



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

BULLETIN 43



Wigston Framework Knitting Museum

J.P. Colver

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS - COTOBER 1995 TO FEBRUARY 1996

Wednesday 18th October 1995

'Keeping a boarding house during the war' - Mrs. Carton.
7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

***Wednesday 15th Novemver 1995**

'Tales of a Leicester Lad' - Mr. Derek Seaton.
7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

****Wednesday 13th December 1995**

Christmas Pary.
7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

Wednesday 17th January 1996

'Theatre in Leicester' - Mr. Herbert Mason.
7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

Wednesday 21st February 1996

A.G.M. followed by film 'The Reluctant Squire'
7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

* Mr. Seaton was our guide in August when we visited Welford Road Cemetery. He has very kindly agreed to speak at relatively short notice in place of Bernard Elliott who has sadly passed away. An obituary follows inside.

** Please note this date is the second Wednesday in the month, not the more usual third one, which was thought a bit close to Christmas & other commitments members might have.

GERTIE GITANA EXHIBITION

An exhibition on the life of Gertie Gitana is to be held over the week-end 11/12th November at the Folk Museum. Tapes of her singing, made from old 78 records by a nephew of her husband Don Ross, will be on sale. The family has also lent photographs & other memorabilia for the occasion. More information will be published in the press or can be obtained from Tony Lawrance, telephone 2880917.

The Bulletin is published three times a year on 1st February, June and 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.

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JUNE MEETING

Our outing this year proved very popular with every seat on the coach filled & 2 members following in their own car. To complete the Civil War Commemoration season we visited Naseby, 350 years & 1 week after that decisive battle. We spent a most interesting time in the village museum which is situated in the loft of a building in a farm yard.

Among the many exhibits, were in the first section, some excellent displays of bygone farm implements & animal medicine containers, several period room settings & many old local photographs. A facsimile of a manorial estate map of the parish dating from the middle of the 17th Century was most interesting, showing the pre-enclosure sweep of open countryside which existed in 1645.

The second section was taken up with display cabinets showing, with the aid of model figures, the positions of the two armies at 3 key stages during the battle. The sequence of events was further explained with a recorded commentary.

After all this it was supper time & we went round the village to the Old Vicarage, where Mrs. Ann Key welcomed us to her beautiful home for a truly lovely buffet salad, homemade desserts & coffee. Ann regularly has groups to her home for meals but it is doubtful if she has ever had so many all at once! Fortunately it was a warm, fine evening & we were able to spill out into the garden.

The evening concluded with the arrival of a birthday cake & rendering of 'Happy Birthday to You' for Doris Chandler who was 40 (something!) on the day. After a warm vote of thanks to our hostess by Edna Taylor we returned to Wigston.

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AUGUST MEETING

The Society's August meeting, on a perfect summers evening, took the form of a conducted tour by Mr. Derek Seaton, round Welford Road Cemetery, Leicester. Mr. Seaton commenced by explaining that this, the first municipal cemetery, was created in response to the chronic shortage of space in the mainly Anglican burial grounds in the town, & the growing number of dissenters who did not wish to be buried in them anyway. The sloping 17 acre site which at the time was in open countryside was chosen & planted with specimen trees because in the days before public parks the Victorians used it for picnics & walks when they came to visit the graves of loved ones. Two chapels were built (which have unfortunately since been demolished as unsafe) & part of the grounds were consecrated by the Bishop of Peterborough for use by members of the Established Church, & part left unconsecrated for the use of the many non-conformists.

It was opened on 19/6/1849 by the Mayor, William Biggs, on the same day as the New Walk Museum. So important was the occasion that workers were given a half day holiday. Nine days later the first interment took place of one James Page, a hosier, of Wellington Street. He was soon to be followed by many others. By 1870 a further 13 acres had to be purchased which made the area up to its present size.

Mr. Seaton then took us to the last resting place of some of Leicester's most famous people. These included:

Thomas Cook, travel agent, & his son John Mason Cook.

William Gardiner, author of 'Music & Friends' the first to introduce Beethoven's music to this country.

Albert Harris, professional racing cyclist, who died following an accident while competing in Birmingham.

Mary Royce, teacher & friend to the poor, who qualified as a doctor, aged 43, when the medical degree was first open to women & died 4 years later of a disease contracted from a patient at the workhouse. The Royce Institute still remains today.

Sir Jonathan North, former chairman of Freeman, Hardy & Willis, Lord Mayor during W.W.I, Liberal Councillor & Chairman for 25 years of the Education Committee being responsible for many improvements to schools. Knighted by King George V at De Montfort Hall.

Sir Samuel Faire, co-founder of Faire Bros, elastic web manufacturers, who built the handsome Alexandra House Factory in Rutland Street.

Arthur Wakerley, Mayor, architect responsible for the Turkey Cafe & Singer Building & most of North Evington, Wakerley Road, plus Gwendolen, Margaret, Dorothy & Constance (his daughters) & Elizabeth (his wife) are roads which commemorate the family.

William Flint, architect responsible for Charles Street Baptist Chapel & the former Fielding Johnson Hospital.

Amos Hames, architect of Leicester Town Hall.

Sir Joseph Herbert Marshall, Mayor, founder of the Leicester Philharmonic Society, & music shop owner.

Sir Edward Wood, founder of a boot & shoe company which he sold to his partners, Messrs. Freeman, Hardy & Willis, & stayed on as Chairman for 35 years.

Benjamin Sutton, banker & philanthropist, who being unmarried left most of his fortune to the hospitals so the poor could benefit from convalescence after being discharged.

Frederick Goodyer, Leicester's first Chief Constable.

Samuel Ginns, Leicester's first undertaker & co-founder of the present Ginns & Gutteridge.

After being thanked for a most interesting evening by Edna Taylor, Mr. Seaton was presented with a cheque for the Leicester Wycliffe Society for the Blind, a charity which he actively supports.

September meeting ...

On Wednesday the 20th of September the Society met to hear Mr. K.R. Day from Market Harborough speak on "The coaching days of England". Before the talk commenced, Edna announced the death of Bernard Elliott, and the members present spent a few moments in quiet reflection on the loss of one of our oldest members.

Mr. Day's talk was a multi-media presentation with slides, tape recordings of some of the coaching horns, and readings from works of literature. Mr. Day began by pointing out that travel in the eighteenth century was very different from today. Coach travel as described in the novels of Charles Dickens, and in particular "Pickwick Papers", was the normal way for the wealthier members of society to move around the country.

Early transport used horses to carry goods for export to the ports. Many counties have examples of pack-horse bridges easily recognisable by their low parapets. Leicestershire examples can be seen in Anstey, Aylestone, Belgrave, Medbourne and other places too. The coaches developed from simple covered wagons. The servicing of the coaches and their passengers required many coaching inns, stables of horses and the people to work with them.

Coaches came to Leicester in the second half of the eighteenth century. The town still had its town walls and the gateways were too narrow for coaches to be driven through. The walls were demolished in 1774 and the coaching inns in Leicester developed from this time. The George, the Three Crowns and the Three Cranes were the principal inns in Leicester. However, none of the coaching inns of Leicester remain. All of them have been swallowed up in the redevelopment of the city centre. Later came the formation of turnpike trusts and toll roads. The improved roads had to be paid for and toll houses were built to collect the dues. The toll houses had quite distinctive windows that enabled the toll house keeper to observe the road from the inside of the house so that he could rush out and open the gate as the coach approached. The mail coaches also developed at this time. They were most important and woe betide the toll house keeper who had not opened the gate for the mail coach.

Sadly the coming of the railway brought the coaching days of England to an end. All that remains now are a few coaching inns, some milestones and toll houses, and pub signs that depict a past age.

Edna thanked Mr. Day for a most enjoyable and interesting talk. The meeting closed at 9 p.m. and 49 members were present.

NEW SERIES

In a previous bulletin we mentioned the intention of starting a series on local businesses. We would like to thank Jim Colver for submitting the first one on Stentons of Bell Street. Another on their next door neighbours, W.B. Roberts & Son, will hopefully be ready for next time. Articles on any others would be much appreciated. Surely most members must have been connected with a local business or know someone who was. If you are not keen on writing an article, facts in note form for us to edit would be fine.

WIGSTON IN BUSINESS - No: 1

THE STENTONS OF WIGSTON MAGNA

In 1922, Mr. & Mrs. W.S. Stenton and their two sons, William Arthur Vinrace (referred to as Arthur throughout the remainder of this text) and Edward, moved from Belgrave where Mr. Stenton had been a doctor's dispenser since serving in the First World War, to live in Kimberley House, Spa Lane, Wigston Magna and rented a former butchers shop at No. 45 Bell Street for use as a drug store. This shop was first known as Stanley's Drug Store where both parents worked. Later the first storey became a ladies hairdressing salon whilst Arthur started a country round for his father, first by push bike and then by motor car, conveying patent medicines, surgical appliances, private dispensing but no cosmetics for his father objected to such, the store held the first Kodak agency in the area. In earlier times, Toe H meetings had been held in what had become the salon and a harmonium was kept there.

Edward attended the Church Infant School in Long Street where Mr. Ross and later Mr. Harrold were headmasters. The teaching was good but strict and the penalty for disobedience was a sharp rap on the knuckles or legs with a cane. However they showed endless patience with the backward children.

He recalls as a boy, playing at Goodin's Mineral Water Works, also in Spa Lane, with his close friend Donald Mobbs, who lived in the Old Quaker Meeting House in Bulls Head Street, they also attended school together and in the fullness of time Edward was best man at Donald's wedding. Edward's mother and Mrs Mobbs also became good friends.

Goodin's was still in production and the house to which the Stentons moved had been built for Mr. Goodin's widow and her daughter Pat. Later when the works closed, the spring which provided the basic material for the product, was diverted.

On leaving school, Mr. Cecil Forryan, a chemist on Hinckley Road accepted Edward as an apprentice. There were four Forryan brothers in Wigston and it was from Cecil that he learned his business, training with hard work and long hours. The pay for the first year was 2/6d (12 1/2p) per week and he cycled in all weathers. At the end of the fourth year he had 10/- (50p) per week. The shop was open from 8.30 am till 7.00pm and 8.00pm on Saturdays. He also attended Leicester School of Pharmacy for three years.

Edward remembers the drinking fountain that stood on The Bank and the solid tyred buses that used to stop there, Millie Beazley was a conductress in those days. He recalls going to Mr. Laundon's shop, next to Donald Mobb's house, for grain to feed the chickens. One half of the premises was

used for animal feed stuffs and the other half was a workshop for making and repairing saddles and harnesses.

Mr. Laundon's daughter Stella, a school teacher, was married late in life to Mr. King, another of Wigston's chemists, she passed away in 1994.

Edward's mother suffered a heart condition and died suddenly one cold February morning in 1927. As Arthur's other forename might suggest, she had been a member of the Vinrace family, well known in Ashby-de-la-Zouch. Her father kept the Bull Inn there and had died when she was 14. Her uncle was a well established doctor in Birmingham and his sons became surgeons in London.

One of them founded the Hospital for Skin and Urinary Diseases in Holbom (now demolished). A lecture on the Vinrace family was given to the Birmingham and Midland Family History Society by Dr. Cockingham a few years ago.

A year after the death of his first wife, Mr. Stenton remarried and Dorothy Chadderton, an ardent church worker, became step-mother to the two boys She was the daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Edward Chadderton who had been butler and ladies maid at St. Michael's Mount in Cornwall, though themselves born in Dorset and Derbyshire. Dorothy's father later went into the police force and was stationed at Blaby and Narborough where at the former village Dorothy was probably born, in 1904.

In 1932 the Bell Street properties at No. 47, then a police house, No. 45 and the two adjoining houses occupied by Mr. Eric Roberts, a newsagent and his aunt, a green-grocer, were put up for auction Arthur Stenton, the elder son now 21 decided to bid for No. 47 and was successful as was his father for No 45. The other two premises were purchased by the Roberts incumbents.

After the police vacated the premises, Arthur made the rooms over the two Stenton shops into a very nice flat for himself The lower stairs in both properties were removed, the kitchen at No. 47 was demolished and the back kitchen at No 45 altered into an entrance hall with stairs going up to the first floor. A toilet was built halfway up the staircase and kitchen and bathroom made on the first floor with a door leading into the back of No. 47.

Arthur learnt the hairdressing trade and made the bottom part of No. 47 into a flourishing ladies salon, leaving his father to his own shop and the country round with his assistant, Mrs. Hill. Customers of Arthur's came from a wide area including theatrical folk from Leicester.

Joan and Edward met at a 21 st birthday party in the summer of 1942 and were married by Special Licence in March 1944, ten days before Edward joined the Royal Army Medical Corps. He had secured his Ph.C. a short time before. He served in Egypt, Palestine and Cyprus, whilst Joan was in a government department in Leeds.

They set up home in September 1949 in Bristol where Edward was Ethical Manager for a firm of multiple chemists

Things were changing in chemists shops and in the Stenton family. Mrs. Dorothy Stenton was concerned about Edward's father's ill health and the rapid decline of the business. At their suggestion Edward agreed to return to Wigston and invest what he had into the business as a partner. It didn't turn out well as Mr. Stenton's health had suffered as the result of a coronary and he needed to fully retire which was financially impossible then.

Joan's own grandparents and great grandparents had been in business in Leicester for many years and she agreed to go into the shop, where long hours were worked to build up the baby trade, and new medicines and cosmetic agencies were introduced. With the advent of the N.H.S., chemists had to accept the changes it brought about. Previously ointments, mixtures, pills and powders had been made on the premises and drugs bought in large quantities and packed into small quantities as required. With

the N.H.S. more lines came from the Manufacturing Chemists pre-packed. Edward and Joan worked by themselves for 2 1/2 years

In 1954 Mr. Stenton Snr. died of cancer of the bowel, preceded by Mr. King the Long Street chemist who had died in the June The business then became swamped with prescriptions and demands for other requirements and they eventually had four girl assistants full-time.

In 1960 Edward , and Joan at the age of 40, became parents for the first time and Joan then stayed at home doing paper work

Mrs. Dorothy Stenton died age 58 of cancer in Cornwall and the business closed early in 1963. It was rented as a decorators' shop until in 1976 Arthur retired to Saltburn in Yorkshire and the premises were sold for development. John their son now works in the West End of London and Joan and Edward have retired to South West England

The Society is grateful to Mrs Joan Stenton for permission to write and print her story.

Jim Colver.

BERNARD FALKLAND ELLIOTT 17/12/1914 - 5/9/1995

Members will have been saddened to learn of the death of Bernard who suffered a heart attack following an operation. There can have been few more committed to local history than him. He did not allow advancing years to deter him - two articles on the English Civil War were written for our last bulletin & the scheduled November talk on De Lisle & his 16 children was already being worked upon.

Bernard, an only child, was born in Clarendon Park to a Catholic father from Leicester and a Church of England mother brought up in Kibworth. He attended school locally & then the Wyggeston Boys followed by University College, where he met his future wife Jean.

A keen sportsman, he enjoyed tennis, hockey, swimming & rugby, though the latter was curtailed when a kick in the stomach resulted in a hernia & 3 separate repair operations. This left him medically unfit to serve in W.W.II except in the Home Guard. His greatest talent was cricket & he played for Leics. Club & Ground & the County 2nd XI. He was considered for the 1st XI on one occasion but was not given the message in time. He also played club cricket for Granville & Kibworth & the Old Wyggestonians. Putting the ball clear over Welford Road into the cemetery when playing on the 'Prims' ground at Wigston was one of his memories.

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He began his teaching career at a junior school in Knighton where he offered music in addition to the usual subjects. He will be remembered by many local 'children' for his next appointment as history master at Kibworth Grammar School before moving on to Humphrey Perkins School, Barrow-on-Soar. His final post was at the then Loughborough College School, now renamed Burleigh Community College, from where he retired (having earlier made a good recovery from a stroke) as head of Humanities. The name 'Burleigh' was Bernard's suggestion, it being a local medieval field name.

He has written numerous books & papers, notably histories of the schools where he taught, the monastery at Mount St. Bernard's Abbey, the Immaculate Conception & St. Peter's Churches Oadby & Stories of Oadby. He contributed to Oadby 1880-1980 & more recently wrote Victorian Oadby, Oadby in 1891, Victorian Wigston & Wigston in 1891.

He was a founder member of the Vaughan Archaeological & Historical Society & treasurer for 16 years of the Oadby Local History Group who often met at his home. He was an enthusiastic member of this Society & life member & first chairman of the Friends of Wigston F.W.K. Museum.

Very much a family man with many interests besides history (Jean assures us), he will be sadly missed by her & their three children, Valerie (the main historian of the next generation), Marie & Michael & the grand & great-grand children to whom we offer our sincere condolences.

Richard Carter & Tricia Berry

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Evening Tour May 15th 1995, with the Greater Wigston Historical Society

To Naseby, and back, tonight.

On an overcast evening, we departed Paddock Street, Wigston Magna, courtesy of John driving a 49 seater Woods' coach for a tour of the villages and by ways surrounding the area where the historic Naseby Battle was fought almost 350 years ago. Our guide was the eloquent, learned local historian, Mr. Duncan Lucas, whose knowledge seemed endless. Passing through villages which included Mowsley, Naseby, Cold Ashby, West Haddon, Braunston, Ashby St. Legers and Crick - to name but a few - Duncan explained the meaning of the village names and the different styles and types of houses for both the wealthy lords and land owners and the poorest estate worker. He also pointed out examples of various types of building bricks and associated materials used - sometimes very different in villages and communities which were next to each other. We were given an informative lesson on natural history, nature, general farming, architecture, forestry, husbandry, hedge laying and many other aspects and facets of country life as Duncan related his knowledge and expertise.

We saw buildings ranging from modern single storey, to houses built several hundred years ago that were two and a half storeys high, to the stately homes. The manner of hedging, crop sowing, distancing of crops from hedgerows, and the specific location of trees were explained. Our knowledge of varying breeds of sheep, cattle and other animals was also greatly increased. It was difficult to realise that the lanes we were travelling down did not exist 350 years ago - the land then would have been predominantly open fields with just the occasional hill or village to break the vast area. Sitting in our warm coach (very warm!) it was hard to both appreciate and visualise that we were travelling over the very route that the soldiers had tramped - cold, weary, probably hungry, with no hedges to rest by. Towards the end of our tour we stopped at The Wharf Inn, Welford, to partake of refreshment and reflect how very different life, and the living of it, has changed. Then, home through the drizzly rain, many of us *I am sure*, much the wiser regarding events and history just beyond our own door steps.

Note - this trip was not part of the published programme of the Society.

Editors

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WIGSTON WHO'S WHO NO:

12 JOHN THOMAS

PROCTOR

John Thomas Proctor was born on 24/8/1846 in New Sleaford, Lines, the son of Thomas Proctor, a stonemason, & his wife Eliza nee Cox. Clearly a serious minded mature young man he took employment as a solicitors' clerk & had become a Methodist (Wesleyan) lay preacher by the time of his 18th birthday. He gave his first sermon at Anwick, Lines., taking for his text the parable of the Prodigal Son. He preached under the superintendency of the Rev. Samuel Wesley (a descendant of the original Wesleys).

Three years later on 6/8/1867 when just short of his 21st birthday he married, at Sleaford Wesleyan Chapel, Harriet Copeland, the daughter of Thomas Copeland, a local butcher. Harriet was some years older than her husband being 29 at the time. The couple had a daughter Evelyn E.M. & a son Arthur T.M. In early 1871 when Arthur was still very tiny the family moved to 76, Lytton Road, Leicester

because John Thomas had taken up employment with Mr. Alfred Howard Burgess, solicitor, of 22, Friar Lane, & later 1, Berridge Street, Leicester.

Mr. A.H. Burgess was a member of a prominent local family. His father Alfred Burgess J.P. lived at the large 'Brookfield' on London Road, Leicester & was in business as Burgess Bros, woolstaplers, 1, Belvoir Street with his brother Thomas Burgess who lived at The Grange, Leicester Road, Wigston. Thomas's son Frederick Burgess gave his name to Frederick Street & Burgess Street in Wigston. Mr. A.H. Burgess's legal work included being clerk to Wigston Council for many years & also the Burial Board when that was created.

John Thomas soon developed his own strong connections with Wigston. He is thought to have moved there in 1872 & by 1877 is listed as living in Burgess Street. Did he buy a plot of land from the Burgess Family? He was however back in Leicester at 27, Arundel Street in 1879 & at the 1881 Census at 90, Catesby Street. By 1885 he was at 35, King Richard's Road & in 1887 at number 25 in the same street, before finally settling permanently at the aptly named Sleaford Villa, Burgess Street, Wigston, about 1890. He may have moved & then returned to Wigston but in view of his continuous involvement in local life it seems more likely he always maintained a home there, used perhaps only for weekends, at this time. It could have been a requirement of his job that he lived in Leicester, maybe using the various addresses as branch offices for Mr. Burgess.

He had a varied working life. As well as his legal duties he was appointed School Attendance Officer to Wigston Board School in February 1880 at a salary of £26 per annum. Later, by 1892, he was clerk to the Managers of the same Board, a post he still held in 1908. He was also secretary of Wigston Building Society & one of the founders of Wigston Adult School. In c!890 he became a partner with a Thomas Lewin as Lewin & Proctor, land, house, estate & insurance agents at Provident Chambers, Bowling Green Street, Leicester. An advertisement states they also supplied strong room doors & safes etc. This arrangement did not last too long as a few years later Mr. Lewin was trading instead with a Mr. Irons in Belvoir Street & John Thomas was working as an accountant & estate agent at 45, Friar Lane. He may have left what was by then Burgess & Williams during this period but certainly returned later, for in 1903 he drew up on behalf of his old employers a will for his friend John Goodin, gent, (father of Thomas Goodin the mineral water manufacturer). He called in his, by then married, daughter Evelyn Shipley, & her husband Alfred, to be the witnesses, & himself acted as a joint executor with the family after his friend had died.

It is as a totally committed member of Frederick Street Methodist Chapel that he will best be remembered locally. He was appointed a Trustee in 1879 & together with his 14 fellows made all arrangements for the new building erected in 1885 & the Sunday School extension in 1890. A sealed bottle was hidden during the first construction & the named stones serve as a reminder of those times. Over the years he was to hold every office.

He was a talented artist in both oil & watercolour & produced landscapes & exquisite pictures of butterflies, fruit & flowers. All the internal doors at Sleaford Villa were decorated with examples of his craft. He taught art to hundreds of pupils at his home. Perhaps his most remarkable talent was his tiny but legible writing within a circle the size of a coin. An example is illustrated below. He was also an author & wrote 'Cotters of Glendale' & 'Bygone Days' a story of Lincolnshire life in the early part of the 19th century. A reviewer of this latter publication states that "it shows the author to be a man with an eye for character & not without a sense of humour." Some of his addresses entitled 'Breezy Bits' & 'Homely Talks' were also put into print under the pseudonym Father Sunshine. A very methodical person, Bill Ward can recall when, as a young boy helping in the chapel library, he was advised to "always write it down, Willie, don't rely on memory alone."

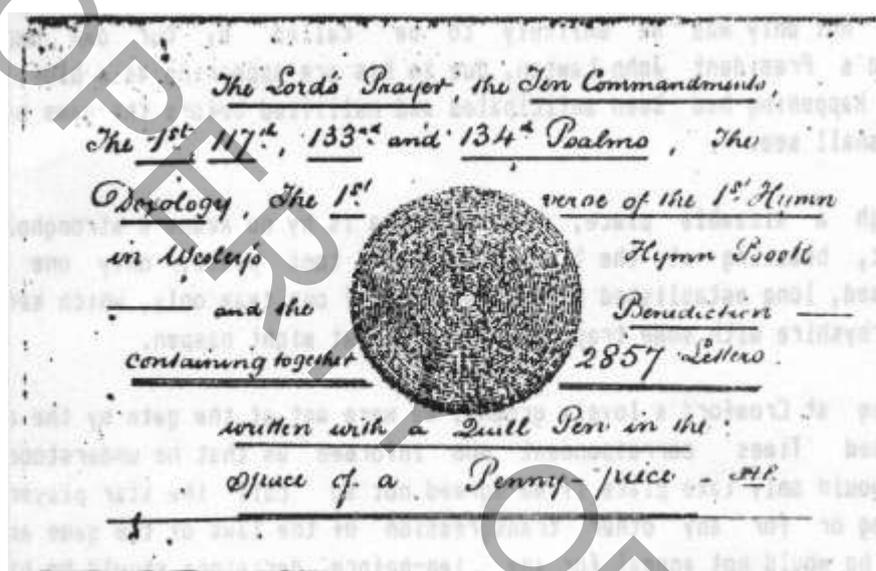
Harriet died on 17/11/1907 aged 70 & is buried at Wigston Cemetery. On the gravestone her husband had engraved "Her life was fragrant & her death triumphant."

When John Thomas first arrived in Leics., he immediately joined the Leicester (Bishop Street) Circuit & continued as a lay preacher. In 1914 he celebrated 50 years of preaching. During all of this time the meticulous man kept records in a preaching journal & was able to reflect on having travelled 9413 miles & walked 3342, preached 1893 sermons to a total congregation of 191,414. In addition he had given 303 addresses to Adult Schools, Brotherhoods etc. to a total audience of 21,946. The average number of sermons & addresses worked out at 44 per year for the 50 years & this did not count addresses to Bands of Hope, Temperance & Good Templars' meetings of which he did not keep a record! He had preached in every Wesleyan Chapel in the three Leicester circuits & had also helped many outside churches.

On 30/4/1921, by then aged 74, he re-married at Wigston Independent Chapel, Long Street. His new wife was Ethel May Dunkley, spinster, who was the daughter of William Dunkley, a grazier, of Paget Street, Kibworth. Her age is clearly stated in the register to be 32, but comparison with the 1891 Census suggests she was about 44, which seems much more likely. It is believed she had acted as house-keeper to the Proctors since about 1897.

He died at home on 9/2/1932, aged 85, sadly "after much suffering he was one of the oldest & most respected inhabitants of the parish & the oldest local preacher in the country in which capacity he had served for 60 years." He was also buried in Wigston Cemetery but not with his first wife. In the 25 years since her death, Irene, a daughter of their son Arthur & wife Elizabeth had died aged 31 & she was buried with her grandmother. Her brother George is also commemorated on the stone having died in 1916, aged 22, in Persia "serving his country." John Thomas is buried in another area in the same grave as Barbara, another daughter of Arthur & Elizabeth, who had died aged 29, in 1930. "The joy to do the Father's will" was inscribed on the stone. As time went on Ethel May also re-married & became Mrs. Chandler & was later buried elsewhere.

Sleaford Villa was situated at the top (Oadby Road) end of Burgess Street. It was occupied by Mr. A.T. Lowe, builder, in more recent times & demolished in the 1970's.



An example of J.T.P.'s skill with pen & ink reproduced by kind permission of Bill Ward from originals generously given by Mrs. Ena Singleton of Preston.

Sources: Birth & Marriage certificates, Wigston Independent Chapel Marriage Register, various directories & census returns, Leicester Advertiser 13/2/1932, Wills of John Goodin & Alfred & Thomas Burgess, grave stones at Wigston Cemetery, Article by Rev. A.J. Laughton, Pastor of Frederick Street Chapel in Wigston & District Free Churchman Jan. 1915, Wigston Board School Minute Book 1880, various Wesleyan Messenger Magazines.

Special thanks are due to Bill Ward for so willingly sharing his memories & making available material he had collected during the course of his research for the Frederick Street Centenary Book 'Through all the Changing Scenes' 1985.

MISSION C.C v HAROLD RHODES

A village encounter against England's fastest bowler by J.R. Colver.

Early in the morning of July 5th 1965, having devoured the said items relative to cricket in the 'Sunday Times', my eye was drawn to a small insertion tucked away in the bottom left hand corner of the page, the heading of which read simply, "Harold Rhodes to play for Croford".

This particular player, acknowledged as the fastest bowler in the land had been omitted from the Derbyshire eleven due to his suspect action and the article written by the Cromford Meadows President, mentioned that this gate would help to keep his in trial whilst not knocking over the stumps of all and sundry at his own level. He further added that he did not expect Harold to be 'called' for 'throwing in this particular match. Not only was he unlikely to be 'called by our own umpire, Wigston's President John Lawton, due to his an appearing as a blur, but such a happening had been anticipated and nullified before the game began, as we shall see.

Although a sizeable place, Higston Hagna is by no means a stronghold of cricket, boasting at the time the event took place, only one well organised, long established club consisting of one team only, which set off for Derbyshire with some trepidation as to what might happen.

Arriving at Cromford's lovely ground, we were all at the gate by the afore mentioned 'Tues correspondent who informed us that he understood the match would only take place if we agreed not to call the star player for throwing or for any other transgression of the laws of the game and in return he would not appeal for any leg-before decision should he hit us instead of the stumps and to this we agreed for a number of reasons.

Firstly, a crowd of approximately 1000 people had turned up to view the slaughter and we had no wish to appear other than accustomed to battling against such folk, secondly, most of the national Daily papers had sent reporters to witness the possibility of our umpire further impeding the career of an England badly needed and thirdly, the umpire himself had no desire to be involved in events that might have led to his becoming a national notorious figure.

So all was agreed, the coin spun and the risk to Wigston lives and limbs put off till after tea. The game proceeded at rather better than the going rate for such a match. Wigston's bowlers kept a tight grip on the game and the fielding in front of such a crowd perfectly adequate. The star attraction, going in at number five was caught quite brilliantly in the slips after contributing only four runs. In retrospect we consider this may have been our big mistake. Should we have let him get 100 or so, working on the theory that he might not have wanted to bowl all afternoon as well. But alas the deed was done and the innings closed for a modest 112 with twenty minutes to spare before tea was served.

During this period 16 runs were on the board with all Wigston's wickets intact and the tea interval was the usual jovial affair of eating as fast as decency allowed and at the relief that Harold did not intend to bowl flat out after all.

On the resumption however, the great man had other ideas and started his run from the sight screen, contrived to hit the stumps with apparent ease (generally the middle one, so as not to involve the Cromford treasurer in too such expense for breakages! on ten occasions in the next half hour.

The author (also the 'not out' batsman) freely confesses to not running seemly easy two's that fled off the bats of others, on the simple basis that, in the event, his partner might have declined the second and having faced no complete over's, considered he had borne the brunt long enough. He was shrewd enough to notice that the only player to be hit by the ball was limping alarmingly and had no wish to collect such a memento of the gaiter for himself. In various dressing rooms for many a week afterwards this particular player would proudly show the ghastly evidence of his 'not out'.

For all the damage he did, we found Harold Rhodes to be an extremely pleasant and a few of us were really sorry that he was at Cromford, rather than at Haidstone on that memorable day.

SCORES

CROMFORD HEADHHS C.C.

Shuttleworth	run out	6
Needham	b. Hoore	2
Boswell	b.Hill	3
Bunting	run out	1
Rhodes c. Colver	b.Hill	4
Flint	run out	16
Derbyshire	b. Hason	13
Haite	b. Hason	2
Taylor	b.Hill	19

Froggatt	b. Hoore	9
BreMell not out		4
	Extras	7

HIGSTON C.C.

Hoore	b. Rhodes
Bibbins	b. Rhodes
R. Carter	b. Rhodes
Willows	b. Rhodes
8. Carter	b. Rhodes
Hason	b. Rhodes
Colver not out	
Jayes	b. Rhodes
Dunkley	b. Rhodes
Hill	b. Rhodes
Hensian	b. Rhodes
	Extras

H. Rhodes 10 wkts for 11 runs

The Editors would like to thank Jim Colver for submitting his article on one of Wigston Cricket Club's most memorable matches. It was written in 1965 for publication in the Midlands Club Cricket Conference Year Book.