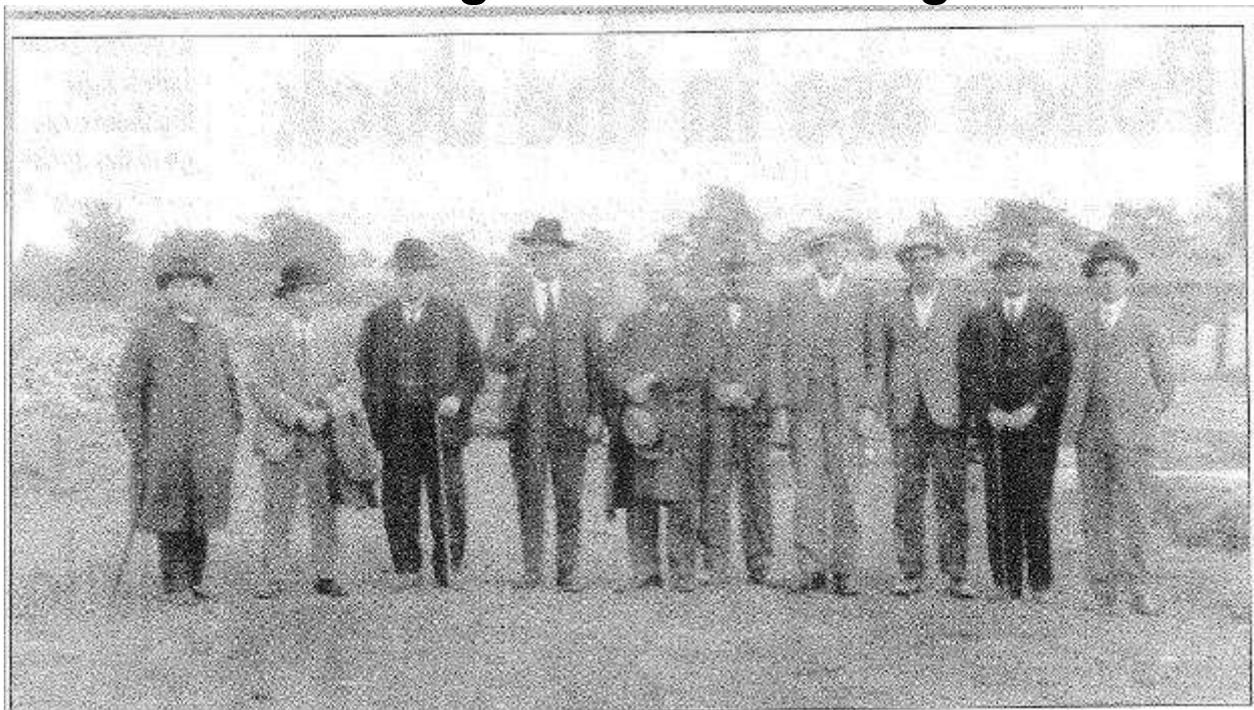


Setting the Record Straight



SITE VISIT: Wigston Urban District councillors pictured on the council-owned land on the north side of Aylestone Lane in the 1920s

My recent item about the history of the Aylestone Lane Allotment Society prompted a response from Alderman Duncan Lucas of Wigston Magna, who says he wants to put the record straight.

He writes: "As a lad during the war I worked for my uncle Les Forryan, and he farmed four plots on allotments – not Eli Bailey, who farmed the other side of the fence where Waterleys School now is.

"In my book, *One Man's Wigston*, which is still available at the County Records Office, there is a lot of information about this subject.

"The Urban District Council owned a block of land on the North side of Aylestone Lane and they developed Northfield Avenue for Council housing in 1929 (I enclose a photo of councillors on the site)

"The remainder of the land was developed into allotments. These Adjoined the Charity Allotments and next to them came Shackerdale's front field, with with the drive down parallel to the railway. The land was tenanted (not owned) by Charles Harrison and Eli Bailey became tenant after him.

“The land was owned by Park Estates, the company of the Craddocks. Mr Wheatcroft bought it for £600 per acre, the going price at that time.

The Charity Allotments were sold and the two road named Badderly and Brailsford after the two benefactors.

“Wigston UDC’s sold their frontage in the 1950’s and retained the allotment society as they are today. An Allotment Society was in being during the War but numerous plots were vacant and rubbished up.

The War Agricultural Committee ploughed up many of them to get people to take them on.

The land was and is very heavy and early established plants thrived.

We grew marigold wurzel with a mix of lettuce, carrots, radish, turnips – these thrived under the huge leaves of the marigold and we sold hugh Webb’s lettuce for up to 6d each to Little’s Greengrocers, Leicester Road, Wigston Magna.

The oil bombs on Eli Bailey’s farm, called Lodge farm, now where Woods Coaches is, were dropped some time after the Cavendish Road raid (also mentioned in One Man’s Wigston).

“The Charity Allotments houses hundreds of pigs owned by Bill Norman and his father. They also had a large racing pigeon racing loft and it was feather dust that sent both to an early grave.

“Aylestone Lane, from Wigston Magna to Aylestone, was my mother said, a very lovely Road.

“Prof Hoskins tells us Shackerdale means robbers valley, but progress and development changed the loneliness into a typical clogged road.

I can still close my eyes and remember driving cows daily down a quiet road in the late 1940’s and 50’s until the council bought, - no pinched! – the land opposite the allotments for £100 per acre. Yes, £100 per acre!

“The Charity Allotments were sold and the two roads named Badderly and Brailsford after two benefactors.”

Duncan Lucas

