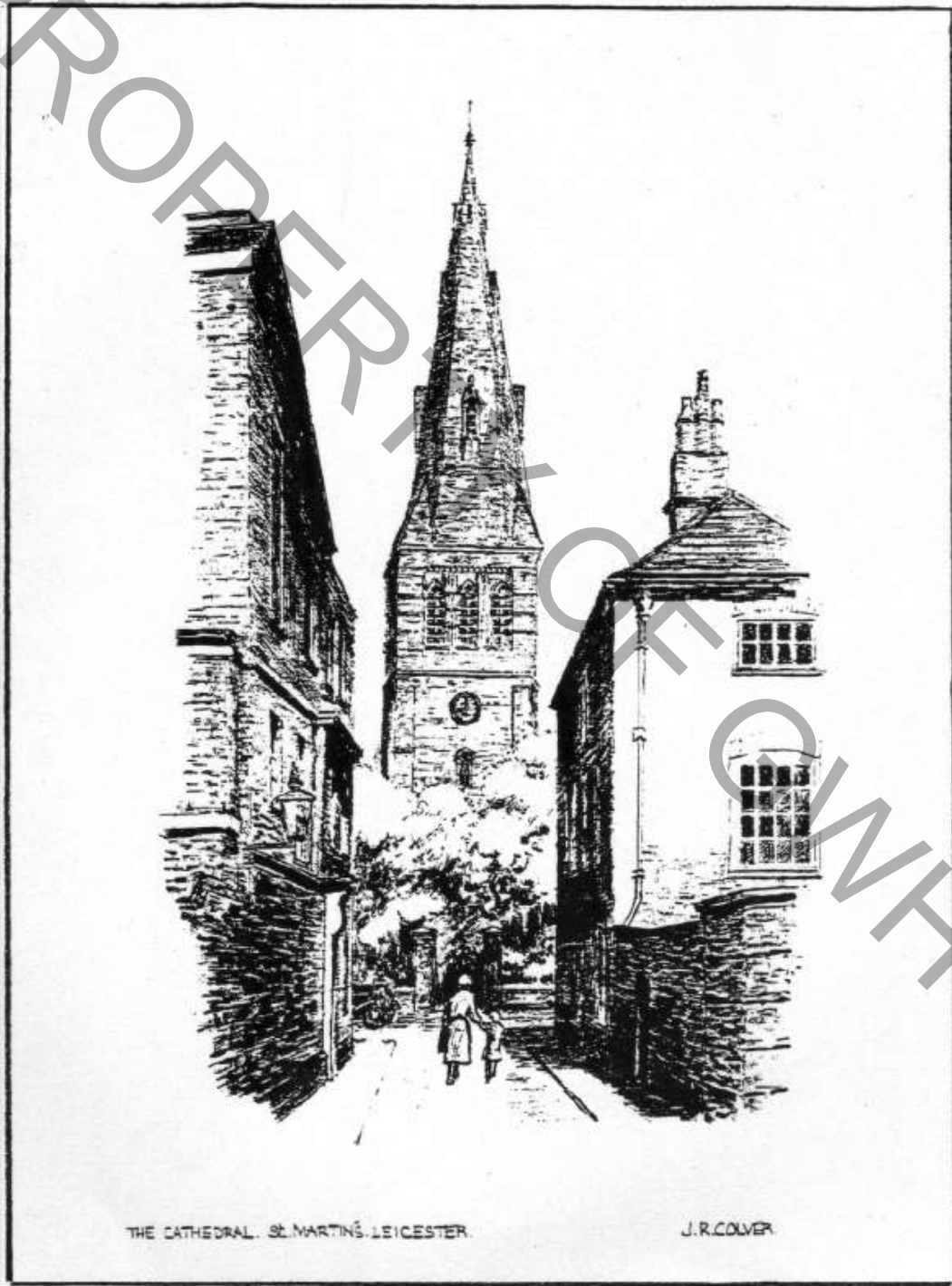




Greater Wigston Historical Society
White Gate Farm, Newton Lane, Wigston Magna Leicestershire

BULLETIN 53



PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS - FEBRUARY TO AUGUST 1999

Wednesday 17th February 1999

A.G.M. followed by short talks by members Anne Brown & Tricia Berry
7.30p.m. U.R. Church Boys' Brigade Rooms.

Wednesday 17th March 1999

Restoring Southwell Workhouse - Susan Smith from National Trust
7.30p.m. U.R. Church Boys' Brigade Rooms.

Wednesday 21st April 1999

Ancient Toys - Philip French from Newarke Houses Museum
7.30p.m. U.R. Church Boys' Brigade Rooms.

Wednesday 19th May 1999

Visit to Hinckley & District Museum
Meet 6.45p.m. Paddock Street Car Park to share transport.

Wednesday 16th June 1999

Visit to Stanford Hall, conducted tour & supper if required
Meet 6.45p.m. Paddock Street Car Park to share transport.

Wednesday 18th August 1999

History of Wigston United Reformed Church - C. Clr. Duncan Lucas
7.30p.m. U.R. Church Boys' Brigade Rooms.

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FRONT COVER DRAWING

The cover for this issue portrays St. Martin's Cathedral, Leicester, which is believed to be on the site of a Saxon church mentioned in Domesday Book. It has nothing to show of those days except portions of two Roman pillars discovered in the original foundations which can be seen in the nearby museum.

The Norman church was built in the shape of a cross, but all that remains of that is a fragment of moulding and some of the walling in the 19th century central tower.

The aisles are of 13th and 14th century date and the chancel was made new in the 15th century. St. Martin's was hallowed as a cathedral in 1926.

Jim Colver

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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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October meeting

On Wednesday the 21st of October 45 members of the Society met to hear Richard Harrison give an illustrated talk about the Chesterfield Canal.

The Chesterfield Canal was constructed to enable the owners of Derbyshire mines to get their coal to new markets. It originally extended as far as Worksop, from there the Bawtry River was navigable. It was later re-routed and extended to join the Trent at West Stockwith. James Brindley, the engineer, was responsible for the original surveys. Construction commenced in 1771 and the Canal was opened in 1777. It had several sections of locks including the intriguingly named Whit Sunday Pie lock. It also had the country's longest tunnel at Norwood.

With the decline in canal transportation the Canal fell eventually into disrepair and the collapse, of the Norwood Tunnel isolated the Derbyshire section. By the 1950s most usage had ceased. The section from Worksop to the Trent is owned by British Waterways and has been fully restored. The section from the Norwood Tunnel to Chesterfield is now the subject of an restoration programme being carried out by the Chesterfield Canal Society. Many parts of this section have been filled in or built over. The tow path remains although in places it has been diverted.

These days it is possible to walk the whole of the Canal along a route known as the Cuckoo Way. Richard's talk took us on a journey along the Canal and many of the slides illustrated the restoration work that has been carried out with 'before and after' photographs. After a vote of thanks and notices the meeting closed at about 9 p.m.

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NOVEMBER MEETING

At the Society's November meeting we welcomed back Sylvia Brown who this time gave us her illustrated talk entitled 'The Demon Drink'. Now working for Leicester Museums Service she used examples from that town & commenced by saying that ale had been brewed there since Roman times. A weak version was in fact the main beverage for the entire population until the late 19th century because the lack of proper sanitary arrangements made the water unsafe to drink. For this reason it was even served up to patients at the infirmary which for many years had its own brew-house.

However, the stronger ales & spirits could, & did, lead to excessive drunkenness & various regulations were introduced over the years to try & control this. Between 1830 & 1869 there were no restrictions on the sale of beer, but there were on spirits, in an attempt to control the consumption of these. In 1869 much stricter rules were introduced by the licensing authorities, but the greatest changes came about as a result of World War I & the need to conserve grain for food. All this led to a gradual reduction in the number of public houses from a high of 540 in the town (one for every 108 people including women & children) to the present levels. It also led, together with company amalgamations, to a corresponding reduction in the numbers of breweries, from 30 to a mere 5 by the end of the 19th century. Today, 85% of all beer drunk in this country is produced by just 4 breweries.

Drink could be bought from Beer Houses, Ale Houses, Public Houses, Inns & Hotels. Some establishments were also private houses, which is how the Inns of Court in London, such as Lincoln's Inn obtained their names. Others were places where people could hold meetings & conduct business. Nathaniel Corah used to sell his socks in the Globe in Leicester. Others of course offered accommodation for overnight visitors, the most famous being the Blue Boar where King Richard III stayed prior to the Battle of Bosworth.

The names of public houses can tell much of their past. Odd Fellows Arms were formed by the Friendly Societies. Others were named after occupations such as Brickmakers' & Ropemakers' Arms. These would serve especially those trades & would often be able to supply introductions to suitable work for newcomers to an area. Re-naming pubs is not a new idea. The present Four Pence & Firkin in Loseby Lane was once known as the Star & Ball, then the Crown & Thistle. When the Lord Mayor goes there each year to receive his symbolic rent it is said to be the only occasion when he is permitted to go into a public house wearing his chain of office.

The temperance movement formed in response to the evils which can result from drink took many forms. The working mens clubs were actually formed by temperance groups as were the 16 or so coffee houses, which the Quaker Burgess & Ellis families were closely associated with. Thomas Cook was perhaps the best known temperance advocate. He opened his Temperance Hall (the first building in Leicester to have a piped water

supply) & Temperance Hotel to give people an alternative to using licensed premises & thereby becoming tempted by the "Demon Drink".

After some questions & discussion Sylvia was thanked for a most interesting talk by the Chairman, Edna Taylor, after which members were reminded to give in their names if they wished to attend the Christmas Social next month.

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December meeting - Christmas party

On Wednesday the 16th of December the Society met for its annual Christmas Party. Once again we intellectually challenged by a picture quiz which consisted of questions about local, national and international current affairs, historical figures and general knowledge. This was followed by a team quiz organised by Stella. The questions were based on knowledge of facts and figures about Leicestershire and included a few particularly difficult anagrams.

After the quizzes we had supper. This year was slightly different to others in that we had decided to use outside caterers. A magnificent spread of sandwiches, savouries and salad had been laid out, with wine or fruit juice to accompany the meal and trifle and mince pies to follow.

Once again we had a large turn out of members and the evening was successful and enjoyed by everyone.

Many thanks to all those people who helped to organise the party, the quiz, the prizes and the food.

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JANUARY MEETING

For this month, member Peter Clowes, showed a wonderful selection of slides of Wigston dating mainly from the 1960s & 1970s. The majority were taken by our chairman's late husband, Dennis Taylor, while others were the work of Peter himself.

He started with a number of aerial views, pointing out various landmarks as he went along. It is surprisingly difficult for even native Wigstonians to recognise these without some guidance. Especially noticeable was how very many fields had been lost when the housing estates, Little Hill, Wigston Harcourt & The Meadows were built.

The remaining slides were taken 'on terra firma'¹ many showing the huge changes that have occurred in the Bull Head Street area with the complete demolition of everything on the west side to make way for the dual carriageway. Also the radical changes in the Bell Street, Oadby Lane & Junction Road areas. It all brought back fond memories of the Bull's Head Inn, The Quaker Cottage, Snowden's House & hosiery needle workshop & George Willett's & Mr. Gee's farms. It also brought more than a touch of sadness that so much had been lost & expressions of amazement from newer residents who found it pretty difficult to imagine that farm entrances once led directly off what is now a fast main road. By happy contrast Kilby Bridge & the canal side looked very much the same as at present.

Peter explained that he is in the process of assembling another slide show which will concentrate on the remaining areas. He also hopes to take more photographs in future in order to show 'then & now' comparisons on a double screen. We look forward to seeing these in the future.

The Chairman, Edna Taylor, thanked Peter very much for a most interesting evening. During further discussion he mentioned that there were two other major collections of photographs of Wigston, these being the work of member Bill Ward & local councillor Bill Boulter. We should indeed be grateful to all these people for the time, trouble & expense they so willingly give to record the passing history of our area. For those keen to see more, Tony Lawrance announced that Bill Boulter is putting on a slide show of some of his collection at 7.30p.m. on Saturday 13th February at Cross Street Methodist Church.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

We learn with sadness that Bill Ward is currently in the Leicester General Hospital. Get well soon - Bill, our thoughts are with you & Margaret & Elizabeth.

Also our secretary, Doris Chandler, also after a spell in hospital, has decided she needs to be looked after & is currently living at Curtis Weston House. Because this was a hurried arrangement she may move elsewhere later.

Millie Moore has moved to Yorkshire to be nearer to her niece & has settled into her new surroundings. Our very best wishes to all three.

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SIR JOHN FOWKE LANCELOT ROLLESTON JP DL

John Fowke Lancelot Rolleston was born on 26/3/1848 at The Vicarage, Great Dalby, where his father was the local incumbent He was the eldest son & second child of the large family of the Rev. William Lancelot Rolleston & his wife Mary Sophia nee Fowke, who was the daughter of Sir Frederick Gustavus Fowke of Lowesby Hall, Leics. The family later moved to Scraftoft Vicarage when the Rev. Rolleston was appointed to that parish in addition to retaining the living at Great Dalby.

The Rolleston family was an ancient one whose origins can be traced to Rolleston in Staffs, before their later move to Burton Joyce in Notts.

John was educated at Repton School & Kings College, London. He trained as a land agent & surveyor & from 1868 worked in Leicester. He founded his own company which was originally named Rolleston & Soady of Friar Lane, but later Rolleston & Co. Rolleston Street in Leicester took its name from his firm which expanded to include a London office. At this time of growth there was plenty of work available & he was responsible for negotiating much of the land purchase for the Great Central Railway (Manchester to London line) which must have been a huge undertaking. He also became a director of the Rock Insurance Company.

He married firstly, in 1874, Catherine Adshhead, the daughter of Charles Adhead of Brighton & after her early death in 1891 at the age of 38, he remarried on 30th June of the following year, Eliza Morant, the daughter of Capt. George Morant, late of the Grenadier Guards, of Farnborough Park, Hants. He does not appear to have had any children by either marriage. He lived at Glen Parva Grange, a house & estate he managed for different owners over the years including Lady Eyres Monsell of Dumbleton Hall, Nr. Evesham whose name is perpetuated in the housing development which was much later to be built on some of the land. He had another residence at 54, Curzon Street, London where he was a member of the Carlton & Junior Carlton Clubs.

He became a JP for Leicester & Leics. & Deputy Lieutenant for the county. He was also an Alderman on Leicester Town Council. A strong Conservative, he was Chairman of the Leicester Conservative Association from 1890 & in 1894 & 1895 stood unsuccessfully as candidate for Leicester. He was returned in 1900 but heavily defeated in the landslide election of 1906. From 1910 he was elected MP for East Hertfordshire. He hunted with the Quorn for 20 years, was a Freemason & received his knighthood in 1897. He was also a member & President of the Leicester Architectural & Archaeological Society. He travelled extensively all over the world & was a specialist in arboriculture having a fine collection of trees at Glen Parva. In 1902 he was appointed a member of the Departmental Committee on Forestry & advocated that the Government should pay-more attention to forestry.

He was president in 1896/8 of the Fosse Football Club (later Leicester City) & in 1908 of the Rugby Union to which he gave the Rolleston Charity Cup for annual competition. He was an active supporter of many charitable institutions notably the Leicester Boys & Girls Summer Camp at Mablethorpe which he & his wife were instrumental in founding. He served as its President & she was for many years Honorary Treasurer. He retired from Parliament in 1916 because of ill health & died three years later on 9/4/1919. His funeral at St. Thomas's Church was attended by many representatives of the organisations he supported as well as business people, staff from his offices, family & household servants. He was buried at Gilroes Cemetery.

The beautiful East window in St. Thomas's Church is dedicated to his memory. His widow Eliza survived him by some years. She was a talented artist, being a copyist of Reynolds & Gainsborough & others & a noted miniaturist. She was responsible for the large three panel mural depicting Angels & a Virgin & Child on the West wall in St. Thomas's Church.

One of Sir John's brothers, Major William Gustavus Stanhope Rolleston DL JP also lived in Glen Parva for a time at Marstown Villas, Saffron Road.

Tricia Berry

Sources: Leicestershire & Some Neighbouring Records: Historical, Biographical & Pictorial, London, Allan & North. Census Returns for Great Dalby 185-1, Scraftoft 1871 & Leicester 1881. Illustrated Leicester Chronicle 12/4/1919. Various Directories. Members of Parliament for Leicester 1832-83. A Dictionary of Edwardian Biography, Leics & Rutland, edited by W.T. Pike, re-issued Edinburgh 1985.

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OADBY & WIGSTON CHARITY SHOW

Member Mary Mason has suggested the society might be interested in having a stall at the above show, which is the former Borough Show but now run on a voluntary basis. The organiser is Audrey Cawley. It is to be held at Parklands Leisure Centre on 8th August 1999 from 11 a.m. to 5.p.m.

Their committee are always on the look-out for interesting local people/groups to provide new attractions for visitors. She suggests a display of old photographs etc. Mary who is already involved herself on behalf of a charity rightly points out it would be good publicity for our society & there is no charge to take part. The society might then be eligible for a grant of between £50 & £400 though as we are not a charity this is not certain. We could be situated inside or outside & would be able to borrow display boards. This will be discussed at our next society committee meeting which will take place soon after the A.G.M. In the meantime if any members would like to take part or have any suggestions to offer please have a word with any committee member so that we can get an idea of what support there might be.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR THE BUSY HOUSEWIFE.

EXTRACTS FROM HOME & COUNTRY MAGAZINE 1931

A Short Article on Washing Up. The washing up in a house is regarded as the most horrid and tiresome of jobs that have to be done. It comes so regularly, at least four times a day and cannot, like the turning out of a room, be postponed to a more convenient season.

A great deal depends on the preparation you make for washing up and I advise young housewives in particular to give attention to these preliminary arrangements.

The sink should have a draining board on one, or better still, on each side. These boards prevent breakages and any carpenter or handyman will make and fix them for a nominal sum. You should also have an enamel and a wooden bowl, two jam jars, a piece of soap and, most important of all, a brush the size of a nail brush and costing about threepence.

To protect your skirt and the cuffs of your blouse, provide yourself with a mackintosh apron and a pair of cooking sleeves with elastic top and bottom.

Presuming then that you have hot water over the sink or a kettle on a gas ring 'or stove, collect all the dirty glasses, silver, cups, saucers and plates. Start with the glasses, wash them by hand in the wooden bowl, then turn down on the draining board, next collect the spoons and forks in the enamel bowl and with soap on your brush scrub each article separately, rinse in the enamel bowl first and then in the wooden one, both of which should contain hot water, and lay on the draining board.

Next get a clean cloth and polish the glasses, which will have partly dried, put them on a tray and carry to the cupboard or shelf where they are kept, then wipe the silver, being very careful to dry between each division of the forks holding one end of the article in the cloth, while you rub up the other, then put away in the silver basket, each article in its particular place.

Now empty the water from both bowls, pouring it through a sink dish over the grating on the sink ; in this way you collect all bits, which can be burnt, and the soapy water is good for the drain.

Again fill both bowls with fresh water and start on the cups and saucers, using the brush well soaped and rinsing in the enamel and then wooden bowls, turn down to drain and proceed with the plates and dishes in the same way and lastly with the knives, which should have been previously placed in one of the jars, scrub each blade, holding the handle in your hand and then place in a second jar. Wipe each article. Scrub out the two bowls and turn down to dry after washing out your cloths in the enamel one.

After breakfast there is probably a frying pan and from dinner several saucepans to be cleaned: scrape any fat from them and then wipe with a piece of newspaper ; next fill with water into which a little soda has been added, bring to the boil, rinse round with a saucepan brush (one with a long handle and fibre top preferred), and turn down on a shelf.

Should these simple instructions be carried out you will not find that washing up is either laborious or disagreeable. Your glass, silver and china will be bright and pleasing to the eye and by using a brush in place of a dish cloth, you will avoid meeting with egg and dried mustard from the meal of the day before !

DAILY ROUTINE FROM 6.30—9 A.M. CONTRARY to nearly everyone else, I start my morning's work the previous "evening" ! About ten minutes before going to bed, I take off the serge table-cloth in our sitting-room, shake it well, fold it up carefully and put it at the end of the table. Then I gather up the cushions, shake them too and put them on top of the tablecloth. I then put the chairs seats downwards on the table and roll up any rugs and put them in the passage just outside. Under the table go the fender and fireirons. I put the big pieces of burning coal to the side of the fireplace, and spread out the smaller pieces as much as possible, to prevent thoir burning away. Then I bring in the ash-box, shovel, blacklead-box with its brushes, and the newspaper, small coal and about ten dry thin sticks, and leave matches by the side—all to hand for the next morning at 6.30 a.m.—not a second later ! Then I put out the light and draw up the blind.

Next morning, my preparations for the busy bit before breakfast put me in a good temper right away. I shovel up the ashes, taking care to put the pieces of coal in the coal-box (they go later on the top of the fire), and to make as little dust as possible. Sometimes I put some damp tealeaves amongst the ashes. I brush well into the corners of the bars with the hearth-brush, otherwise my black-leading would have a greyish tinge, instead of being the shiny black we all like so much. Then I mis the black lead (and I do love Nixey's) to a thick "cream" with a few drops of cold water, and rub on a little of it hard with the round brush we buy for 6Jd. at any ironmonger's. I give more hard nibs with the first long brush, some quickflight polishing strokes with a softer brush and perhaps a final polish with a piece of old velvet or rag.

Now I crumple up the newspaper I had put out the night before into small balls and put about eight of them into the grato, very gently and quickly, one by one, then I lay on the sticks crossways, and just as gently I lay on bits of coal. Now I clear away the ashes and blacklead things, light the fire (with one match) and open the window top and bottom to make a draught so that the fire may burn quickly. Then the big bits of half-burned coal go on and the kettle for breakfast. Out come the broom and dust-pan, and I begin sweeping as far as possible from the door, always keeping my eye on the broom and using long strokes, I sweep towards me, going well into the corners and greeting all the ledges of the skirting-boards with my broom bristles. I frequently take the fluff off the broom as I work. Next I sweep the hall in just the same way and -while the dust is settling, I sweep the rugs out of doors. Then, I do the dusting, beginning at the highest things and the top of the door, I work methodically all round the room,

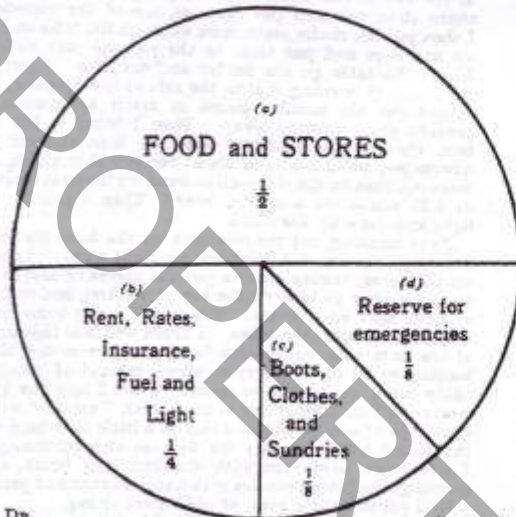
But quick and good dusting soon comes with practice and by 7.30 I am ready to lay the breakfast-table. Yes, the cups, saucers, plates, knives and forks were left on a tray in the scullery after washing-up at supper-time. So, while the bacon is cooking, I only have to add the bread, butter, sugar, and milk to the tray. After making the tea, I fill up the kettle at once and add a little coal to the fire ; we do not want to wait for the washing-up water, do we ? The meal over, I put away the clean things and the bread and sugar in o the cupboard, wipe the greasy plates ; and knives with soft paper, rinse out the cups, and steep the milk jug in cold water. wash the spoons and forks, first and dry them at once, they shine so much better if, dried while still hot from the water. Then I wash the cups, saucers, small plates and the knives ; I add more very hot water to the bowl before doing the greasy bacon plates. I rinse out the dishcloth in hot soapy prater, a little soda can be put into the water, and peg it out to dry if the weather permits. Now I clean the knives and put some slack on the fire. Then I go upstairs as quickly as possible, to the bed-making and dusting there.

This article & the household expenses on the following page kindly supplied by Jim Colver.

DETAILS OF EXPENDITURE OF A HOUSE-KEEPING ALLOWANCE OF £2 5s. 0d. A WEEK.
(For working man and wife.)

Mrs. BLACKWELL, Member of Baslow W.L., Derby (Prize winner in competition).

- 1921 -



Dr.	£	s.	d.
To $\frac{1}{2}$ weekly allowance	1	2	6
" $\frac{1}{4}$ " " " " " " "	5	7	6
" $\frac{1}{8}$ " " " " " " "	5	7	6
" $\frac{1}{8}$ " " " " " " "	5	7	6
	<u>£2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>

	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	Ca.
FOOD AND STORES ($\frac{1}{2}$ weekly allowance)						
By $3\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. of beef @ 1/6 per lb.	5	3				
" $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. suet, 3d., and 1 lb. bacon, 1/-	1	3				
" 1 lb. cheese, 1/1; & 1 lb. oatmeal, 3d.	1	4				
" 1 lb. currants, 8d.; and 1 lb. prunes, 6d.	1	2				
" $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. lard, 4d.; and $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. butter, 11d.	1	3				
" 2 lbs. sugar, 11d.; & $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. cocoa, 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	1	7 $\frac{1}{2}$				
" $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. rice, 3d.; and $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. tea, 7d.	10					
" 6 eggs @ 9d.; and 7 pints milk, 1/9	2	6				
" 2 ozs. of yeast, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.; and fish, 6d.	8 $\frac{1}{2}$					
" $\frac{1}{2}$ stone of flour @ 2/8 per stone	2	0				
" pepper, salt, mustard, vinegar, and baking powder	2	6				
" stove, brass, and boot polish	6					
" matches, 1d.; and 1 lb. soap, 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	10	6				
" 3 ozs. tobacco, 2/-; and papers, 6d.	2	6				
" stationery and stamps	6					
			1	2	6	
RENT AND LIGHTING ETC. ($\frac{1}{4}$ weekly allowance)						
By rent and rates	5	11				
" 1 cwt. coal @ 2/2; and gas, 7d.	2	9				
" insurance, 1/2; and sick club, 5d.	1	7				
			11	3		
RESERVE FOR EMERGENCIES ($\frac{1}{8}$ weekly allowance)						
By subscriptions, outings, garden seeds, manure, and renewal of household needs	5	7 $\frac{1}{2}$				
RESERVE FOR CLOTHES ($\frac{1}{8}$ weekly allowance)						
By boots, clothes, and sundries (for details see attached statement)	5	7 $\frac{1}{2}$				
			<u>£2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	

DETAILS OF EXPENDITURE ON CLOTHES ETC.

Dr.	£	s.	d.
To Reserve for clothes, 52 weeks at 5/7 $\frac{1}{2}$ per week	14	12	6
	<u>£14</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>6</u>

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
By HUSBAND'S CLOTHES:—						
1 suit, £2/5-; and 1 cap, 2/3	2	7	3			
1 pair cord trousers, 18/6; and 3 collars, 2/3	1	0	9			
1 drill jacket, 6/6; and 2 pairs of pants, 9/10	16	4				
2 Union flannel shirts	14	0				
2 handkerchiefs, 1/2; and 1 tie, 1/1	2	3				
1 lb. of wool for socks	5	6				
1 pair heavy boots, £1/1-; and 1 pair shoes, 17/6	1	18	6			
				7	4	7
By WIFE'S CLOTHES:—						
1 coat @ £1/1/6; and 1 hat @ 5/6	1	7	0			
2 skirts, 1 @ 15/11 and 1 @ 6/9	1	2	8			
2 blouses, 9/6; and 2 overalls, 8/6	18	0				
1 pair of gloves, 1/6 $\frac{1}{2}$; and 2 handkerchiefs, 9d.	2	3 $\frac{1}{2}$				
1 pair fleecy knickers, 3/6 $\frac{1}{2}$; and 1 fleecy petticoat, 4/6	8	0 $\frac{1}{2}$				
2 woollen vests, 9/-; and 2 woollen bodices, 5/-	14	0				
1 pair of corsets, 3/6; and 2 pairs woollen hose, 5/-	8	6				
1 pair boots, £1/1-; and 1 pair shoes, 8/11	1	9	11			
1 doz. yards calico (for underlinen)	9	6				
Haberdaesery	2	0				
Boot Repairs	6	0				
				7	7	11
	<u>£14</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>6</u>			

OLD FASHIONED EXPRESSIONS

There are a number of expressions still in use today which have their origins in the distant past. We know what is meant when we hear them but their literal meaning makes no sense at all now. It is hoped to build up a collection & we would be pleased to receive any contributions from members for future issues of the Bulletin. It doesn't matter if you don't know the origin, someone else might!

Here are a few to start with. For instance we might:-

- 1) Encourage a dawdler to come on 'slow coach'¹
- 2) Describe an infrequent occurrence as 'a flash in the pan'¹
- 3) Call an extrovert person one who enjoys the 'limelight'
- 4) Remind a slack worker to 'keep his nose to the grindstone'
- 5) Criticise a reckless person for 'playing fast & loose'¹
- 6) Describe the end of a working day as 'knocking off' time.

Origins:

1) Coaches meeting the ferry at Dover for London went fast, covering the 75 miles in 6 hours. The luggage was piled on other coaches which followed at a slower pace, hence "slow coach"¹

2) When a gun was fired the fine powder in the pan (container) should ignite the main powder in the barrel. Occasionally a malfunction would occur & the powder did not ignite thus causing a 'flash in the pan'

3) Before electricity, cinemas & theatres obtained maximum illumination by using lamps which burned lime, thus 'limelight'¹

4) The last three come from the Iron Foundry trade. When sharpening tools a man would lie above a huge grinding wheel, face down on a flat board, holding the tool against the rotating wheel. To avoid slacking he had to 'keep his nose to the grindstone'

5) The machinery, operated by water power, was driven by belts run on two sets of pulleys. One was the fast pulley which turned with the shaft & the other was the loose pulley which allowed the belt to idle & disconnect the power. The dangers of working among these gave rise to the expression 'fast & loose'

6) At the end of the working day a workman would knock the belt onto the loose pulley, thus stopping work & so 'knocking off'

Don't forget we would like to feature some more in future issues.

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