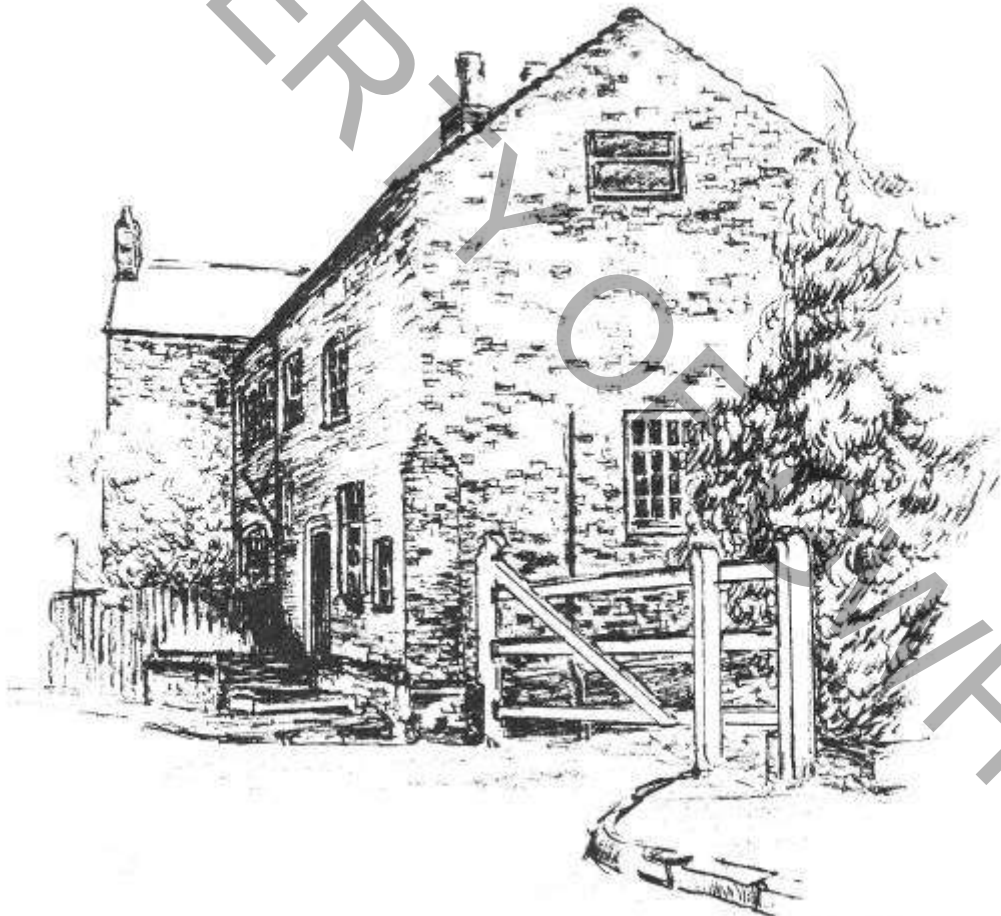




Greater Wigston Historical Society
White Gate Farm, Newton Lane, Wigston Magna Leicestershire

BULLETIN 36



7 Spa Lane Wigston Magna

J.R. Coher.

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS JUNE 1993 To FEBRUARY 1994

Wednesday 16th June 1993

Visit to Ashley Church, Northants - buffet meal at George Inn, Ashley. Coach from Wigston Liberal Club Car Park, meet 6.45p.m.

Wednesday 18th August 1993

Museums Without Walls - Mr. T. Schadla-Hall (Head of Leics. Museums).
7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

Wednesday 15th September 1993

Deep Sea Fishing - Mr. T.G. Dentith (Royal Nat. Mission of D.S. Fishermen).
7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

Wednesday 20th October 1993

Leicester Through The Ages - Mr. J. Banner. 7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

Wednesday 17th November 1993

India's Golden Triangle (Delhi, Japur & Taj Mahal) - Mr. G.L. Jackson. 7.30p.m.
Wigston Liberal Club.

***Tuesday 14th December 1993**

Christmas Party.
7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club, large room downstairs.

Wednesday 19th January 1994

Farm Buildings - Mr. D. Smith.
7.30p.m. Wigston Liberal Club.

Wednesday 16th February 1994

A.G.M. plus 4 speakers (some members) all on their family history research. 7.30p.m.
Wigston Liberal Club.

*Please note the Christmas Party is on a Tuesday. The large room at the Liberal Club not being available on our usual meeting date.

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 publication date please.

Joint Editors

Mrs. Chris Smart, 48 Evington Valley Road, Leicester.
Mrs. Tricia Berry, 7 Wensleydale Road, Wigston.

FRONT COVER DRAWING

Jim Colver's drawing for the front cover features No: 7, Spa Lane, Wigston. This interesting Georgian building was at one time part of the neighbouring house known as The Chestnuts, No: 9, Spa Lane. It was the farmhouse for Upper Farm which was approached through the gateway which still exists to the side of the property. The curved shape of the wall and the stone curb at the base were to prevent farm wagons cutting the corner and causing damage to the brickwork.

The last resident to occupy the whole house was Mr. Arthur Lee, the Managing Director, of Two Steeples Ltd., hosiery factory. During the last war the A.R.P. made use of the downstairs part of No: 7 as their headquarters. The house was divided into two dwellings in 1941.

A much more detailed account of the history of this building was published in Bulletin 21, dated June 1988.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Members are reminded that subscriptions became due at the A.G.M. in February. Anyone who has not yet paid for the year but wishes to retain their membership is asked to forward their cheque to the treasurer, Mr. B. Bilson, 23 Thirlmere Road, Wigston a.s.a.p. The rates are the same as last year i.e. £5 00 full and £3 00 concessionary.

HERITAGE FORTNIGHT

During the last two weeks of January an exhibition of local history was held in the picture gallery at Whitegate Farm. Many fascinating photographs, books, maps and artefacts relating to Wigston's past were on display together with the Transactions and booklets produced by the Society and family trees of the Marlow and Forryan families, the painstaking work of John Marlow of Stockton-on-Tees and Society member, Mike Forryan.

The whole event was manned by members who willingly gave up their spare time. It was declared a great success with many local people not involved with the Society being tempted to come along. One of the results of this was a new branch being added to the Forryan 'Tree'.

On the final Friday an Antiques Roadshow type evening was organised with experts from Leicestershire Museums Service giving opinions on a wide range of items brought in by the public.

A ROYAL VISIT

On 13th May Wigston was much honoured to receive a Royal Visit. H.R.H. Duke of Gloucester arrived to officially open the Record Office newly moved into the converted Board School in Long Street. He was met by the Lord Lieutenant of the County, Mr. Timothy Brookes, and welcomed by Councillors and Officials. The Archivist, Mr. Carl Harrison showed everyone the impressive new facilities. Afterwards the party moved on to visit the Framework Knitters Cottage Museum in Bushloe End. In the presence of the Trustees and the 'Friends' Committee Members, the Curator, Mr. Peter Clowes, gave a conducted tour of the house and workshop.

NEW PUBLICATION AB. OUT WIGSTON

Leicestershire Museums, Arts and Records Service hosted an informal reception at Leicestershire Record Office in Long Street on 18th May to launch their latest publication "One Man's Wigston", Sixty Years' Recollections of Everyday Life in Wigston Magna, by Duncan Lucas.

This 128 page A5 size soft cover book is produced in association with Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd., with a foreword by Steph. Mastoris, the Curator of Market Harborough Museum. It is intended to be the first in a series called Leicestershire Remembered which will recount the memories of people living in different areas of the County.

This lovely book which is mainly about farming and people is bound to be of interest not only to local history enthusiasts but anyone who has lived in Wigston and will remember the characters mentioned. Illustrated with plenty of photographs it can be obtained, price £6 95, from the Record Office.

FEBRUARY MEETING

The Society held its A.G.M. & Members Evening with 45 members present. After apologies for absence the evening commenced with:-

- 1) The Chairman Edna Taylor reading the minutes of the last A.G.M. There was one amendment when it was explained that the authors of 'For the Record' the book about Long Street Board School, now the Record Office, had actually received £300 towards the printing costs instead of the £700 previously agreed. This was noted and the minutes were then agreed and signed as correct.
- 2) The Treasurer Brian Bilson explaining the year end accounts. He reported a balance in hand of £823 38. In view of this it was decided to leave the subscriptions unchanged. These are to remain £5 00 and £3 00 concessionary.
- 3) The Chairman reporting a successful year with membership rising from 67 to 75. The average attendance at meetings being 37. All speakers were enthusiastically received and the summer trips enjoyable and providing a small surplus for the funds. Members were invited to mention if they had any particular interest so that this

could be considered when speakers were chosen. The Committee members were asked to stand up so that new members would know who to speak to on different matters. Meetings are to continue at the Liberal Club with the Christmas Party to be held downstairs in the larger room. The Record Office opened, at last, on 8th February and members were encouraged to visit and view a small display of relevant material relating to the buildings previous use. The Heritage Fortnight and antiques road show type evening held during January at Duncan Lucas's stable yard were noted to have been a great success and to have drawn in a good number of people not at present involved with the Society. The Bulletins continue to be produced three times per year and praise was kindly given for these, the Wigston Who's Who series being especially well received. Members were reminded that subscriptions were due and should be paid at the end of the meeting if possible.

4) The present Officers and Committee being all re-elected unopposed.

The second part of the evening was the usual members spot.

Bob Wignall told the story of two brothers from Germany who emigrated to the Isle of Aran and settled in Brodick in the last quarter of the 19th Century. They and their descendants became variously painters, saddlers and shopkeepers as well as doing mail delivery and the transport of passengers. During the 1914-18 war they encountered some suspicion and this led to the odd situation of their being permitted to carry the mail but not to enter the Post Office to collect it. The family still live on the island and run the Aran Transport Co. and a garage.

Bernard Elliott spoke of his efforts to obtain the 1891 census returns for Oadby and Wigston. He bought these direct from the Public Record Office with the help of a grant from an Oadby Fund. He has analysed these and already published 'Oadby in 1891' and a similar book on Wigston will follow when he has deciphered the enumerators' handwriting!

Bill Ward told us of a notable Wigston resident, John Thomas Proctor, who came to Wigston from Sleaford, Lines, via Leicester c!870. He was a solicitor's clerk and lived at the top of Burgess Street. He was much involved in the weslevan Methodist Chapel, Frederick Street, and was a lay preacher. He was a talented amateur artist in oils and water colour. He produced some minute examples of hand writing, one being the Lord's Prayer written three times on an area the size of an old Id. This led on to the story of how, at the time of the sale of the building in 1988, Bill and a friend found a time capsule bottle from behind the foundation stone laid in 1885 by John Proctor. It contained newspapers of the day and a history he had written which unfortunately was too affected by damp to be understood.

The Meeting closed at about 9.45p.m.

MARCH MEETING

The Society at last managed its planned visit to the new premises of Leicestershire Record Office in Long Street, Wigston. Twice previously the date had to be postponed because of frustrating delays in converting the 1881 former Board School

to its new function. However the wait proved worthwhile. The architects have managed to retain many original features, and the old and the new blend together very well. Several old boys and girls were heard to voice their approval.

As many as 60 members and friends heard a short talk given by the County Archivist, Mr. Carl Harrison, who introduced Mr. Robin Jenkins, the Keeper of Archives. Mr. Harrison said the move went very smoothly taking 10 weeks & 1 day to complete. With 5 miles of shelves full of material he likened it to the disruption of moving house multiplied by 100! He outlined the range of items stored - from medieval charters to last years electoral register, and from a workhouse diet sheet to estate plans of Beaumanor. The Office is an appointed Diocesan Record Office and all Leicestershire and Rutland parish registers over 100 years old have to be deposited there.

The work of the staff is to collect material, preserve, conserve, catalogue, and produce and sell publications as well as provide facilities for research.

The group later split into two parties for a tour of the premises. The old school hall is now the No. 1 Search Room. Here are the microfiche and microfilm readers which are used for consulting parish registers, census returns, wills etc., which are mainly for the family history researcher. The No. 2 Search Room, formerly a classroom, is where original material can be ordered and studied. The former art room is now a conservation room and the cooking room a staff rest room. The archives are stored in a huge specially constructed repository in the former playground.

The Chairman, Edna Taylor, thanked Mr. Harrison and his staff for a marvellous evening which ended with a wander round the display of 'Old Wigston' photographs in the reception area. Anyone is welcome to slip in to view these and the various books for sale. These include one on the old school entitled 'For The Record' by the Chairman and Vice Chairman. To use the rest of the Office facilities application must be made for a reader's ticket.

APRIL MEETING

About 40 members heard a very detailed and interesting talk on early jet engines by Brian Bilson. This subject has special relevance in Leicestershire because much of the research was conducted here, though in such secrecy that few people were aware of this at the time.

There were two types of jet engine, both of which worked basically by air being driven in at the front, compressed, mixed with fuel and burned continuously in a combustion chamber. The expanding gases then operated a turbine which drove the compressor and then rushed out of the rear of the engine, propelling the aircraft by pushing it forward, in the same way as the recoil of a rifle. It is based on a principal first observed by Newton that in every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. Jets were desirable because they used less fuel, were lighter in weight, could operate at higher altitudes and were of a simpler construction than the older piston engine with the familiar propeller. Research commenced early in the 20th Century, when

France, Italy, Germany, U.S.A., and Britain all experimented independently. Only the German and British versions were successfully developed and it was Sir Frank Whittle who succeeded in designing the first practicable jet engine which flew an aircraft in May 1941. Prior to this achievement there had been many years of hard work and struggle.

Whittle was born in 1907 and in 1923 commenced a technical apprenticeship. In his spare time he designed model aircraft. The top 5 students were offered entry to the R.A.F. Whittle came 6th but because one of the 5 was found to have eyesight problems Whittle was accepted in his place. He went on to Cranwell & then Whittering. He took a mechanical science degree at Cambridge. On 16/1/1930 he took out patent no; 347206 for a jet engine design but received little encouragement from official sources and had to let it lapse.

Later, attitudes changed and the R.A.F. gave him a year off for research. He managed to attract funds from a small merchant bank, O.T. Faulk & Co, and B.T.H. at Ladywood commissioned the first jet engine. Power Jets began in April 1937. The Company later moved to Lutterworth and in 1942 to G.E.C. at Whetstone. Rolls Royce eventually took over production.

The last Whittle experimental engine WIX is preserved at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C.

Brian was thanked by the Chairman, Edna Taylor, who then reminded members to book their places if they wished to go on the summer trips. The meeting closed at 9.45p.m.

May meeting ...

On Wednesday the 19th of May the Society travelled by coach to Peckleton to visit Peckleton Church.

We were met outside the church by Celia Davies and Chris Whitby, Chairman of the Friends of Peckleton Church. Once inside the Church, Chris gave us a brief outline of the aims and objectives of the Friends group, some of the problems they had encountered with the 'experts' and details of some of the restoration problems they had met. The church has had major problems with drainage due to its situation on a hill-side. The Friends have aimed to restore or conserve those items excluded by the P.C.C.

The church has many interesting features, including a Norman font and an Early English piscina both thought to have come from an earlier building. The tower and spire are 15th century and access to the tower is by step ladder. There are six bells given by Thomas Boothby of nearby Tooley Park. An incised slab of Chellaston alabaster on the north chancel wall shows Thomas Harvey and his two wives this item has just been restored.

The east window is by Kempe, a well-known stained glass artist, it depicts The Resurrection. It is dedicated to the Rev. T.E. Chataway one of Peckleton's rectors and grandfather of the M.P. Christopher Chataway.

On the south chancel wall is a memorial to Robert Chessher a skilled 18th century orthopaedic physician.

After leaving the Church we proceeded by coach to the Village Hall where an appetizing buffet had been spread out for us.

This was a most interesting visit and many thanks are due to Doris for arranging it at short notice and to the Friends of Peckleton Church for accommodating us in such a splendid fashion.

THE COST OF MAINTAINING THE POOR IN WIGSTON IN 1803

The Editors have received, from Brian Bilson, details of the money raised and how it was spent for the benefit of the poor in 1803. We would like to thank him for making these available to us.

The Abstract which was probably prepared for parliament is transcribed on the following page.

The abstract also quotes comparative figures, copied from the returns made under 26 Geo. III c56 in 1786 and 16 Geo. III c40 in 1776

Medium average of money annually raised by assessment in the years ending Easter 1783, 1784 & 1785	£465 2 8
Money raised by assessment in the year ending Easter 1776	£408 14 4
Medium average expenditure on account of the Poor in the years ending Easter 1783, 1784 & 1785	£432 5 1
Annual expenditure on account of the Poor, in the year ending Easter 1776	£377 14 1

ABSTRACT of RETURNS relative to the EXPENSE and MAINTENANCE of the POOR

43 GEO. III A. 1803

	f	s	d
Total Money raised by the Poor's Rate & other Rate or Rates within the year ending Easter 1803	1,182	8	3 ³ / ₄
At what Rate in the Pound for the year ending Easter 1803			9 8
Total Money expended in that year for maintenance & relief of the Poor;			
distinguishing	360	4	5
a. Money expended OUT of any House of Industry or Workhouse	210	13	0
b. Money so expended IN any House of Industry or Workhouse			
Expenditure in Suits of Law; Removal of Paupers; & expenses of Overseers and other Officers	120	6	8
Total of the whole Expenditure for the year ending Easter 1803 on account of the Poor	691	4	1
Expenditure for any other purposes; Church Rate; County Rate; Highways; Militia etc	505	5	2
Total Expenditure within the year ending Easter 1803	1,196	9	3
Money expended in purchasing materials for employing the Poor;			
distinguishing	16	6	6
a. Money so expended OUT of any House of Industry or Workhouse	-	-	-
b. Money so expended IN any House of Industry or Workhouse	-	-	-
Money earned by the labour of the Poor towards their maintenance and accounted for to the Parish or Place.	36	1	8
Numbers of Persons relieved from the Poor's Rate permanently; distinguishing			
a. Persons so relieved OUT of any House of Industry or Workhouse; not including children	64		
b. Persons so relieved IN any House of Industry or Workhouse; including children	24		
Number of children of Persons relieved permanently out of the House and of any other children out of the House; distinguishing	48		
a. under 5 years of age	107		
b. from 5 to 14 years of age	30		
Number of Persons relieved occasionally			
Number of Persons, including the above five entries, above 50 years of age, or disabled from labour by permanent illness, or other infirmity	17		
Number of Persons relieved, not being parishioners	5		
Number of FRIENDLY SOCIETIES who hold their usual meetings within each parish or place	3		
Number of members in the said Societies	171		
Number of children in Schools of Industry	-		

Wigston Who's Who No:5
Thomas Ingram

Thomas Ingram was a well known Leicester solicitor , who for much of his life lived at Abington House, originally known as Hawthorn Field, Station Road, Wigston. Over the road and just to the south stood Bushloe House, now the Oadby and Wigston Borough Council offices, the home of Hiram Abiff Owston another well known

solicitor who must have been well acquainted with Thomas Ingram during his lifetime.

Thomas Ingrain has been described as Wigston's greatest benefactor. He was born in Little Bowden, Northamptonshire on March 31st, 1810, the son of Thomas Ingram, a Leicester solicitor. He is thought to have had at least one sister. His early years were spent in Market Harborough where his father was a partner in the firm Wartnaby, Shuttleworth, and Ingram. He was educated at two private boarding schools. The first, where he attended from January 1816 to Christmas 1821, was owned by a Mr. James Lockwood grandfather to Sir Frank Lockwood a solicitor-general. A glance at White's directory of 1846 reveals that in Silver Street, Leicester Jas. Mitchell and Son are said to be running an academy. Perhaps this is the school that Thomas Ingram attended. From January 1822 to Christmas 1825 he attended a school in London. His father dissolved the partnership in Market Harborough and came to Leicester about 1830. Many years later at the beginning of the 20th century he wrote to the Times giving some recollections of his schooldays in London in the 1820s. He was able to remember going with his father to the polling booth at the Hasting Cave elections of 1826. He remembered catching a chill and spending a period of convalescence in Brighton. It is an example of his remarkable memory that he was able to write his recollections of this period in his life almost eighty years later.

He was articled to his father, Thomas Ingram senior, who was at that time in partnership with a Mr. Loseby and for a time the practice was known as Ingram, Loseby and Ingram. In April 1836 he was appointed Clerk to the Billesdon Poor Law Union a post which he held for fifty five years until his resignation in November 1891 when at 80 years old he was the oldest Clerk in the County.

In White's directory of 1846 he is said to have a house in Horsefair Street Leicester. In the Post Office directory of 1855 he is practising from 33 Friar Lane with a residence in Welford Road. In 1864 his firm is called Ingram and Loseby and is at 34 Pocklingtons Walk. By 1870 his practice address is 2 New Street and his home is said to be Great Wigston. During this time he married Frances Dowley Jackson who had been born in Leicester about 1810.

White's trade directory of 1862 contains the earliest reference to Thomas Ingram in Wigston. Under Wigston it lists "Ingram of Bushloe End". A glance at the 1871 census reveals that Thomas Ingram is living in Blaby Lane, his age is given as 61 and his occupation as solicitor, Registrar of Leicester County Court and Clerk to the Billesdon Union. Living with him was his wife Frances also aged 61, a visitor Eliza Jane Jackson of Leicester and four servants to attend to their needs. The 1881 census mentions the name Hawthorn Field. Frances Ingram is said to be a farmer of 70 acres employing 4 men. They have four female servants; a cook and dairymaid, a parlour-maid, a housemaid and a kitchen-maid.

Thomas Ingram was a well known and generous local benefactor. In All Saints Church he presented a stained glass window depicting "Christ among the doctors" in memory of his father and mother who had died in 1842 and 1864 respectively. At his expense a new south porch was erected in 1872. He is said to have provided for the church wall to be rebuilt. He was evidently a modest man as the stone tablet built into the north east corner simply states ...

"This Church Wall was built A.D. 1897

Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee Year, by a parishioner".

He had been appointed Registrar of Leicester County Court in June 1860 and he combined this office with that of District Registrar of the Crown Court. He broke many records in his profession including the holding of each of the appointments of Registrar of the County Court for 42 years, Clerk to the Billesdon Board of Guardians for 55 years, and solicitor to the Wyggeston Hospital Trustees for more than thirty years. On completion of fifty years service to the Billesdon Board of Guardians he was presented a silver rose bowl. He resigned the office of Registrar of the County Court at the age of 95 to give place in his own words "to a younger man". He had had exceptional qualifications for his County Court work. He had long experience of methods of procedure and together with sound legal knowledge and common sense he was an authority on County court practice. He was held in high esteem, not only for his legal acumen, but for his patience, courtesy and sympathy to rich and poor alike. In his speech in response on his retirement from the County Court on June 17th 1902 he finished with these words. We all remember the glorious message which Nelson sent round his fleet, on the last great day of his glorious life - "England expects every man to do his duty", and well they performed that duty. I have made that principle of duty the object of my life, and if I have succeeded in the least degree I owe it entirely to that creed. Now I bid you farewell. Like the Roman of old I retire to cultivate the few acres I possess, and in doing so I heartily wish you all health and prosperity. He was President of the Leicester Law Society in 1868 and treasurer from its formation in 1861 until the 1890s. In 1902 he was said to be the oldest solicitor living, having been admitted Michaelmas Term 1833.

Newspaper reports of the period show him to be a well respected man with a sense of humour. There appears to have been little professional or personal rivalry between Thomas Ingram and his neighbour, solicitor, Hiram Owston. Owston was Ingram's junior by 20 years and on many occasions they acted on each other's behalf in local matters.

At a Vestry meeting on 29th July 1867 Mr. Owston had submitted to have a footpath which passed over his land stopped up. Thomas Ingram spoke to the meeting on Mr. Owston's behalf. At a further meeting on the same subject in August Mr. Ingram yet again reported to the meeting and moved a proposal on Mr. Owston's behalf. On January 2nd 1869 much was given away among the poorer classes by the more wealthy inhabitants, Mrs. Owston gave articles of warm clothing and Mr. Ingram added some soup. When members of the community gathered for meetings he was frequently elected to the chair. He was a staunch conservative but never held municipal office declaring that his life was too busy to take a prominent stance in the work of the party. The Leicester Daily Mercury reports on January 31st 1874 that Mr. Warner was the Conservative candidate for the next Leicester Borough elections. Included on his Central Committee were T. Ingram and H.A. Owston.

On Thursday 4th of December 1884 a Vestry meeting was held to elect three members to the Wigston Burial Board, to replace Mr. Ingram and two others who had retired. Mr. Ingram presided. A political discussion resulted from the fact that three Liberals were nominated. Mr. Owston remarked that the matter was evidently being

made a political business by the Liberals. Upon which Mr. Wignall (a Liberal) replied that if the matter was being made into a political one then Mr. Owston's party were to blame. When the Burial Board had been formed it was to consist of an equal number from each party with the Vicar as chairman. Some time later the Vicar had resigned and one of the Liberal members died and Tories had filled the vacancies. "Was that sort of thing to go on year after year, because if so", Mr. Wignall announced, "he would retire from the offices he held in the parish". Mr. Ingram was thanked for presiding over what had evidently been a lively meeting.

In 1887 the nation celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of Queen Victoria's accession to the throne. Wigston was no exception in wishing to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee and on Monday May 9th 1887 a public meeting was held in the National Schoolroom. Mr. Thomas Ingram was voted to the Chair. It was proposed that a public recreation ground be set out to celebrate the Jubilee, and if sufficient funds were raised for this a treat be arranged for all the school children and people over 60 in the village. Thomas Ingram announced that three people had subscribed £10 each towards the event viz. Colonel Seddon, Mr. Owston and himself.

A committee was formed to explore the possibilities of a recreation ground. Another committee which included Mr. Ingram was formed to arrange a treat even if the first objective could not be reached. On Tuesday the 14th of June the final general meeting of this committee previous to the celebration took place, Mr. Ingram presided. The Wigston Gas Company was to supply gas free to anyone who wished to illuminate their premises. The children were to have tea in their respective schools and then march round to Mr. Ingram's field for amusements and a firework display. Several thousand people gathered in the grounds of Hawthorn Field where there was much dancing and singing.

Mr. Ingram was one of the first directors of the Great Wigston Gas-light and Coke Company when it was formed as a result of the Great Wigston Gas Act in 1889. In his later years when attendance at local meetings must have been more difficult, Thomas Ingram would express his opinion by letter. The letters were often read out by his old friend Mr. Owston, who would also offer to take the chair on these occasions. One occasion in particular was the Royal wedding of the Duke of York to Princess Mary Victoria of Teck in 1893. Mr. Owston read a letter from Thomas Ingram heartily supporting the object of the meeting. £43 was raised to treat the children and old people, 250 people partook of a substantial meat tea in the Public Hall, 200 children had tea in the National School and 700 had tea in the Board School. After tea the Wigston United Brass Band led the children through the decorated streets to Mr. Ingram's field where races and other games took place. Dancing was kept up with great spirit until quite late. The church bells rang peals throughout the day. In 1893 Thomas Ingram would have been 83 years old what pleasure he must have got from watching this spectacle from his home.

Throughout his life he was committed to the Church. He was a member of the Archdeaconal Board for Church Extension. He had held the office of churchwarden at Wigston on several occasions and was churchwarden at St. Martins, Leicester from 1851-1853. He had also been Vestry clerk there for many years. Thomas Ingram contributed much to the life of Wigston but by far his most generous support in his

later years was given to the founding and building of St. Thomas's Church in South Wigston.

South Wigston developed in the 1880s and was laid out in a grid-iron pattern by Orson Wright and it consisted mainly of terraced houses and two large hotels. "There is no more depressing sight", according to Hoskins, "on a wet Sunday afternoon". In 1891 the new ecclesiastical district of South Wigston and Glen Parva was formed. In his first letter to the parishioners W.G. Whittingham, the vicar-designate stated his objectives to be, "to build a Church and to get together a congregation of faithful men to use it". Mr. Orson Wright had given land as a site for the new Church. At the end of 1892 a meeting took place to discuss the financial position. Mr. Wright took the chair supported by Mr. Ingram. £1250 had been given or promised towards the nave of which Mr. Ingram had donated £1000 by far the largest single donation and a considerable sum of money. Mr. Ingram moved a resolution to the effect that. This meeting learns with unbounded satisfaction that the building of the new Church will commence early in the coming year, and expresses its earnest hope that the chancel may be proceeded with at the same time, and the Church completed as a whole, and pledges itself to use its utmost efforts to collect the necessary funds.

This resolution was seconded and carried unanimously. The vicar later reported that the meeting had a result which no one anticipated then, Our well-beloved and most sincere friend Mr. Ingram, whose presence, was a source of such pleasure to us all, took a chill which, in addition to a previous cold, rapidly resulted in a grave attack of pneumonia.

For several days Thomas Ingram lay at death's door and it seemed unlikely that he would recover. However he did recover and was restored to health. Preparation for the building of the new Church continued and Mr. Ingram's generosity was again evident as he promised fifty guineas towards the organ fund. On Tuesday July 26th 1893 the Foundation Stone of the Church of St. Thomas, Glen Parva and South Wigston was laid by Mr. Ingram. Mr. Bland the contractor presented Mr. Ingram with a silver trowel already spread with mortar and the stone was lowered into position and he declared it well and truly laid. The choice of Mr. Ingram to lay the Foundation Stone was met with the fullest approval of the parish. The vicar declared, The foundation of our new parish and Church have been principally due to Mr. Ingram, and nothing could be more fitting than that he should crown his own act by the material expression of it in the laying of a Foundation Stone.

After the service, which had been led by the Band of the 1st Volunteer Battalion, Leicestershire Regiment, Mr. Ingram provided a tea for the united choirs and sidesman in the Clarence Assembly Rooms, for which he was heartily thanked. Later that year Mr. and Mrs. Ingram made a gift to the Church of the pulpit. The Church was finally consecrated on Thursday February 2nd 1894. Another example of Thomas Ingram's generosity occurred at this time. He undertook the responsibility of offering the £271 necessary to be eligible to apply for a grant from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners when the money could not be found from another source. In 1896 he gave the organ in memory of his wife, who had died in 1894. In 1901 he gave the bell tower and peal of eight bells, the bells were engraved,

"Ego et soch septem Laudem del sonamus" Thos. Ingram donavit A.D. 1901

Thomas Ingram was also one of the principal landowners in Wigston. In Leicester Domesday of 1873, said to have been compiled for voting purposes, he is said to have had 50 acres 3 rods and 14 perches of land in Wigston Magna with a gross estimated rental of £207. In 1888 when he made his will his land amounted to 40 acres adjoining his house, 9 1/2 acres, bought from George Shipp, situated near the railway and 2 meadows near to Kilby Bridge amounting to 18 acres.

During this time he continued to practice as a solicitor, and he was held in the highest esteem by members of his own profession and well respected by the younger generation of legal practitioners. The firm changed name many times as different partners were incorporated.

Thomas Ingram was active in many fields. Whilst he was a practising solicitor he had the habit of arriving early in the morning during the winter, then leaving later for hunting. He would then return to work at dusk and continue working into the evening, expecting his staff to do the same. He gave much advice to younger members of his office, he was fond of saying that whisky, smoking and the smell of old parchment never killed a lawyer. When he was originally articled there were no printed books of precedents and those used in his office had been drafted in his own hand and bound in calf. During his lifetime he took considerable interest in outside affairs. He was an old Volunteer and always took a great interest in the force. He was one of the original members of the Leicester Architectural and Archaeological Society, founded in 1855, and for some years acted as its honorary secretary. He spent many holidays travelling on the continent. He was said, at the age of ninety, to have driven from Wigston to Bognor Regis in an open carriage with a pair of horses to visit Mrs. Mortlock, his sister. He was said to have offered £1000 to the Leicester Royal Infirmary on the condition that nine others did the same.

Thomas Ingram died on March 23rd 1909 in his 100th year and seven days short of his 100th birthday having remained in good health until a few days before his death. On the 14th of May 1909 probate was granted on Thomas Ingram's will to A.P. Moore the surviving executor. Alfred Percival Moore was his business partner and friend. Thomas Ingram had made several codicils to his will presumably as family circumstances changed with his increasing age. He left generous legacies to his servants and to clerks in his office. He made provision for the children of his sister Mary Ann Mortlock, and also for his late wife's brothers and sisters and their offspring.

His obituary appeared in the Leicester Daily Post of Wednesday March 24th 1909. His funeral was reported in the Leicester Daily Mercury of March 29th 1909. It had taken place the Saturday previously. There had been a service at All Saints Church, Wigston conducted by the Rev. R.C. Palmer followed by interment at Welford Road Cemetery in Leicester. Many clergy and members of the legal profession were present. The principal mourners were his nephew Rev. C. Mortlock, the Misses Chapman, the Misses Jackson (sisters-in-law), Miss Jackson (grand-niece), Mr. C.T. Moore, Mr. A.P. Moore and Dr. Moore. As the cortege made its way to Leicester eight members of the Midland Counties Association ascended the tower of St. Thomas's Church in South Wigston and rang, with the bells half-muffled, a full and complete peal of 5040 Grandsire triples as a tribute to the donor of both tower and bells. Mr. Ingram had been a friend of the bell-ringers and a honorary member of

their Association. Thomas and Frances did not have any children and Hawthorn Field and its grounds came into the possession of his nephew The Rev. C.F. Mortlock. (This months Who's Who has been researched in part by Chris Smart for her M.A. Course at Loughborough University).

LONG STREET, WIGSTON1 HAGNA, A CENTURY AGO

This title concludes the series giving details of the four main streets of Wigston Magna a century or so ago (see the Greater Wigston Historical Society's Transactions No. 36. Bell St, No. 42. Bulls Head Street and No. 57. Moat St).

In appearance, the various facets of a village turning away from agriculture and its allied trades into a sizeable place of small industries were very much in evidence. The arrival of the railways to the area also widened the scope for employment. Of the four examples, Long Street was by far the more pleasing to the eye for it contained a number of fine buildings and a tree lined stretch with a view to Long Lane and All Saints Church at its southern end.

Beginning with a cluster of small shops and houses at the Bell Street end there followed the recently opened Board School, now the Leicestershire Record Office. Next came the Manor House, the home of James W. Hulme M.D. a surgeon who lived with his elderly mother described as a gentlewoman, who had 4 servants to attend them. After the farm of William Yates was the rather grand Wigston Hall with its high brick wall overhung eventually with mature trees.

On the opposite side of the road lay the paddock belonging to the Hall and a field that in due course became the Peace Memorial Park, known locally as Little Park. text came what was called the Congregational Chapel, until very recent times, with its four Doric columns looking somewhat out of place in a red brick village. After its neighbour, The Manse, came the National School, now a car park for what was called at the time, the Working Mere Institute.

The first of three Courts followed, the one at the end of Willow Place had five dwellings (shown by the letter C on the map) homes for a total of 32 folk. The two houses at the end of this track, Willow Cottages, are not taken into this record. Then came Clark's Hospital with all eleven sections occupied by the elderly (now replaced by a modern version on the same site).

The only other building of note was the Durham Ox, prior to 1817 called the Woolpack, at the corner of Blunt "s Lane.

Opposite Clark's Hospital and behind the larger houses on the street, lay the other two courts (shown as A and B on the map) containing together eight small homes lived in by 41 people in a congested area of agricultural and other workshops.

A total of 291 people resided in the street in 69 houses, plus one more in each of the hospital homes.

The two largest families had nine in number and both dwelt in the smallest houses, Joseph and Mary Barratt, she being only 35 years of age, lived with their 7 children in Court C while Thomas and the even younger 31 year old Sarah Woods with the same size family lived in Court A.

As might be expected, the hosiery trade in one form or another provided the living for a good proportion of the workers, a total of 41 including 17 framework knitters out of a total of 114 people working for others. There were 14 labourers including 4 still working on farms, 13 people, mostly men, were engaged in the tailoring / dressmaking trade. 9 men were employed by the Railway Company and 9 people as house servants. 6 females were engaged in nursing, including the youngest worker of all, the 13 year old Mary Ann Spence live in at No. 25 and described as a Nurse Girl, and also the oldest at 92, the widow Am Lancham, living at the Hospital.

Gardening brought a living for 4 men including the 77 year old Will Jam Farmer living at No. 67 with his widowed daughter.

There were 3 painters and a like number of charwomen, 2 bricklayers, 2 joiners, a Butcher and his apprentice, 6 others in various forms of employment (one not identified). Added to these were 70 children at school with a further 39 still too young to attend.

Of the 302 people residing in the street, 197 were born in the village a further 66 moved in from the county of Leicestershire and the remaining 39 from further afield. See Greater Wigston Historical Society Transaction 'No. 67 for full details.

J. Colver find S. Whymant.