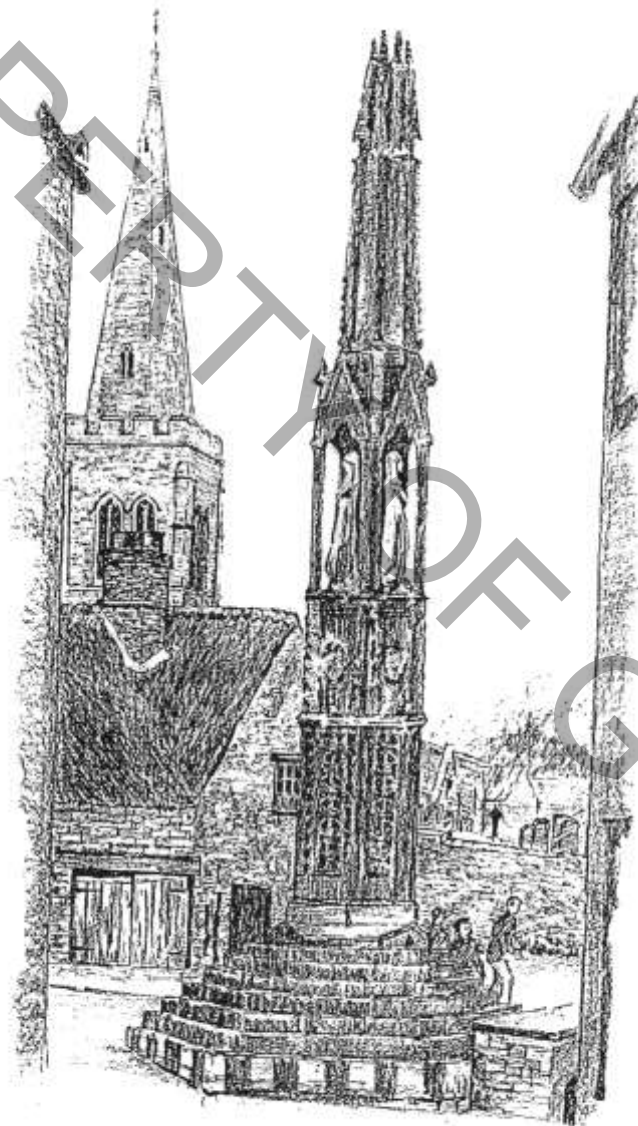




Greater Wigston Historical Society
White Gate Farm, Newton Lane, Wigston Magna Leicestershire

Bulletin 88

November 2010



Queen Eleanor Cross, Geddington,
Northants.

J.R. Colver.

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS – NOVEMBER 2010 TO JUNE 2011

Wednesday 17th November 2010

History & Operation of Radio Leicester – Russell Hobbs
7.30p.m. U.R. Church Boys' Brigade Rooms.

***Wednesday 15th December 2010**

Social Evening with Quiz & Local Picture Show – Mike & Linda Forryan
7.30p.m. U.R. Church Boys' Brigade Rooms.

Wednesday 19th January 2011

The Green Bicycle Mystery – Gerry Broughton
7.30p.m. U.R. Church Boys' Brigade Rooms.

Wednesday 16th February 2011

A.G.M. followed by 'Where I worked' contributions from members (Part II)
7.30p.m. U.R. Church Boys' Brigade Rooms.

Wednesday 16th March 2011

Newsreels from the 1940s & 1950s – Mike Forryan & Tony Lawrance
7.30p.m. U.R. Church Boys' Brigade Rooms.

Wednesday 20th April 2011

Canal People – Mary Matts (to be confirmed)
7.30p.m. U.R. Church Boys' Brigade Rooms.

Wednesday 18th May 2011

Visit to Kibworth followed by supper at The Rose & Crown (to be confirmed)
Meet 7p.m. Paddock Street Car Park to share transport.

****Wednesday 15th June 2011**

Visit to John Taylor Bell Foundry, Loughborough
Meet 6.30p.m. Paddock Street Car Park to share transport.

* Please note there will be a £2 00 charge to cover the cost of refreshments for the December meeting. This will be collected on the night.

** Please see note about this trip on page 5.

The Bulletin is published three times a year on 1st March, July and November.
Articles etc.(which are always welcome) should be submitted to the Editor, Tricia Berry, three clear weeks before publication date please.

FRONT COVER

Jim Colver's drawing this time features the Queen Eleanor Cross at Geddington, Northamptonshire. This cross was one of twelve erected by King Edward I in memory of his wife Queen Eleanor of Castile.

Edward was in Scotland when his wife was taken ill while travelling north to join him. Her party stopped at The Manor House at Harby near Lincoln where she died on 28/11/1290. Her body was embalmed at Lincoln and then brought on the 210 mile journey back to London for burial. At each of the twelve places that the cortege rested overnight Edward commissioned memorial crosses which were worked on by several artists to individual designs. The places were Lincoln, Grantham, Stamford, Geddington, Hardingstone, Stoney Stratford, Woburn, Dunstable, St. Albans, Waltham (now Waltham Cross), Westcheap (now Cheapside), and Charing (now Charing Cross).

All but the ones at Geddington, Hardingstone and Waltham Cross were destroyed during the Civil War. In some cases fragments survive in local museums and new replacement memorials or plaques have been erected on or near the original site. At Charing Cross the original cross was to the south of Trafalgar Square and is now occupied by a statue of King Charles I on horseback. A plaque set in the ground behind this statue states that the mileage distances on road signage from London is still measured from this point. A replica Eleanor Cross made in 1863 now stands outside Charing Cross Station.

Queen Eleanor was born in Castile, Spain in 1241. She is buried in Westminster Abbey close to her father-in-law King Henry III.

AUGUST MEETING

The subject of Brian Johnson's talk for this month was Leicester's Prefabs. A few of these low cost homes had been brought into use before the Second World War, but it was the need to re-house the many families made homeless by bombing that caused the authorities look seriously at this solution.

The Government announced their Temporary Housing Programme (THP) and in 1944 Lord Portal, the Minister of Works, introduced the Portal Prototype Bungalow which set the standard. There were nine specific criteria: they had to be 635sq.ft. in area, last 10/15 years, make best use of available materials, minimum use of timber, no bricks even for chimneys, back to back kitchens and bathrooms to share common plumbing fittings, factory made parts wherever possible, units not to be more than 7ft 6ins. wide, (the width of a lorry's load, wider and a police escort was necessary), could be erected easily on site with minimum building skills. Several manufacturers were used, with different designs but all had a living room, fully fitted kitchen with pantry, bathroom and two bedrooms, and were well supplied with cupboards and wardrobes. They usually had a steel frame made by car manufacturing companies, and panels and roof of cast concrete or sawdust/asbestos/cement compound. They cost about £550

each and could be erected anywhere, no planning permission needed. Some were also imported from America.

After the war returning service personnel and the slum clearance programme, which had been halted during the war, meant there was still a serious housing shortage. The THP was speeded up, with the Aircraft Industries Research Organisation for Housing (AIROH), displaying a new aluminum bungalow which was similar to the Portal but more expensive. The AIROH was designed by aircraft engineers led by Jim Payne, who had been responsible for the design of the famous D-Day Mulberry Harbour. Production took place at the Bristol Aeroplane Company's factory using surplus new aluminum which had been bought for war planes, and re-cycled material from crashed and obsolete ones. The AIROH was made in four 22ft.6in x 7ft.6in panels complete with cupboards and fittings, and all pre-wired and ready glazed. Even the doors and guttering were factory fitted. Once delivered they could be assembled onto a pre-prepared base with services already installed, by six unskilled workers (often POWs) in four hours.

The bungalows were generally very popular especially with people who had never been used to an inside toilet, bath and fitted kitchen before. The only serious disadvantage was poor insulation which meant they were too hot in summer and really cold in the winter. There were prefabs in Coleman Road at the back of the General Hospital, at New Parks, Ambassador Road, Hinckley Road, Hockley Farm Road, Hughenden Drive and Groby Road. There were smaller numbers in many towns and villages in the county. A very few survive, but most have now been demolished. Some have had a make-over and are now clad in brick, with raised, tiled roof and proper chimney.

After some questions and discussion the Chairman, Mike Forryan, thanked Brian for a really interesting talk.

SEPTEMBER MEETING

This fascinating talk by Derek Seaton focused on the research for his soon to be launched book *This Gallant Steelback*, W.E. Boulter VC, rather than its content. Starting with the very willingly shared information gathered for a short biographical article, which featured in the Who's Who series of this Bulletin some years ago, Derek set out on a huge voyage of discovery.

'Billy' Boulter was born and grew up in Wigston, he left school aged 12, and went to work in the drapery department of the local Co-operative store, later moving to a similar post at another Co-op store in Kettering. It was from there that he signed up with six friends for service in World War I, joining the 6th Service Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment, one of the 'pals' brigades.

He won the V.C. for taking over his platoon when the officers were killed, knocking out an enemy position even though badly injured, and thus saving many comrades' lives. Receptions to celebrate his award were held at Northampton, Kettering and at Wigston. At Northampton, 20,000 people turned out at Abington Park to welcome him.

The research took Derek to many places, he tracked down nephews and nieces both locally and further away and gained much useful family information and many photographs. He was also given unlimited access to a unique family scrapbook and other relevant memorabilia. He visited London on a number of occasions to visit the Imperial War Museum, the National Army Museum, the National Archives, the Newspaper Library at Colindale, and John Lewis department store head office. Other destinations were the Central Library and the Abingdon Museum in Northampton. The Kettering Library, the Co-operative Society Archives in Manchester and other records in the Midlands. Leicester University and the Leicestershire Record Office. Even a trip to France to photograph Trone Wood where the medal was won.

After a number of questions and some discussion the Vice Chairman, Tony Lawrance, thanked Derek for a really fascinating talk on a true hero of Wigston.

OCTOBER MEETING

Pack Horses and Pack Roads was the subject of this month's talk by Wendy Freer. Pack Horses were in use from the Middle Ages onwards, they would travel as a single animal, or in a train of up to forty. Their handlers were known as Jiggers and could occasionally be women. They carried anything that needed to be transported but typically this might be lime, wool, coal, salt, imported spices and fish from the coast.

Smaller, strong horses were most suited to the job. They wore a special saddle with hooks each side from which panniers or wrapped items were hung. One horse could manage 224 lbs, 10 were needed for a ton of goods. The horses wore bells to warn other travellers of their approach, because a train proceeding in pairs would often block the road completely. Surviving features from these days include the narrow pack horse bridges, with examples in Leicestershire at Anstey, Thurcaston and Aylestone. Other reminders include tracks or roads named The Drift or Drovers Road, Gypsy Lane, Saltersford Road and Green Lane. Also hollow sunken lanes worn down over years of use, perhaps with parallel lines of stones or paving to make causeways, often have a pack road origin. Wild moorland areas often had direction stones, known as Stoops These useful aids to travellers are now sometimes utilized as gate posts.

The introduction of canals and later the railways, which could deal with much larger loads saw the rapid end of pack horses except in hilly or remote areas.

Drovers were another group of regular road users in the past. Farm animals were walked from as far as Scotland and Wales to market in London, travelling 10/15 miles per day. When they came to water they would swim, even quite large areas such as the Anglesey Straits. Drovers had to be capable of caring for the animals, from medical treatment to seeking appropriate food and shelter for each night. It was necessary to protect their feet, so cattle wore metal nailed-on shoes similar to horseshoes (but needed two for each cloven foot). Pigs wore a type of sock, geese were made to walk through tar and then sand, sheep were strong enough to manage unaided.

After some questions and discussion Wendy was thanked for a most interesting evening by the Chairman, Mike Forryan.

SUMMER OUTING TO BELL FOUNDRY AT LOUGHBOROUGH

On 15th June 2011 we have arranged a visit to the John Taylor Bellfoundry at Loughborough. This involves a conducted tour of their museum and the workshop which takes about 1½ hours and will cost £8 00 each. We had to give the numbers who would be coming in order to make the booking. The company will then accept another group or individuals, who wish to go on the same evening, up to their maximum number. We decided to reserve 20 places, which will be available on a first come first served basis. So could members who would like to go on this trip reserve their places (together with payment please), as soon as possible. We shall be starting a list at the November meeting.

We normally get more than 20 on our visits, so when we reach that number we will continue taking names and approach the company for more places. There is a good chance these will be available in the near future, but quite possibly not later on.

The company ask us to ensure that all visitors know they should wear reasonably sturdy footwear, and that people wearing sandals or open toed shoes cannot be admitted on Health and Safety grounds.

Tricia Berry

SUBSCRIPTIONS

At the AGM in February 2010 it was agreed that the Committee could increase the subscriptions due in February 2011 if it was thought necessary. The reason for this was to give members who do not attend meetings regularly some advance warning of any rise so that they do not automatically renew at the old rate. It was decided at the committee meeting on 29th September that due to rising costs it would be prudent to make a modest increase, so please note that the rates at renewal next February will rise by £1 00 and will be £11 00 full, or £8 00 concessionary.

MYSTERY SUMMER COACH TRIP

On 21st July the society organised an extra event, an evening coach trip led by Duncan Lucas. The route took us through south east Leicestershire where Duncan pointed out features we were mostly familiar with but probably knew little about. We learned of the history of the landscape and villages, and events and people associated with them, plus farming methods, local tales and a good dose of humour. We ended up for refreshments at The Fox at Hallaton before returning to Wigston at about 10.30p.m. A thoroughly pleasant and worthwhile evening enjoyed by members and also by quite a number of friends and visitors too.

The trip was arranged to raise money for the purchase of some up-to-date recording equipment. An extremely generous benefactor, who wishes to remain anonymous,

paid for the coach and also supplied the raffle prize, so we may well have sufficient funds to make the purchase now. Technical members of the committee will look into what is available and a decision will be made at the next committee meeting probably in April. Thank you very much indeed.....for this most welcome gift to the Society.

PRIDE OF THE BOROUGH

Congratulations to our member, Evelyn Brooker, for winning first prize in the Oadby & Wigston Borough Council's Pride of the Borough Floral Display Competition, for the best front garden. There were about fifty entries and Evelyn won for the second year running, quite an achievement, well done Evelyn.

NEW MEMBERS

The Committee are always on the lookout for new members. Our Chairman, Mike Forryan, is preparing a 'flyer' to put through letterboxes. He asks members if they know anyone interested in Local History to tell them about our Society and invite them along to a meeting.

NEW BOOKLET ON WIGSTON

The late Bob Walden wrote 'Memories of a Wigston Man - Recollections and stories of life in a Leicestershire village during the First World War'. His son John has put this together as a booklet and very generously offered copies to the Society to sell for our funds. It is a fascinating window into the past with many people and events mentioned. Some stories considerably pre-date WWI and are the recollections of the author's father, such as when he worked for Shipp's the Drapers, who also ran the Post Office, and employed him to deliver the mail on a Penny-Farthing bicycle. Mike Forryan will have copies available at meetings, they cost £2 00 each.

THE ARRIVAL OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN WIGSTON

By 1888 it was apparent that the system of local administration that had developed over the previous century was totally inadequate. The existing Sanitary Districts and Parish Councils had legal status but were not part of the mechanisation of government. They were run by volunteers and often no-one could be held responsible for failures to undertake required duties. Also Quarter Sessions were quite unable to handle the ever increasing business.

The Local Government Act (1888) was passed enabling the creation of County Councils whose areas were based of the old pre 1974 historic counties of England. Within these counties, County Boroughs, were established to administer the larger

towns, and London became the Metropolitan County of London, with full statutory county powers. Crucially all councillors were to be elected.

The Local Government Act (1894) retained the counties and boroughs for the wider administration of the area but enabled divisions into smaller rural and urban district councils for more local management. The Act also provided for the establishment of civil parishes for administrative purposes which were quite separate from ecclesiastical ones. The Act was quickly implemented all over the country. In Wigston, Mr. H.A. Owston, solicitor, of Bushloe House, was instrumental in obtaining urban district status. Thus the village was no longer run by parish volunteers who met at Vestry Meetings, chaired by the Vicar, but by elected councillors who met at Council Meetings, and chose a Chairman from among their number.

The following description of Wigston Magna and South Wigston taken from Wright's 1892 Directory gives an idea of what the district was like just prior to this big change.

Wigston Magna or Great Wigston, is a populous and improving parish, situated on the main line of the Midland railway, at its junction with the branch to Rugby, and with the lines to Hinckley, Nuneaton and Birmingham. It is in the Harborough Parliamentary division, and division of Wigston for County Council, hundred and rural deanery of Guthlaxton, Blaby Union, and Leicester County Court district, nearly 4 miles south from Leicester, and 94 from London. The Union Canal passes through the parish. The village has been called Wigston-two-steeples, from there being two churches. One of them, St. Wolstan's [now St. Wistan's], was long disused, and was gradually falling into decay. The tower and greater part of the spire remained, however, in a fair state of preservation. The church was restored in 1853 at a cost of £6,000. A Burial Board has been formed, and a new cemetery of four acres, with mortuary chapel, was opened in 1881. All Saints' Church is a stately well-proportioned fabric (of the Decorated period, with 14th century work), consisting of chancel, nave, aisles and tower (with 6 bells), surmounted by a lofty crocketed spire. An ancient rood screen of oak divides the nave from the chancel. There is a beautiful stained window at the east end, the gift of Captain Baddeley. In 1883 Mr. Ingram presented a magnificent organ of three manuals, built by Mr. S. Taylor of Leicester. The Registers date from 1571. The living is a discharged vicarage, of the yearly value of £300, with residence, in the gift alternately of the Haberdashers' Company and the Governors of Christ's Hospital. There are National and Board Schools, the latter erected in 1872; an Infant Board School having been added in 1881. There is a good parochial Library from which there are over 100 issues every week. The Village Hall, erected by a Limited Liability Company, is used for concerts, lectures and public meetings; *Secretary*, Mr. Sml. Matthews. There are several sick societies, including Odd Fellows' (M.U.) [Manchester United], and Church Friendly Society. There is a handsome Independent Chapel, built in 1841, on the site of an old one, at a cost of £1,070. There are also Gospel Preaching Room, Wesleyan, Primitive Methodist and Calvinistic Chapels. A handsome Wesleyan Chapel was built in 1885, from designs of Messrs. Redfern & Sawday, the builder being Mr. O. Wright. The cost was about £1,200, and accommodation is provided for 350 worshippers. A new Primitive Methodist Chapel, situate at the bottom of Moat Street, was also opened in 1886.

Three Almshouses were endowed by Mr[s] Clarke, a former resident, with £174 a year, for the reception and support of eleven inmates. In 1771 Mrs. Catherine Palmer bequeathed 13 acres of land and a house in Leicester for prayers to be said by the resident minister on Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays. There are several charities producing £90 per year, half of which is distributed in bread, the remainder in fuel and clothing. The village is lighted by gas supplied by a local company, small consumers being charged 3/4d per 1,000 cubic feet. The inhabitants are chiefly employed in the hosiery trade. Here are extensive and handsome engine sheds, belonging to the Midland Railway Company, and employment is found for nearly 300 hands. The Hall is a handsome mansion, and is placed in the midst of extensive and well wooded grounds. Sir Henry St. John Halford is lord of the manor. The principal landowners are the Trustees of A. Cooper, Messrs. Robert Lowe G. Vassal, J.G. Pochin, T. Ingram, Richard Haymes, Tyler Bros. (Leicester) and Thomas George Langham (London). The parish contains 2931a. 1r. 17p. of land; rateable value, £26,668; and the population in 1881 was 4,299, and in 1891 numbered 7,013. The feast is on the first Sunday after November 1st.

All Saints' Church – Services, 11 and 6.30; Communion first Sunday morning in month at mid-day, other Sundays, 8 a.m. *Vicar*, Rev. Henry J. Mason, M.A.; *Wardens*, Messrs. A.A. Cooper and J. Cooper; *Organist*, Mr. Edward P. Cooper; *Sexton*, H. Vann. *Hymns*, A. and M. (new edition).

St. Wolstan's – Sunday 3.30p.m.; *Organist*, Mr. William Vann.

Independent Chapel - Sunday 10.45 and 6.30, Wednesday 7.30p.m. Rev. T.C. Deeming; *Organist*, Miss Nellie Matthews; *Keeper*, Mr. Thomas P. Johnson. Wesleyan – 10.30 and 6; *Keeper*, Alfred Smart.

Primitive Methodist – 2.30 and 6; *Keeper*, Mr. Merrick.

Calvinist – 10.30 and 6;

Christian Brethren – 11 and 6.30.

Church Mission Room – 3 and 6.30.

School Board (elected Feb. 1890) – Mr. John Wignall (Chairman), Rev. T.C. Deeming, Col. A.W. Mensergh, Messrs. William Bentley, Orson Wright and J. Gamble. *Clerk*, Mr. J.T. Proctor.

Burial Board – Messrs. H.A. Owston (Chairman), H. Hill, J. Cooper, Ths. Johnson, John Snowden, Rev. H.J. Mason, Col. P.J. Seddon J.P. and Rev. T.C. Deeming. *Clerk*, Mr. A.H. Burgess (solicitor).

Post, Money Order, Telegraph & Office – at Mr. Shipp's, Bell Street. Letters from Leicester arrive at 6.50a.m. and 2.40p.m.; box cleared 10.30, 6.20 and 8.15p.m.; box in church wall cleared at 10.15 and 5.50 on weekdays only; wall box, Wigston Fields, cleared at 6p.m. weekdays only. Pillar box at station cleared at 11 a.m, 5.45 and 8.30p.m.

South Wigston, formerly an outlying hamlet, and containing only a few houses west of the railway, has, during the short space of eight years, developed into a considerable suburb, containing upwards of 700 houses, with a population of upwards of 2,500, including a large timber yard and building works, three boot and shoe factories, elastic web works, biscuit manufactory, an iron foundry, and some good retail shops. There are an iron church, in charge of a curate, and mission rooms for several dissenting bodies. A large Board School has been erected, at a cost of upwards of £4,000. It is proposed shortly to erect a permanent church in place of the iron one. There is a coffee house, a fine building standing on the Blaby Road, with concert hall,

a bagatelle room, a skittle alley attached, also a handsome and commodious hotel on the Blaby Road, considered to be one of the finest in the Midlands, likewise a large one in Canal Street.

All Saints' Mission Church – Services, Sunday at 11a.m. and 6.30p.m. Communion first and third Sunday in month and on chief festivals at 8a.m., and second and fourth at 11a.m. Curate, Rev. G.H. Fraser; Organist, Mr. Arthur Abbott.

Congregational Mission Room, Blaby Road – Services, Sunday 11 and 6.30; Tuesday 7.45p.m. Rev. James Clarke; *Secretary*, Mr. C. Redshaw; *Organist*, Mr. J. Tarry.

Wesleyan Chapel, Blaby Road – Services, Sunday 10.30 and 6. *Keeper*, Mr. Underwood, Station Street.

Christian Meeting House, Canal Street – Services, Sunday 10.30 and 6. *Steward*, Benjn. Toone.

Primitive Methodist, Station Street – Services, Sunday 2.30 and 6.

Post, Money Order, Telegraph and Telephone Office, Blaby Road – Mrs. Jane Adams, sub-postmistress, Letters from Leicester delivered at 7.30a.m. and 1.15p.m; box cleared at 10.50, 6.25 and 8.30 on weekdays only. Telegraph business on Sundays from 8 to 10a.m.

Most of Wigston Magna and South Wigston combined to form Wigston Magna Urban District Council with effect from 31/12/1894. It consisted of fifteen councillors, three for each of the five wards. The largely rural area to the east of Wigston, including Kilby Bridge broke away to form East Wigston Rural District Council with effect from 28/12/1894. This latter consisted of ten councillors, two for each of the five wards.

Before this change there was much activity, Liberals and Conservatives held meetings to rally support and endorse nominations. Speakers explained what their priorities would be if they were elected. The most pressing problem was improvements to sanitation there having been thirty cases of Diphtheria in the area that year. Most candidates stood for the party they belonged to but not all, three members of the Liberal party stood as Independent Liberals which caused much disapproval from some of their fellow members.

The Leicester Chronicle & Leicestershire Mercury of 1/12/1894 reports that:

“A meeting of the Conservative Burgesses of the town of Wigston Magna to choose fifteen candidates for the new urban district council was held at the Long Street schools on Monday 26/11/1894. Mr. H A Owston presided and stated that the Conservatives had offered the Liberals eight members as against the Conservative seven and also the right to nominate the chairman but they declined. He did not think the question should be a political one and some of the gentlemen nominated tonight were some who did not belong to the Conservative party. They were men who had lived in the village of Wigston all their lives and had got the welfare of their village at heart. They had come forward in a patriotic and magnanimous way to support their side. Put aside all question of party and had given themselves up to patriotism. By doing this they did not give up their feelings, could still retain all their political feelings.”

There were three of these Independent Liberal nominations, Mr. J.D. Broughton, Mr. J.A. Harris and Mr. J. Snowden. *“Mr. Broughton, then spoke to the meeting. He said he was a Liberal but thought the compromise offered by the Conservative Party was a fair one and that was the reason of his present conduct. They might have saved £150 if only a contest could have been avoided. He considered they were acting as Mr. Logan had advised them to.”* [Mr. Logan was the Liberal MP for Harborough division at the time]. *“The latter had advised them to put politics to one side and get the best men they possibly could and he thought they were sticking to the programme.”*

A further meeting, this time to hear the independent candidates, was reported in the same newspaper two weeks later. Mr. Broughton again spoke, saying: *“he was not going to be led by the Liberal Association. They could have picked fifteen men, seven from one side and eight from the other, better than they would secure as a result of the elections. He said he had been reluctantly induced to come forward by Liberal friends, not by the Conservatives as had been stated. Having come forward it was his determination to fight with all vigour...for return to the council. Mr.Harris said he did not feel called upon to apologise to anyone for the position in which he stood. It was not honest Liberalism they were fighting but a local faction of the party which thought more of their party than the wellbeing of the town in which they lived. Mr. Snowden said that having been told he did nothing for Wigston he would explain public matters upon which he had taken an interest. Mr. Owston then spoke in support of the three gentlemen.”*

The results of the election for councillors for the new Wigston Magna Urban District Council were as follows:

Elected

St. Wolstan's	Thomas Henry Johnson, farmer, 78 Bull Head Street	L 155
	William Goodwin Forryan, butcher, Bell Street	L 138
	John Snowden, needle maker, 11 Bull Head Street	IL129
Central	Hiram Abiff Owston, solicitor, Bushloe House,	C 150
	Francis Hickling Freckingham, butcher/grazier, Long St	C 114
	John Walker, grocer, Cherry Street	L 111
All Saints'	John Daykin Broughton, hos.manuf, Bull Head Street	IL147
	John Cooper, maltster, 55 Long Street	C 135
	George Ross, baker, 29 Moat Street	L 123
Fairfield	Orson Wright, builder/contractor, Blaby Road, SW	C 114
	Henry James Barwick, school master, Blaby Road SW	L 101
	William Dunmore, biscuit manuf, Blaby Road, SW	L 89
Bassett	Arthur Moulds, leather factor, Blaby Road, SW	L 143
	John Bruce, elastic web foreman, Orange Street SW	L 124
	Richard Henry Warren, foundry manager, Blaby Road, SW	C 106

Not Elected

St. Wolstan's: Reuben Broughton, hos. manuf, Junction Road, IL. George Shipp, coal merchant/farmer, Bull Head Street, C. John A. Harris, gas works manager, Newgate End, IL.

Central: John Cheney, cabinet maker, Leicester Road, C. William Sibson, gardener, I. William R Herbert, framework knitter, Gladstone Street, L.

All Saints': Henry Hill, hos. manuf, Moat Street, L. John Wignall, Co-operative Society manager, Long Street, L. William Loveday, corn merchant/brewer's agent, 35/37 Bull Head Street, C.

Fairfield: Charles Foister, carpenter, Fairfield Street, SW, L. Robert Hamp, retired station master, Blaby Road, SW, C. Henry Onions, carpenter, Blaby Road, SW, C.

Bassett: Charles Burdett, hosiery foreman, Blaby Road, SW, C. John Thomas Rowlett, bootmaker, L. Harry Atkinson, stove grate fitter, Healey Street, SW, Isaac Rayner, labourer/benefit society agent, Healey Street, SW.

The abbreviations are: L = Liberal, C = Conservative, IL = Independent Liberal, I = Independent.

The results of the election for councillors for the new East Wigston Rural District Council were as follows:

Elected

St. Wolstan's:	Eleanor Shield, married woman, Roseleigh, Granville Road	L 172
	Richard Hassall, farmer, Kimberley House, Spa Lane	L 140
Central:	William Usherwood, lic. vict, Railway Hotel, Station Road	C 122
	John Walker, grocer, Cherry Street	L 102
All Saint's:	George Ross, baker, 29 Moat Street	L 154
	Daniel Johnson, farmer, 10 Newgate End	L 129
Fairfield:	Orson Wright, builder/contractor, Blaby Road, SW	C 117
	William Dunmore, biscuit manuf. Blaby Road, SW	L 88
Bassett:	John Gamble, boot/shoe manuf, Water Street, SW	L 117
	Samuel Freeman, house furnisher, Canal Street, SW	L 110

Not elected

St. Wolstan's: Thomas Goodin, Mowsley End, aerated water manuf, C. John Thomas Boulter, lic. vict, Durham Ox, Long Street, C.

- Central: William Cook, farmer/grazier, 12 Long Street, C.
- All saints': William Loveday, corn merchant/brewer's agent., 35/37 Bull Head Street, C. Ambrose Lee, retired hos. manuf, Homefield, Aylestone Lane, C.
- Fairfield: Robert Kind, boot & shoe maker, 35 Kirkdale Road, SW.
- Bassett: Thomas Herrick, draper, 65 Blaby Road, SW, C.

The newly elected councillors for the urban district met at the National School in Long Street, on the day of formation. This school, now demolished, stood on the site of the car park used until recently by the Working Men's Club. The first item on the agenda was to select their Chairman and Vice Chairman. It was by no means a unanimous decision. Mr. Wright proposed, and Mr. Broughton seconded, that Mr. Owston be appointed Chairman, but Mr. Walker and Mr. Ross then proposed Mr. Moulds. A vote was taken and Mr. Moulds won by 8 votes to 7, so he became Chairman and Mr. Walker was appointed Vice Chairman. It was agreed that two meetings would be held at Wigston Magna and one at South Wigston. Alfred Burgess, solicitor, was appointed Clerk at £80 per annum.

The National School seems to have proved an unsatisfactory venue because at a subsequent meeting a letter dated 22/1/1895 from J.T. Proctor, clerk to the school board, was noted in the minutes. This offered the new council the use of a room at either the Board School in Long Street, (now the Record Office), or at Bell Street School, at 1/6d per evening. It was noted that the following meeting on 5/2/1895 was to take place in a fortnight at Bell Street School.

By the time Wright's Directory of 1895 was published a few changes had occurred. The Burial Board is not mentioned, the management of the cemetery having been taken over by the new council. A.H. Burgess had been replaced as clerk to the council by his employee John Thomas Proctor. All the councillors were still in place with one notable exception. Arthur Moulds had stepped down from his position as Chairman and from his seat on the council and had moved to Leicester. His place was taken by William Atkins, a shoe maker, who lived in Timber Street, South Wigston. Mr. A.H. Owston was elected the new Chairman.

Tricia Berry

Sources:

Book 3 Green folders of council schedules in 2nd search room –LRO. Wigston UDC Minute Book DE6335/1 – LRO. Wright's Directories 1892 & 1895. Census Returns 1891 & 1901. Leicester Chronicle & Leicestershire Mercury 1st/8th & 15th December 1894 – LRO.



The first members of the new council walking along Long Street, believed to be moving from the National School to their new meeting place at Bell Street School.