle of All Saints' Thurlaston.

Stephen & Eliza lived in New Walk & had three children. The first two, Augustin Barber Fry & Harriet Eliza Fry were baptised at Desford, but the youngest one, Ellen Charlotte Georgina Fry, was baptised at Wigston where her Uncle William Barber was by then the curate at All Saints'.

Stephen's business prospered & he decided to move from the town, so he bought 2.5 acres of land in Wigston, near his brother Augustin Fry, surgeon, who lived at Kingswood Lodge, & his brother-in-law, who lived at the vicarage. He drew plans for his own family house which was to be in yellow brick under a Welsh slate roof. The design incorporated a big squared bay window with moulded stone jambs, ornamental chimneys, a deep cornice below the overhanging eaves, & inside, a three flight open well staircase with heavy finely carved octagonal newels with acorn finials. Building commenced in early 1850 on what was to be named Bushloe House.

Things however were not to work out as planned. On 7th August in that year he had a severe Epileptic attack & was in a state of "violent dilirium 6 days" before he died, in Wigston, on 13th August, aged just 34 years old. The death was registered by Thomas Carr a gardener of Long Street who was present at the time. Probably he worked at Kingswood Lodge or the vicarage & had been asked to sit with the patient for a while. His devastated family had him buried in Welford Road Cemetery, Leicester. His would have been one of the earlier burials as the cemetery was only opened the previous year.

The following Spring when the 1851 census was taken Eliza Fry & her children aged only 8, 6 & 3 years old were staying with her brother at the vicarage. There was quite a full house. Rev. Barber & his wife Harriet & their 4 children, Eliza & her 3 children & a 13 year old visitor from Ireland named Aubrey D Beauclerk, whose family were the impropiators & consequently large land owners in the parish. There were also 4 indoor servants to be accommodated.

It is not known whether Eliza & the children ever lived at Bushloe House. It was however retained by the family & let to various tenants, notably Rev. Charles Berry who had earlier in his life been a well known minister at the Great Meeting Chapel in East Bond Street, Leicester. Stephen's son Augustin Barber Fry followed his uncle & namesake into the medical profession & settled in Kibworth Harcourt. He was the owner of Bushloe House when it was sold to Mr. H.A. Owston in 1866.

Eliza remarried in due course & it was as Eliza Sykes Manton that she died, aged 61, in Stockton-on-Tees on 10/7/1879. Her body was returned to Leicester to be buried alongside Stephen 5 days later.

Stephen's architectural practice was taken over by Robert Johnson Goodacre who had been articled to him. It traded as Walker & Goodacre & in 1853 was responsible for the rebuilding of St. Wolstan's Church (except the tower which had survived). Ten years later another architectural practice had moved into 6 New Street & R.J. Goodacre was at 5 Friar Lane. In 1877 R.J. & J. Goodacre were responsible for further large scale restoration at St. Wolstan's, adding the porch at this time. Thus Stephen's design influence & ideas are still around us today some 147 years after his death

Tricia Berry

Sources: 1851 Census for Wigston, Various parish registers & directories, Grave (Consecrated) H467 at Welford Road Cemetery, Death certificate, The Buildings of Leics. & Rutland by Nikolaus Pevsner, The Master Builder by Donald S. Hunt, Leics. Architects 1700-1850 by J.D. Bennett.

Friends of the Peace Memorial Park Fete - Saturday 6th September

The Friends of the Park have launched a fund raising programme to enable them to restore and refurbish the Peace Memorial Park in Long Street.

The Historical Society has offered to help with the fund raising.

If any member has either ideas for a stall or event at the fete or would be willing to volunteer to help would they let **Doris** (Tel. 2881978) know before the 20th June.

SOME NOTES ON WIGSTON'S DUTCHY MANOR & HOUSE IN LONG STREET

At the time of the Norman Conquest the whole manor of Wigston (together with many others) belonged to Ralph, Earl of Hereford who was a nephew of Edward the Confessor. This gift of Wigston by a king suggests that it had been a royal manor beforehand, though there is no evidence to prove this theory. At the Conquest, or immediately afterwards, Ralph's manor of Wigston was given by the new king William I to Hugh de Grentemaisnil, a Norman magnate who had accompanied him to England, and had then been richly rewarded with lands in five counties.

The vast estates of Hugh passed about 1101, to Robert, count of Meulan (or Mellent), who became the first Earl of Leicester. For the next 100 years, down to 1204, the manor remained in the hands of the earls of Leicester, through four generations, until the death of the last earl without issue. Sometime during this 100 years one of the earls granted a considerable part of the manor to a local magnate, one of the Croft family, so called after the village of that name. This property came to be regarded as a manor in itself, & descended in due course by marriage to the Champayne family.

When the fourth earl died his estates were partitioned between his two sisters, Margaret the wife of Saer de Quincey who was created Earl of Winchester in 1207, & Amicia, who subsequently married Simon de Montfort, father of the better known Simon.

The principal manor of Wigston, some three quarters of the whole, was assigned to Margaret & was then known as the Winchester fee, later passing by marriage to the Earls of Oxford, & becoming known as the Oxford fee. The overlordship of the smaller, Champayne manor, went to Amicia & was then known as the Leicester fee or Dutchy fee because the Earls of Leicester were also Dukes of Lancaster.

The Dutchy manor passed from the Champaynes by a complicated descent to one Baldwin Bugge & then to the Turviles of Normanton Turvile. It must have been purchased outright at some stage because by 1509 it was held by Sir William Turvile, while the larger manor was held by John de Vere 13th Earl of Oxford. Both were absentee Lords but whereas the Oxfords probably never came to Wigston because it was their only land in Leicestershire, the Turvile's lived at Normanton & may have been known locally.

The Turvile's manorial rights were concentrated in the NE part of the village, ie most of the farmhouses on the East of Bull Head Street & the cul de sacs off it. Similarly the farmhouses along Moat Street up to All Saints' Church & the West side of Bull Head Street tended to belong to the Earl of Oxford's manor. There was no such neat division of the farmland however, as this was prior to enclosure & the lands of both were intermingled throughout the three big fields.

The older established Bull Head Street & Moat Street tended to have wide square plots, whereas streets developed later, when space was more limited, such as Long Street, had long narrow plots.

St. Wolstan's Church was built or more probably rebuilt in the last quarter of the 13th century for the use of the Dutchy manor. It was served by a chaplain from the parish church.

The Dutchy manor was the first to be disposed of, by Henry Turvile in 1586-8, when 14 farms totalling 711 acres were put up for sale. Three of the larger farms of 80 to 120 acres were bought by outsiders, but the smaller ones of 30 acres were mostly bought by sitting tenants, one of whom was Peter Ragg. The Ragg family, each succeeding generation being named Peter, continued to prosper & acquire more land. This gave them the right to call their house the Manor House. They took their part in local life, there was a Peter Ragg acting as churchwarden in the parish in 1699 & again in 1758/9.

On 28/11/1763 the current Peter Ragg was buried aged only 30. He was probably unmarried because the Manor House & lands took a sideways step into the hands of his brother John. This John, referred to as John Ragg I, had been baptised at Wigston on 18/2/1734, & not expecting to become a farmer & landowner had trained as a surgeon. His ownership of the Manor House was the start of its long association with the medical profession.

When the fields of Wigston were enclosed in 1766, John Ragg I was allotted just over 267 acres & was the second largest landowner in the parish, beaten only by the absentee Duke of St. Albans who was granted 387 acres in lieu of the great tithes.

John Ragg I married on 8/1/1782, Mary Brookes of Croft. They were a mature couple, he aged 48 & she 38 years old. They had just the one child, John Ragg II. John Ragg II did not marry at all & lived alone except for his domestic staff after the death of his parents, his father in 1815, & his mother in 1828, both in their 80's. He was an active farmer & worked his own Home Farm which stretched from an orchard at the back of the Manor House across to Aylestone Lane, over that road to Leicester Road, incorporating the large area of land where Carlton Drive is now, down to near the boundary with Leicester. In addition he farmed another 25 acres in 3 closes to the North of Cooks Lane at the junction with Welford Road & a 30 acre block of pasture in 3 closes known as Brockslade on the South/West side of Newton Lane near the Newton Harcourt boundary. He also owned & let out a 10 acre smallholding situated to the North of Burgess Street (somewhere under the traffic island!) & two other farms. One named Doonibos? Farm, was let to William Eggleston & can be identified by the more recent name of St. Wolstan's Farm. The 145 acres of land stretching up to the Oadby boundary & as far as The Meres. The other unnamed farm was let to William Langham & consisted of 127 acres to the West of Welford Road. It included the two large fields now used as the cemetery & continued up to & included some meadow land bordering the River Sence.

The death of John Ragg II on 30/9/1838 aged only 53 meant that a large amount of the parish was transferred to new owners. Although he had no direct descendants he did have some wider family. His father's sister Mary Ragg had married Robert Haymes whose family were large landowners in Great Glen & Kibworth. They lived at Glenn House, a big mansion still there today, situated opposite the church in Church Road. This couple had nine children & their eldest, another Robert Haymes, (John Ragg II's cousin) was left the Manor House & Home Farm. The 10 acre smallholding & 25 acres at Cooks Lane were left to his housekeeper Mary Ann Barsby. The 30 acre Brockslade was left to his friend & executor (& resident at the other Manor House) John Armston Pochin. The 127 acre farm went to his friend Jesse Berridge of Leicester for life, & afterwards to his friend & solicitor who was the other executor, Samuel Berridge, or if he was by then deceased, to his children. Two other cousins, sisters of Robert Haymes, named Elizabeth Wartnaby (she had married a Market Harborough solicitor, the firm still continues under that name today) & Margaret Brown who had married the Rector of Stretton-en-le-Field, were to share the proceeds of Doonibos Farm which was to be sold.

He made various other bequests of money, namely, £400 to the Infirmary, £100 to the House of Recovery from Contagious Fever & £100 to Leics. & Rutland Lunatic Asylum, £200 for the poor of Wigston, £500 each to his relative William Brookes & his friend John Earl Brown of Leicester, printer. To the children of J.E. Brown & J.A. Pochin £50 each & to his servant Stephen Wood £10.

The Manor House & Home Farm remained in the ownership of the Haymes family for three generations going from Robert the original beneficiary of John Ragg II, to Arthur his son, & then Richard his grandson. They occupied the farm land for much of this time but the Manor House was let to tenants except for a short period around 1855 when Arthur Haymes lived there with his wife Ellen. But Arthur was a solicitor & spent most of his working life in the Kenilworth area & at Methuen Villa, Leamington Spa. He retired back to the family seat at Great Glen & was buried in the churchyard there.

The tenants who lived at the Manor House include Augustin Fry, surgeon, in 1846, before he moved to Kingswood Lodge, & a Thomas Johnson in 1856. By 1859 John Denton Hulme another doctor, originally from Stourbridge, had arrived & he remained for many years until at least 1877. He was unmarried & brought his mother & sister to live with him & also a medical assistant & 2 servants.

By 1888 Dr. Arthur Nathaniel Barnley was living there prior to moving to Kingswood Lodge & by 1895 Dr. Cowcher owned the property. It was in 1908 that Dr. John Manning Longford moved there with his wife Sarah, buying the medical practice & property from Dr. Cowcher. His son Dr. Patrick Fitzgerald Longford continued there with his wife Blanche, & his death earlier this year ended a long tradition of medical practice associated with the house.

Notes on the present Manor House

A Grade II listed building of three storeys constructed in the early 1700's to a typical T shaped Leicestershire farmhouse design, in red brick under a Swithland slate roof, & presenting at right angles to the road. Large, possibly two foot square flagstones in the hall, are deeply indented with the continual tread of footsteps from kitchen to dining room.

A very substantial series of alterations took place, believed by English Heritage to be C1810. The Georgian stuccoed front with Tuscan porch was added, so that the front of the house then faced the road. An additional lounge was built at the back. Elegant fitted cupboards were constructed into existing alcoves beside fireplaces in the downstairs former surgery & master bedroom. An existing George I wine/collectors chest was built into another recess. Original stone mullioned windows were incorporated into the new work. A Chinese Chippendale style staircase was constructed which rises in a series of right angle turns with hollow centre. Other similar examples occur in a back stairs at Wistow Hall & at Cosby House (now a restaurant) suggesting work by the same craftsman.

There used to be a vegetable garden at the side which was sold shortly after WW II to the Conservative Club for their car park. A small paddock opposite gave the present Paddock Street its name.

Inventory of The Manor House, Home Farm & other Wigston Property of Arthur Haymes of Great Glen prepared following his death on 2/6/1872 - this was left to his youngest son Richard Haymes.

<u>Names of Closes or description of property</u>	<u>Occupiers</u>	<u>Quantity</u> a r p	<u>Total</u> a r p
Mansion House, stables, coach house, garden, orchard & outbuildings	James Denton Hulme		
Two Pews in Parish Church	James Denton Hulme & Richard Pick		
The Paddock	James Denton Hulme	2 0 35	
The Home Close	James Denton Hulme	8 1 27	10 2 22
Spinneys & Plantations	In hand	-	
Allotment Gardens numbered on ground & parish plan to 35 Incl [Missing!]	The Poor		
11 Cottages & outbuildings	Lois Coltman & Oths		
Messuage, Grocers Shop, yard, garden & farm buildings	William Evatt		
Garden adjoining	"		24
Mill Bank Close	"	1 3 9)	
	"	3 2 0)	
Little Brewin	"	3 1 32	8 3 25
Middle Wards	William Forryan	3 1 25	
Far Wards	"	5 0 14	
Simons Close	"	1 2 14	10 0 13
Farmyard, buildings & Dovecote	Late John Langham Now Richard Pick	1 33	
Portgate	"	13 0 8	
Laws Close	"	7 3 4	
Long Bewins	"	7 3 17	
Laws meadow	"	12 2 39	
Redgrass Close	"	8 0 28	
Witchgrave [or grass]	"	12 3 21	
Great Brewins	"	22 0 20	
Smarts	"	4 1 6	
Watery Leys	"	5 0 7	
First Wards	"	5 0 9	
Crow Willow	"	5 1 7	
Clarsons Close	"	2 3 31	107 2 30
Messuage	Richard Pick	-	

Portion of the Will of John Ragg II (does this say Doonibos Farm?)

or I do give and several acres of ground in the township of Wigston in the County of Leicestershire and forty five acres or thereabouts now in the occupation of William Raggist one together with all the rights members profits privileges advantages & appurtenances whatsoever to the said last Doonibos farm and lands

Sources: First nine paragraphs 'Midland Peasant'¹ by W.G. Hoskins. Haymes Inventory - LRO 11D58/7. Will of John Ragg II - PRO PROB 11/2148. Wigston Parish Registers & 1861 Census. Various Directories. Wigston Church Rates Books LRO DE384/44-45-47. Memorial Tablets to Ragg Family All Saints North Wall above Choir Stalls. 'Leics Pedigrees & Royal Descents' by Geo. D. Fletcher.

I should like to thank Mr. Nick Longford for so willingly showing me round the Manor House, pointing out features of special note & for his friendly interest in this project.

Tricia Berry

NEW BOOKS ON WIGSTON

Members Duncan Lucas, Peter Mastin & Tricia Berry have, over the winter months, been putting together a book of old photographs of the Wigston area entitled 'Wigston - Magna & South.'¹ It features a mixture of privately produced material & commercial picture postcards to which captions have been added & covers a time span of before 1900 to the 1960's. Drawn from our various collections it is published by Chalford of Stroud in their Archive Photographs series & retails at £9.99.

After a recent launch at the Record Office copies can be obtained from there, the Library, Burtons, the two local Museums or direct from any of the Authors themselves.

A very busy Peter Mastin has also produced two other books just on South Wigston this time. They are entitled 'South Wigston the early years 1883-1913' & 'South Wigston between the wars 1914-1945.' They again feature captioned photographs but also a number of fascinating bygone advertisements.

They were launched to coincide with his most interesting local history exhibition in April at South Wigston Methodist Church. These are published by Windhover Publications, cost £5 each, & can be obtained locally as above or from Peter himself, telephone 0116 2882503.

Please note - extra meeting

Wednesday July 16th 1997

Olwen Hughes entertains in the Garden Room

This is an evening visit to the home of Olwen Hughes, the well-known artist. It will include a talk by Olwen and the opportunity to view some of her drawings and paintings, many of which have appeared in the Leicester Mercury.

Refreshments are included (tea, coffee, sandwiches etc.), this will cost about £4.

Olwen can accommodate up to 36 people. Please let **Doris** (Tel. 2881978) know as soon as possible if you would like to take part in this visit. Further details will be available at our June meeting.

THE SEVENTH ANNUAL ATHLETICS MEETING IN WIGSTON 1880

Printed in The Field, The Country Gentleman's Newspaper June 19th 1880

Handicapper	H.M. Oliver
Starter	T. Sabin
Judge	J. Flint

The promise of sunshine held out on Saturday last was but delusive; Sunday saw a reversion to the dull and showery weather that so far has characterised the present month and on Monday the outward aspect of affairs was equally unfavourable. Rain fell heavily during the forenoon; the afternoon, though tolerably fair, was gloomy and threatening, and

the seventh annual Wigston sports were held under conditions extremely discouraging to their promoters.

Despite this untoward state of affairs, the attendance was pretty large, and though not equal to that of last year, spectators were present in sufficient numbers to guarantee the committee against any considerable financial loss on the undertaking

The entries too, were numerous, the fact of the sports taking place on Monday placed their promoters in an advantageous position in so far that they did not have to contend against counter attractions in the form of rival meetings held the same day. Monday being thus a clear date, and the prizes offered valuable. Competitors assembled in a strong force at Wigston, and the meeting, from a racing point of view was decidedly successful.

The principal event on the programme was the 120 yards handicap for which a gold stop watch, value £20, had been offered. This had secured an entry of 62, amongst whom were included W.W. Beveridge, Ayr; T.W. Browning, Derby; F.F. Cleaver, F.P.C. Nottingham; T. Pank, Birmingham and many others of considerable celebrity.

Racing began at 2 pm. Results:-

200 yards Handicap. Local. (3 heats)

1. J. Boulter* 2. A. Hill*
time 23 1/2 sees

3. A. Brewin*
* All Wigston Magna

120 yards Handicap. (14 heats)

1. WR Parry 2. A.Chaplin
Moseley Harriers Derby F.C.
time 121/2 sees

3. M. Stillard
Birchfield Harriers

120 yards Handicap. (Under 14)

1. W. Shipman 2. G. Albester
Leicester
time 16 1/2 sees

3. A. Insley
Nottingham

1 mile Handicap

- 1. T.Clark 2. C Gilbert
- Loughborough A.F.C. Nottingham

440 yards Handicap. (2 heats)

- 1. D. Carter 2. J. Hollis
- Northampton A. A. C. Ashby F. C.

Bicycle Handicap. One mile. (3 heats)

- 1. G.H.Walker 2 R.G. Bowes
- Leicester B.C. Nottingham

- 3. A. Holtan Northampton A.C.
- 3. W W Grant Leicester V.A.C.
- 3. EC. Clarke Derby

Hurdle Handicap 120 yards, 10 hurdles. (2 heats)

- 1. A.T. Porter 2. T.H. Prentice 3. J. Ward
- Leicester Leicester A.C. Bradgate Harriers
- time 17 3/4 sees

J.R Colver.

(L.R.O. Wigston Magna P47)

GRAVESTONE IN ST. WISTAN'S CHURCHYARD

The following verse is engraved on the gravestone of John Hurst who died 9/10/1861 in his 56th year. Also commemorated on the same stone are his son, George Ernest Hurst, who died 17/11/1872 in his 40th year & daughter Hannah Mary Hurst, who died 23/10/1837 aged 1 year 9 months.

"It was so suddenly I fell, My neighbours started at my
knell,
Amazed that I should be no more The man they'd seen
the day before.
But what security is breath Against the spirited
hand of death?
Not one is safe, not one secure, Not one can call his
moments sure."

On Swithland slate by Samuel Matthews.

