



# *Greater Wigston Historical Society*

White Gate Farm, Newton Lane, Wigston Magna, Leicester

## BULLETIN 69



The Market House, Mountsorrel Leics

J.R. Colver

## **PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS - JUNE 2004 TO FEBRUARY 2005**

**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2004**

Visit to Market Harborough, tour of the town, with Colin Crosby.  
Meet Paddock Street 7.00p.m. to share transport.

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2004**

Old Wigston in slides & film - Peter Clowes  
7.30p.m. U.K. Church Boys' Brigade Rooms.

**Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2004**

Visit to Unitarian Church, East Bond Street, Leicester  
Meet Paddock Street 7.15p.m. to share transport.

\*\*Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2004\*\* (See page 6 for details)

## Leicestershire's Secret War- Enigma, Beaumanor Hall & the Bletchley Park Connection - Hugh Davies from Bletchley Park

**7.30p.m. Wigston Magna Methodist Church. By Ticket only**

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2004**

## History of the Quakers - Malcolm Elliott 7.30p.m. U.R. Church Boys' Brigade Room

**Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2004**

Christmas Social with quiz, games & supper  
7.30p.m. U.R. Church Boys' Brigade Rooms.

**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2005**

Calke Abbey - Mrs. Gillespie from National Trust  
7.30p.m. U.R. Church Boys' Brigade Rooms.

**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2005**

A.G.M. followed by A Look at Gertie Gitana - Tony Lawrance  
7.30p.m. U.R. Church Boys' Brigade Rooms.

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

Editor: Tricia Berry, 7 Wensleydale Road, Wigston. Leics. LE18 3RX.

## **FRONT COVER**

Jim Colver's drawing for the cover this time features the Market House in Market Place, Mountsorrel. Its domed rotunda is supported by eight Tuscan columns and crowned with an urn. It was built in 1793 by William Thomas for Sir John Danvers on the site of a medieval cross which was then relocated to Sir John's home in Swithland Hall Park.

The Danvers family were generous benefactors in the area. An earlier Sir John being responsible, in 1727, for building the south aisle of St. Leonard's Church, Swithland. Many members of the family are buried with impressive monuments within this church. However in the churchyard a tomb-chest to one family member, Sir Joseph who died in 1753, is positioned half in and half outside the boundary. This, at his specific request, is so that his dog could be buried next to him. Dog lovers will be able to relate to this!

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## **FEBRUARY MEETING**

The Society held its Annual General Meeting when approximately 40 members were present. The evening commenced with:

- 1) Apologies for absence being recorded from Mary Freestone, Ruth Harper & Elizabeth Ayres
- 2) The Secretary, Tricia Berry, reading the minutes of the February 2003 A.G.M. which were agreed and signed by the Chairman as correct.
- 3) The Treasurer, Brian Bilson, explaining the year end accounts. He noted these showed a surplus of £98 98, but that some adjustments were required to give a more accurate picture. Namely an agreed donation of £50 00 to the Framework Knitters Museum had not been made and an advance payment of £50 00 towards 2004 outings had been made during 2003. These two items cancelled each other out. Also an invoice for outstanding room rental had not been received and so did not show in the accounts. This was expected to be £56 00 therefore the true surplus was £42 98. Bob Wignall proposed and the meeting agreed the accounts be passed. It was then agreed to leave the subscriptions for the coming year unchanged at £7 (full) and £5 (concessionary). It was proposed to donate £50 00 to the FWK Museum as in previous years plus the £50 00 missed from 2003. It was noted the summer trips were back in credit.
- 4) The Chairman, Edna Taylor, reported another successful year with meetings well attended and speakers enthusiastically received. She thanked the Officers for their work over the year and also all members for their support, without whom there would be no society.

5) The Membership Secretary, Stella Tweed, saying that the membership currently stood at 75, 5 less than last year. There were 15 paying the full membership, with 58 concessionary with 2 honorary. Attendance at meetings averaged 40.

6) Election of Officers: In the absence of any nominations it was proposed by Bob Wignall and seconded by Colin Towell that all officers be re-elected and this was carried unanimously.

7) Any Other Business. Colin Towell outlined plans of the Civic Society to place Blue Plaques on certain Wigston buildings of note or associated with interesting people; perhaps accompanied by an explanatory leaflet. Our Society committee had already been approached and agreed to their suggestion that this be a joint venture and an informal meeting of representatives of the two groups had taken place. Members endorsed this idea and upon learning the Rotary Club had come up with a similar plan hoped all could work together on this. The possibility of a Lottery Grant is being looked into and it was agreed it would also be an apt use for the £250 legacy from the late Mr. Wignall.

Possible ways of using some of the £1000 in the Society's deposit account were also discussed. Suggestions being a donation if needed to the Pride in Borough in Bloom competition in which Wigston came fourth last year, or to sponsor the clearing and planting of a bed outside the old Two Steeples factory.

Members were then reminded that renewal subscriptions were due and should be paid that evening if possible.

The second part of the evening was taken up by our President, Duncan Lucas, who spoke on the history of the land now forming the Rosemead Drive housing estate and Brockshill Country Park. There were two distinct farms, Brocks Hill Farm whose farmhouse survives as a residential home, and Grange Farm once the home of the Nichols family, whose farmhouse has been demolished. The latter not to be confused with The Grange which is the other side of Harborough Road and now a pub and restaurant.

Duncan used to farm the land and obviously has a deep affection for it and considerable understanding of its character. He passed round an arrow head and cutting tool found there, thought to be 4500 years old. Roman scatterings have also been discovered near the Washbrook and Saxon remains including a brooch near Lucas marsh. He mentioned coal used to be transported round Coalpit Nook (the name of one of the fields on the Wigston/Oadby border) en-route to Kibworth according to Merton College records. All the fields had different types of soil (this surely suggesting that it was a deliberate policy when the fields were created at enclosure; it would also explain why some have such odd shapes).

In recent times the land was owned by the Carmichael family. Some was sold to Calverleys the builders, the Carmichaels donating money for the establishment of the Church of Christ building on Rosemead Drive. Duncan bought Grange Farm and this now forms the basis of the Country Park. A suitable location as the area was always rich in wildlife.

## **GREATER WIGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL ACCOUNTS**

### **Receipts and Payments for the year ending 31st December 2003**

<b>Receipts</b>		<b>Payments</b>	
Opening Balances as at 1/1/03:			
Cash in Hand	4.83	Lecturers' Fees & Expenses	145.00
Current A/c	118.00	Donations	0.00
Deposit A/c	863.81	Bulletin printing	67.25
Subscriptions	986.64	Room Hire	56.00
Donation	395.00	Secretarial Exes	90.87
Collections	2.00	Visits-Breedon & Appleby	775.50
Visits-Breedon & Appleby	78.37	Christmas Social	245.20
Christmas Social	734.00	Closing Balances as at 31/12/03	
Bank Interest	255.00	Cash	4.83
	14.43	Current A/c	66.63
	<b>2465.44</b>	Less u/c chq	85.00
		Deposit A/c	1099.16
			1085.62
		<b>2465.44</b>	

### **MARCH MEETING**

This evening did not go according to plan because the speaker failed to turn up. We have still to discover why we were not notified that there was a problem. Lincoln Record Office where she works have expressed their regret even though it was not their fault, the booking was made with the speaker direct. However we understand she is now on long term sick leave so wish her well and a speedy recovery.

Grateful thanks to members Mike Forryan, Anne Brown, Edna Taylor, Peter Clowes, Colin To well, Di Lawrance and Mary Mason who gave impromptu accounts of their family history. Also to a visitor, John Garner, who spoke of his recently launched book Prince Wigstan's Legacy.

### **APRIL MEETING**

Believe it or not the same thing happened again this month! In 20 years we have never had a speaker not turn up with no advance warning and then for it to happen two months running is amazing. This time the speaker telephoned later in the evening to offer her most sincere apologies. Her taxi driver let her down badly by getting completely lost and unbelievably having no A-Z to refer to! She has been re-booked

for January and we are going to collect her on this occasion!

We do apologise to members. It is disappointing when people have made an effort to attend that this should have happened.

## MAY MEETING

Much better luck this month for our main summer outing which took us to Barrowden, Nr. Uppingham. Guided by Graham & Linda Worrall we started the evening at the St. Peter's church where we were given an outline of the history of this very pretty village.

Bounded on the south side by the River Welland the parish was once owned by the king and used as a hunting forest before being sold to the Earls of Warwick in 1487. Lost in battle by them it was confiscated back to the king and by 1550 was owned by the Cecil family, Earls of Exeter, after whom the pub is named. They still own about 60% today. The parish consists of about 800 acres and the open fields were enclosed in 1882. Interestingly the main Leicester/Uppingham road ran through the village before highway improvements took the carriageway a mile or two to the north of the village.

St. Peter's church was the centre of the six neighbouring ones of Seaton, Thorpe, Morcott, Bisbrook, Glaston and Luffenham. The lady chapel, chancel and nave date from c!210, the south aisle being added by c!250 and north aisle by c!335. By c!420 the church had its tower and spire and the clerestory. The south door is a mere 250 years old but the iron work was re-used and dates from 1190. There is an unusual squint within the lady chapel which is directed across the nave towards the door presumably so that the priest could see who was coming into the building.

On a walk round the village we saw several handsome former farmhouses, one whose roof timbers have been dated to the 1400s. Even the few modern buildings have been constructed of the local stone and blend in beautifully. Barrowden was a busy village with a market, two tanneries (one concentrating on making parchment), wagon builders, forge and an iron works. Four interesting brick burners were built for the latter by German POWs and two survive, though are now in a dangerous condition.

The party then divided, some going to view two dovecotes with accommodation for 1,000 birds each in the grounds of Knott House and the rest visiting the Baptist Chapel. This chapel built in 1819 has strong associations with Thomas Cook. He visited it on his preaching rounds and it was there he met his future wife Marianne who was the Sunday school teacher. They were married in the parish church. The little chapel closed last December and there is hope it can be saved and perhaps turned into a museum to commemorate their contribution to the travel and hotel industries.

We then met up again at the village hall where the Wakerley and Barrowden branch of the W.I. had put on a wonderful cold buffet with plenty of tea and coffee. Finally Edna Taylor thanked our guides and the W.I. and we returned to Wigston at 10.45p.m.

## **VISIT TO MARKET HARBOROUGH IN JUNE**

There are still some vacancies for this trip, so if you have not registered to go but would like to do so please just turn up on the night. Booking in advance is not essential on this occasion as there is no meal or coach to book, but please remember to bring the £3 00 charge with you.

## **\*\*OCTOBER MEETING -LEICESTERSHIRE'S SECRET WAR\*\***

Please note there will be special arrangements for this meeting. The speaker, Hugh Davies is an official guide at Bletchley Park, the War Station for MI6 and the Government Code and Cypher School during WWII. He gives his talks to raise funds for this unique place which has recently been opened as a museum to commemorate the crucial role it played in the allied victory. Top secret communications between Hitler and his chain of command were transmitted in code on Enigma machines and picked up at various listening posts round the country including one set up in the basement at Beaumanor Hall in Woodhouse. These were then relayed to gifted mathematicians and linguists at Bletchley who struggled to de-code them. Their efforts led to the development of the world's first computer, Colossus.

It is believed it will be a popular evening and of interest to people other than Society members. It has therefore been decided to make it an open meeting with a modest charge for visitors which will help defray the costs to the Society and also make the evening more worthwhile for Mr. Davies, who charges extra per head for audiences of over 50 people.

Therefore please note that for this meeting only we shall (hopefully) need extra space and will be at Wigston Magna Methodist Church in Cross Street. Admission will be by ticket only to keep track of numbers for Fire Regulations etc. There will be no charge for Members and your ticket should be attached to this Bulletin if you normally come to meetings. For visitors there will be a £3 00 charge. It is hoped that members will pass the word around and bring along any interested family and friends. Tickets can be obtained from Tricia at meetings leading up to October or by telephoning 2880156.

## **OBITUARY**

It is with sadness that we report the death of Ken Roe on 8<sup>th</sup> April, aged 92 years. Ken had been a member of the Society from its earliest days. Indeed he is one of those who registered an interest by signing a paper at Wigston Library in support of the idea of starting a historical society way back in 1980. He maintained his membership over the years and was a regular attender at the AGM's until quite recently.

We send our sincere condolences to his wife Iris and two sons.

## **HERITAGE FORTNIGHT**

Following an exhibition of paintings of Wigston and South Wigston to be hosted at the Record Office in September by Duncan Lucas and Alan Kind, a Heritage Fortnight is to take place at the United Reformed Church, Wigston during the first two weeks of October. These have been held twice before and are very popular with both members and the wider population. Duncan would be grateful if members could bear these in mind and offer support both as a visitor and to help with stewarding of the latter.

### **INFORMATION FROM DEEDS**

A collection of deeds has recently been made available to us. They contain the following snippets of information in addition to what you might normally expect to find.

The first bundle relates to a plot of land off Central Avenue which once formed part of the paddock of Wigston Hall. From these we learn that the original deeds for the Hall were lost on 10/5/1941 when the offices of a firm of solicitors at 11, Serjeants Inn Temple, London were destroyed by enemy action. The strong room was blown open and the deeds burnt in the subsequent fire.

The second bundle relates to a pair of semi-detached houses in Crete Avenue, Glen Parva. The land they were built on belonged to The Rt. Hon. Caroline Mary Sybil, Viscountess Eyres-Monsell. Eyres was her surname before marriage and Monsell was that of her husband. The Eyres Monsell estate was so named because it was also built on part of the land she owned.

However, Sybil's (as she was known) father's surname was Kettlewell which he changed to Eyres (his mother's maiden name) by Royal Licence soon after his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. So we could have had the Kettlewell Monsell estate instead which somehow doesn't sound at all right.

Roads off Narborough Road to the east of the Holiday Inn (formerly Post House Hotel) were also built on land belonging to this family. Dumbleton Avenue (after Dumbleton Hall, the family home in Worcestershire) is mentioned in the deeds. There is also Evesham Road (after the nearest town to Dumbleton). Meredith Road (after Rt. Hon. Bolton Meredith Eyres-Monsell, Sybil's husband) and Sybil Road (after herself).

### **SERIO-COMIC SCENE IN LOUGHBOROUGH 1857**

An accident which was attended by doubly calamitous results occurred in Woodgate on Saturday last.

One of Pickford's men was driving a horse with a dray (upon which was a cask of brandy containing about 60 gallons) into the gateway of Messrs. Paget & White's warehouse, and in turning from the street, the cask rolled off and burst, the contents running down the street.

Almost as instinctively as wasps round a sugar cask, a number of women were quickly on the spot. "What is it" says one, "Porter" cries another. A third ladled up a little in her hand and tasting exclaimed "It's good, I like it, it's brandy." The old adage 'a woman for a quick thought' was fully verified. Mugs, jugs, cups and saucers, tins, bowls, buckets and pancheons were brought into play to check the progress of this 'liquid fire'. It had almost arrived at the sewer grate - what was to be done? As quick as thought, aprons, shawls and other portions of dress were torn from the wearers, while pitchers and bellies were filled to their hearts content. Some could barely stand and those who had been more abstemious while collecting, gave way to excess on reaching home and were soon prostrate on the floor.

A stranger might have supposed that the plague had been raging or that he was on the spot where a sanguinary battle had just been fought, nearly a score were lying in all directions, some apparently dead.

This may be said to be one of those 'ill winds that do nobody any good'. The drayman lost his brandy and those who found it, lost their senses.

#### **A RAILWAY CARRIAGE LIGHTED BY GAS - 1857**

On Monday week, a trial of a new invention was made between York and Milford Junction, when a first class carriage was lighted by gas. The carriage belonging to the Great Northern Railway Company.

Each of the three compartments had an argand burner, the illuminating power being amply sufficient to allow newspapers to be read with the same ease as in a room where gas light is used.

The carriage was fixed to an engine and tender and this small train containing Mr. Knapton, the inventor and several other persons, started from York station at half past 8 o'clock for Milford Junction, where it arrived in 17 minutes, being at the rate of nearly a mile a minute, the journey bring 16 miles in length. During the transit, the gas burnt steadily and regularly, the flickering associated with all descriptions of artificial light being on this occasion, very slight indeed.

With respect to the difference in the expense of gas and oil, we are told that a carriage with these gas lights travelling from York to London would cost within a fraction of 2.5d, while oil would be consumed amounting to Is 7.5d.

## THE COMING OF WIRELESS TELPHONY

Broadcasting as we know it did not start in Britain until 1920, when the Marconi Company's experimental station at Chelmsford was opened. On 23<sup>rd</sup> February Marconi employees started transmitting readings and then music.

The first broadcasts were readings from catalogues or recitals of extracts from train time tables, relayed in order to test reception. Thus a sentence like "The London, Brighton and South Coast Railway trains to Brighton leave London from Victoria station" would be repeated several times during an hour, being picked up by many amateur wireless enthusiasts who had made their own receiving sets.

At first no one thought of using the new medium for entertainment, but after a few weeks of reading, singers were asked to perform, and were paid for their services.

On 15<sup>th</sup> June 1920, Dame Nellie Melba sang from the Marconi station at the invitation of the Daily Mail. Her voice was clearly heard in Paris and Berlin and within a radius of 1000 miles.

More than any other, this broadcast drew the attention of the public to the possibilities of the wireless and within nine months the Postmaster General announced he was considering additional facilities for broadcastings of general interest.

The above three items were kindly supplied by Jim Colver. They can be found at Leicestershire Record Office under Ref: DE 1651.

## LECTURE BY DR. ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL

Dr. A. Graham Bell told a Derby audience of teachings for the deaf how he came to invent the telephone. He studied the problems of the deaf and tried to produce a machine that would hear for them. The study required the active persuasion of a deaf young woman which convinced him that speech reading was possible, thus his machine was unnecessary for that purpose. However the experiments were not wasted because his machine became the telephone instead, and the deaf young woman his wife.

Source: Leicester Mercury 13/12/1920

## **STEPHEN TAYLOR ORGAN BUILDERS & TUNERS -TWO LOCAL CONNECTIONS**

The business was founded by Stephen Taylor, in Leicester in 1866, with the help of an interest free loan of £100 from the Thomas White Charity. This charity was founded some 460 years ago by Thomas White, a prosperous tailor and Lord Mayor of London, who gave estates worth £15,000 for the benefit of the towns of Leicester, Coventry, Northampton, Warwick and Nottingham. Every fifth year the Trustees for the Leicester charity would receive the income produced that year and lend it to suitable young men aged 18 to 34 years who were resident in the town and wished to set up in business. The loans were for a maximum of £100 and were interest free for nine years. Such is the good management of this Trust the loans are still available today, but moving with the times are currently for a maximum of £10,000 and open to women as well. Thomas White whose contribution to the prosperity of these five towns must be huge is one of the four people commemorated with a statue on the Clock Tower.

Stephen Taylor was born in Sileby c!839 the son of a bootmaker and grandson of a Baptist minister. He received his schooling in a part of Sileby Church set aside for the purpose and it was also there that he played the violin as a member of the church band before it had an organ. He served his apprenticeship as a joiner but his love of music drew him to work as a tuner for a Worcester company when he had served his 'time'. Then by the age of 26, when already married to his wife Jane and with two small children, he had moved to Leicester and set up an organ building business in Albion Street. Working initially alone, he had moved premises by 1870 to 26, Clyde Street with a warehouse in Southampton Street, and then by 1877 to Erskine Street before, by 1881, finally settling permanently at 32A, Nelson Street. Here at this time he lived in a house adjoining his workshop and employed four men as well as his 18 year old elder son John Henry.

Organ building as a separate occupation does not appear in the Leicester trade directories prior to Stephen establishing his business in 1866, so it seems he was something of a pioneer, in this district anyway. In Whites Directory of 1863, a few people are described as musical instrument makers, and some music teachers were also tuners, but in neither category was any particular instrument mentioned. There was a Stephen Taylor living at 7, Northgate Street whose occupation at this date was a carpenter so this was very probably our man.

By the time Harrods Directory for 1870 was published there were two organ builders listed as working in Leicester, Stephen, and one other person. In Whites Directory for 1877 there were still the same two in the town plus a further three in the county, and in Kellys Directory for 1888 the numbers in the town had increased to five with still three in the county. This shows that Stephen had competition, but also reflects the increase in business, as the prosperous Victorians with their expanding population built new places of worship and refurbished existing ones.

Stephen had three sons, the previously mentioned John Henry, Stephen Oliver and Cardinal, and a daughter Annie. All the sons were much involved with church music. John Henry being organist for 60 years at St. John the Divine and Cardinal organist at St. Paul's, Leicester and later at St. Stephen's Presbyterian. But it was the middle son Stephen Oliver, born 1870, who carried on the business after the death, at the age of about 80 years, of his father, in December 1920. He continued until about 1949 when his two sons Stephen Alfred, born 1900, and Geoffrey took over.

In an interview in 1953 for the Leicester Mercury in their 'Looking at Industry' series of business articles Stephen Alfred could look back on a record of the firm having installed some 300 organs in churches around Great Britain. The majority in Leicestershire and surrounding counties. The largest was built in 1910 for St. Peter's, Leicester, while another outstanding example of their craftsmanship was the De Montfort Hall organ installed in 1913 shortly after the hall was completed. This organ was commissioned as a gift for the people of Leicester by Alfred Corah of the huge St. Margaret's hosiery company, himself an enthusiastic organ player. It came to be regarded as the Taylors' masterpiece, and one of the two finest civic organs in the country. Leading organists were eager to try it out and many wrote complimentary letters to the firm.

In the interview Stephen Alfred added that in common with other industries there had been a heavy rise in labour and material costs in recent years, such that to build an organ of the type they designed and constructed for the De Montfort Hall would in 1953 cost more like £20,000 rather than the £4,000 it did in 1913. This meant that orders were in the main now for smaller sized organs and the days when some large residences had their own organs installed had long gone.

By 1953 the firm had been incorporated as a limited company, was the only organ builders in Leicester, and employed ten people. It trained its own staff and when choosing potential apprentices favoured lads who had a love of music combined with a certain mechanical sense.

Over time the De Montfort Hall organ fell into disrepair and became unplayable. Then by 1996 a concerted fund raising effort combined with help from the Corah Foundation and other benefactors led to a complete restoration. This enabled a celebration to take place in February 2004 when a day long series of musical events and conducted tours was held to mark the instrument's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. Present on this occasion was a fourth generation Stephen Taylor, great grandson of the original builder.

There are two links with Wigston. Firstly All Saints' Church, has a Taylor organ which was installed in the west gallery in 1883 and formed part of a larger restoration and refurbishment programme. The vicar, Rev. Barber, then sold the old organ to Sproxton Church. The new Wigston organ was later moved to its present chamber.

A second link with Wigston has a really very sad ending. Stephen Alfred had remained

a bachelor until aged 49 when in November 1949 at All Saints' he married 37 year old Margaret Marion Lawton of 38, Bell Street. Margaret was the adopted daughter and 'eyes' of the blind doctor Briggs and had continued living in the family house, next door to Shipp's drapers shop after his death. After the marriage Stephen Alfred duly moved in and they settled down to married life. On pleasant summer days Margaret was in the habit of driving out to country churches where her husband was working and the two would share a packed lunch in the church yard. He was a noted amateur botanist and no doubt found some interesting plants in those peaceful relatively undisturbed surroundings.

All this came to an abrupt end on 8/1/1954 when Stephen Alfred's car was involved in a road traffic accident. He suffered serious head injuries and died the same day in the Royal Infirmary. The deputy coroner Mr. G.E. Bouskell-Wade held an inquest and recorded a verdict of accidental death. The accident happened on the A47 at Leicester Forest East between the Red Cow Inn and Desford Cross Roads. The road was very icy and Stephen Alfred and the driver of an oncoming British Road Services lorry loaded with boxes of sweets realised this and both slowed right down. However they then slid towards the middle of the road and into each other, Stephen Alfred's car becoming embedded half underneath the other vehicle whose driver was greatly shocked but otherwise uninjured.

Stephen Alfred had been on his way to Barwell where the company was engaged in repairing the parish church organ. Passengers in the car were his employees, Alan Cattell (21) electronic organ specialist, Geoffrey Hollings the chief tuner and Leslie Neat (17) apprentice. These three all had facial and head injuries too, Mr. Rollings was said to be very, very ill. That evening's Leicester Mercury which carried a front page account of the accident stated that the business of the company was being carried on under the direction of the late principal's brother, Mr. Geoffrey Taylor.

The firm continued but must have suffered greatly from such a devastating loss. It was still listed in Kellys Directory for 1966 but by 1969 the premises were not mentioned at all and there were no organ builders left in Leicester.

Margaret Taylor picked up the pieces of her life and carried on, supported by a group of very good friends. She continued to live in Bell Street until her house, Shipp's shop, the infant school and Deacon's hosiery factory all disappeared to make way for Sainsburys. She then moved to Cottage Road and passed away in 1982.

Tricia Berry

Sources: *Leicester Directories* as mentioned in the text, *Leicester Mercury* 16/10/1953 (Business Article), 8/1/1954 (Front page account of accident), 16/10 & 13/12/1903 (Thomas White Charity), 1/10/2003 & 21/2/2004 (Restoration & Birthday of De Montfort Hall organ), *Census* 1881 & 1901, *Parish Records*, *Death Certificate*, *Correspondence* concerning the sale of old Wigston organ to Sproxton in Duncan Lucas's collection.

STEPHEN TAYLOR,  
ORGAN BUILDER AND TUNER,  
NELSON ST., LONDON RD., LEICESTER.

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THE FOLLOWING ARE A FEW OF

Organs Built by S Taylor

LEICESTER AND DISTRICT.—St. Saviour's, St. Leonard's, Christ Church, St. John the Baptist, All Saints', St. Michael's, Knighton, Wigston, Thurnby, Thurmaston, Syston, Thrussington, Bond Street Congregational Church ; also, Emanuel Church, Loughborough, Billesdon, Asfordhy, Hoby, Owston, Swadlincote, Thring-Ktone, Wesleyan Chapel, Burton, All Saints', Wellingore (Grantham), Staverton (Daventry), Gresley (Burton), Newhall Catholic (Burton), All Saints', Hawley (Hants). Hallaton, Shepshed, and others building.

Advertisement for the company from Wright's Directory 1892



Enjoying a drink c1948 L to R: Stuart Hodson, Stephen Alfred Taylor, Helen Newman, Connie Hodson (Nee Shipp), Edwin Broughton, Margaret Lawton