

Greater Wigston Historical Society

White Gate Farm, Newton Lane, Wigston Magna
Leicestershire



BULLETIN 58



THE ROYAL ARTILLERY MEMORIAL & THE QUADRIGA, HYDE PARK, LONDON

J.F. COEYER

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS - OCTOBER 2000 TO FEBRUARY 2001

Wednesday 18th October 2000

'Down the Garden Path - Tales of Leicestershire Privies' - David Bell
7.30p.m. U.K. Church Boys' Brigade Rooms.

Wednesday 15th November 2000

'Christmas Customs and Traditions' - Leicester Living History Unit
7.30p.m. U.K. Church Boys' Brigade Rooms.

Wednesday 20th December 2000

Christmas Social with quizzes & supper
7.30p.m. U.R. Church Boys' Brigade Rooms.
(Names and payment no later than 13th December for this please).

Wednesday 17th January 2001

The Tower Within - Tower of London, its prisoners & institutions over 900 years' -
Joe David, former Yeoman Warder & Wigston's Town Crier 7.30p.m. U.R Church
Boys' Brigade Rooms.

Wednesday 21st February 2001

A.G.M. followed by members' contributions
7.30p.m. U.R. Church Boys' Brigade Rooms.

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FRONT COVER

The front cover this time shows the Royal Artillery Memorial & Quadriga in Hyde Park, London. The Imperial War Museum kindly tell us it was unveiled on 18th October 1925 to commemorate the fallen of the First World War. The architect was Lionel Pearson and the figures were the work of Charles S. Jagger.

It is situated prominently on Hyde Park Corner. Interestingly only the King's Troup of Horse Artillery and senior members of the Royal Family are permitted to pass through Marble Arch which is situated at the other end of Park Lane.

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

Joint Editors: Mrs. Chris Smart, 197 Queens Road, Leicester.
Mrs. Tricia Berry, 7 Wensleydale Road, Wigston.

JUNE MEETING

On an unsettled evening, which later turned into heavy rain, members set out by coach for a trip into neighbouring Northamptonshire to the noted village of Earls Barton. We were given a conducted tour of the parish church before dividing up, half taking a look at the museum while the rest enjoyed delicious refreshments at the Jeyes village tea-cum-chemist-cum-gift shop, then changing places later.

All Saints' Church, Earls Barton is an ancient structure which English Heritage has included in its list of the most important Christian sites. The highly decorated tower, with long and short work and pilaster strips, is Saxon and is considered a text-book example of its type which has been used to illustrate many standard works on European architecture. This and the fact that the village is situated in the middle of the Hamfordshoe hundred, together with other indications, suggest that it was a place of consequence and that the church might have once been a minster, that is a church from which a community of clergy served a wider area.

A longer nave and a chancel were built in the Norman period as was the classic doorway in the south porch. In the 13th century the chancel was extended eastwards ending in a triple-lancet window and a priest's door added under one of the arches. Aisles and two chapels were added to the nave. A century later the chancel and tower arches were being pushed outwards and threatened to collapse. These were corrected, the north aisle rebuilt with Decorated windows and new pillars and larger windows installed in the south aisle. The principal additions in the 15th century were the clerestory of the nave and a beautiful screen. The most evident survival of the 16th century is the brass memorial to the Muscote family and the Jacobean pulpit. Extensive restoration by the Victorians, from which time the font and stained glass date, was in the main sympathetically carried out leaving us today with a wonderful example of craftsmanship through the ages to admire and speculate over.

The museum is packed full of interesting items showing many aspects of past Earls Barton life notably the shoe industry. There are lots of old photographs and maps and folders of carefully transcribed census returns making this an important place to visit for those researching ancestors who lived in the village.

Jeyes shop turned out to be a lovely place to rest and enjoy a home made scone and coffee or more or less anything else you fancied. The proprietor a pharmacist is a descendant of the man who invented the still well remembered Jeyes Fluid disinfectant. His wife Georgina and her mother, on duty for the evening, made us very welcome. The shop, which is full of high class gifts and souvenirs, would make an excellent place to stop for anyone visiting this attractive part of Northamptonshire. It appears to serve the locals well too, having recently opened a building society agency since the closure of the last bank branch.

AUGUST MEETING

The Society met at Cross Street Methodist Church for a talk by the Rev. Ken Wilson on the history of the Church and the history of Methodism in Wigston. He began by acknowledging his debt to the late Bill Ward for his history of the Frederick Street church and to Stan Webster who recently edited a brochure for the church. The Methodist Church began in 1738 when John Wesley became a travelling preacher. Methodism came to Leicester in 1766 and to Wigston in 1819. It all started when the

Primitive Methodists had a camp meeting in Wigston, people were converted and they became the nucleus of the first Methodist Church in Wigston. This group eventually moved to a house in Moat Street where services were regularly held. In 1819 William Kirby of Great Glen began to preach in Wigston and he became the minister of a group that opened a meeting house in Mill Lane (later Frederick Street). From the 1830s to 1919 was a period of expansion for both churches. Buildings were extended and activities developed to meet the needs of growing church membership. By 1879 the need for a new building for the Moat Street church became apparent. At around the same time John Dakyn Broughton became involved in the Church and he became the driving force behind the new church which was opened in 1886. The period 1930 to 1990 saw the two Wigston Methodist churches progress towards union. After the First World War there was disenchantment with the Church and this resulted in falling congregations. In 1932 the branches of the Methodist church (Wesleyan, Primitive and United) were brought together. After the Second World War industry revived and the population of Wigston started to grow as new housing developments circled the old village centre. The Central Wigston Development Plan affected the area around the Frederick Street Church.

Talks around the Union of the churches were held in the 1960s and continued through to the 1970s. Frederick Street had the strength of congregation but limitations of space, Cross Street had the better building but was in financial difficulties and was losing its congregation.

By 1982 formal discussions on Unity had begun again. In 1983 the two churches formally came together and in 1987 the decision was made to come together in one building. The Frederick Street property was sold to the assemblies of God who in turn sold their church on Central Avenue to the Church of Christ. Alterations to the Cross Street church began in 1989 and the newly refurbished building opened in 1990. After the talk refreshments were provided and members could have a guided tour of the new building or look at the photograph album that recorded the drastic changes that were made to the church during the

SEPTEMBER MEETING

The Society opened its Autumn season by welcoming a local resident, Mr. Gerry Broughton, to speak and show slides on the research for his recently published book 'The River Sence - Billesdon to the Soar'. He commenced by explaining he was a photographer not an historian, though his historical awareness became obvious when he explained that he used only black and white film and processed in archive quality solutions to guard against future fading and colour change. He particularly warned against the use of the new digital technologies for this reason and also because images can be manipulated and thus not relied upon to be a true impression. Like many good ideas his project to record the River Sence started by accident. His original subject was to be the Derbyshire Derwent and he did some work on the Sence just to practise technique. However, the more he learned the more interested he became and decided to continue with this instead. He has created an oral archive, material for exhibition (already shown at the Record Office) as well as the book.

The River Sence officially begins close to the A47 near Billesdon, where the Coplow Brook and the Billesdon Brook merge. It follows a very circuitous route of 21.25 miles through the parishes of Houghton, Kings Norton, Stretton, Great Glen, Wistow, Newton Harcourt, Kilby, Wigston, South Wigston, Glen Parva and Blaby before

flowing into the River Soar near Narborough. Rising on high ground 700 feet above sea level it flows down to a mere 200 feet which explains the severe flooding noticeably in the Newton and Wistow areas. It follows the contours of the landscape which accounts for much of the meandering route. Other factors are that water tends to flow from side to side and the central fast flowing part known as the 'thalweg'¹ exerts energy sideways and causes bank erosion and areas of build up creating the snake like appearance and deep pools. Big 'TJ' shaped curves can with further erosion break through, the river taking the shorter route, the longer curve becoming slower flowing and eventually silting up. These features are know as 'ox-bows'.

It used to be crossed by four railways including the magnificent Sence Valley Viaduct constructed by the Great Central Railway, but only two now remain open. There are fords at Great Glen and Glen Parva and sixteen road bridges. The canal passes over the Sence near the old Great Glen Station. The fast flowing water was utilised to operate mills which are still visible at Crow Mill and Blaby Mill. Domesday Records show mills also at Wistow, Newton Harcourt and Kilby.

Interesting features along the way include Great Stretton Church where Bella Wright's body was taken after the Green Bicycle murder, an unofficial bridge at Great Glen which is made from an old lorry chassis, a footbridge on the Wigston/Countesthorpe boundary which is made from an old tram line, Sir Henry Halford's target and a moated site behind the Glen Parva Manor House. The Wigston Sewage Works discharges into the Sence and is sometimes unable to cope with the trade effluent from various dye houses in the area. A black and white dog is said to have emerged black and pink after taking a dip down stream from this! An unpleasant feature but said to be more visually than environmentally damaging.

After a number of questions and some discussion the Chairman, Edna Taylor, thanked Mr. Broughton very much for a most interesting evening.

A PLEA FOR HELP

Marion Daetwyler asks for information on a blue banner with the words *The Guildry, 4th Leicesters* on it. There is also a lamp. She would be pleased to hear from anyone who has heard of this organisation. Telephone her if you can help (0116 2882671) or contact one of the editors.

WIGSTON WHO'S WHO NO: 27

GEORGE FOXTON

George Foxtton was born on 7/3/1804 in Ripon, Yorkshire, the son of Michael Foxtton, a builder. He was to have two brothers, one of whom was named William, and sisters, Mary, Hannah and Elizabeth. He trained as a surveyor/engineer and in 1837 took up an appointment with the Leicestershire and Northamptonshire Union Canal coming to live in the Company's house at Kilby Bridge. This fairly large white house is still there, situated near the Navigation Inn and is called 'Berry House', though this has not necessarily always been its name.

On 21/10/1839 George married Mary Ann Barsby at St. Margaret's Church, Leicester. He was aged 35 at the time and Mary, who lived in Conduit Street, was some years older at 43. She was the daughter of Joseph and Mary Barsby who were Peckleton farmers. Mary had however strong connections with Wigston because before her marriage she had been housekeeper to John Ragg, a large farmer, who lived at the Manor House, Long Street. When John, who was a bachelor, died in 1838 he left considerable land holdings to various nieces and nephews, but he also left Mary twenty six acres of pasture in three fields on the corner of Cooks Lane/Welford Road (the Wigston side) and a 10 acre smallholding with house and buildings. This was situated to the north of what is now Burgess Street and would have encompassed the site of McDonalds Restaurant and the traffic island. The rents from this generous bequest from a grateful employer would have made Mary financially independent.

After her marriage she returned to Wigston to her new husband's Kilby Bridge home. The following year George received a rise in salary to £200 per annum. He developed the coal trade for the canal and also traded on his own account. He owned two small closes of meadow totalling four acres just along from his house on the west side of the Welford Road. After 12 years of marriage Mary died and was buried back in her home parish of Peckleton on 17/1/1852. George remained alone for seven years before marrying for a second time, in early 1859 in the St. James District of Westminster, Eliza White a Leicester girl who had been born about 1811.

Sometime before 1861 George left Wigston and moved to Prebend Terrace, 79 London Road, Leicester. This was likely to be because of difficulties with his job. The canals were by this time suffering huge competition from the rapidly expanding railways. In 1858 he had agreed to a reduction of £50 per annum in his salary and in 1862 offered "to take a further cut to £120 to be restored when finances justified it." At about the same time he took on the surveyorship for a year of the Grand Union Canal in addition to his own job with LNU when his brother William, the present surveyor, died suddenly of apoplexy, aged 52, while enjoying a snack in a pub in Market Harborough. Other responsibilities were when he was asked jointly with J.C. Crossley the surveyor of the Leicester Navigation "to produce a report on the condition of the River Soar and suggest remedies for its tendency to flood." In 1866 the LNU and the GJ jointly appointed Mr. H.A. Owston of Bushloe House as clerk. This appointment would mean that George and Mr. Owston would be very well acquainted and work closely together.

On 11/7/1869 George resigned the surveyorship of LNU and was immediately elected to the committee. In 1869 he became Chairman and remained so until his death. He

had also entered into local politics in 1866, being elected as a Liberal on Leicester Town Council for the East St. Mary's Ward. This decision was again at least partly in connection with his job. A book *The Leicester Line* states "Mr. Owston's tact, coupled with the fact that the LNU usually managed to have a representative from its committee on the town council, enabled the company to emerge from its dealings with the corporation on the whole satisfactorily."

George became an Alderman in 1872 and was Mayor in 1873 during which year he unfortunately suffered "a seizure of illness from which he did not entirely recover." On 9/11/1874 he was made High Bailiff of the Borough, an appointment he retained until his death. He was also surveyor of the Welford/Leicester Turnpike, a director of the Leicester Gas Company and Chairman of the committee of the General News Room.

He died at home of a bronchial attack on 28/3/1878 aged 74, and was buried at Welford Road Cemetery, Leicester. He was given an impressive funeral. The members of the corporation waited at the gates and formed a procession behind the hearse and three carriages. First the Mayor and magistrates, then the aldermen and councillors and officers of the corporation, then friends, with a body of police bringing up the rear. A service was conducted by the curate of Holy Trinity in the C of E Chapel prior to burial.

In a newspaper obituary it states he "will be a missed man in town and county. He was a shrewd man of business, possessed of a sound judgment and was most diligent in discharging the duties of any office he undertook." He did not have any children, his Will leaves his assets to be divided between his seven nephews and nieces, the children of two of his sisters. The main beneficiary was George Foxton Hornsby of Yorkshire who received in addition to money, his books, manuscripts and secretaire bookcase, together with his testimonial from the Canal Company. These were originally left to George Fletcher but a codicil altered this due to him having "gone to reside in foreign parts." His widow Eliza survived him ten years being buried in the same grave on 22/8/1888.

George's first wife Mary had left a Will,, unusual for a married woman at the time, leaving George a life interest in her Wigston land. After his death this was put up for sale by her executor, the proceeds being shared by various nephews and nieces within her family.

Tricia Berry

Sources: Census Returns, Parish Registers, I.G.I., *The Leicester Line - A History of the Old Union and Grand Union Canals*, Philip A. Stevens, 1972, Wills of John Ragg, (PRO), Mary Ann Barsby (ODL collection), & George Foxton (LRO Rp307 1878). Welford Road Cemetery Indexes & Grave, Cons. F1220, *Leicester Chronicle* 30/3/1878, *Roll of Mayors 1209-1935*, Henry Hartopp, 1936.

EXTRACT FROM THE DERBY MERCURY - JULY 1755

From Husbands Bosworth, near Market Harborough in Leicestershire, we have received the following account. Last Sunday between seven and eight in the evening, there happened the greatest storm of Thunder and Lightening, with hail and rain, that was ever known there in the memory of man. The effects of which were very surprising and astonishing.

The Parish Churech has suffered much, several stones being struck out of the walls within side. The floor in some places raised an inch above the level of the surface and a seat in one of the aisles broke down.

The bells were displaced, their frames and wheels being splintered, the clock is greatly damaged. The steeple in particular is very much shattered, a large chasm being opened in it from the top downward, about a yard in breadth and twelve yards in length, from whence many great stones were forced to a very great distance. The inhabitants were in the utmost consternation imaginable, some of whom received a shock in their limbs and joints, not unlike that given by an Electrical Machine.

Several little Globes of Fire were seen in the air directing their course from NE to NW. Flame in a terrible manner ran along the streets and a great smoke and sulfurous smell issued from the aperture of the steeple.

And what is remarkably providential, several hundred-weight of stone and rubbish fell about and upon the very grave where the Minister and a large congregation attending, had just before buried a Corpse.

Thanks to Jim Colver for supplying this truly alarming report. It must have taken many months to put right all the damage. It would be interesting to examine the church in Husbands Bosworth to see if there is any evidence today of the repairs, particularly to the steeple.

The reference to an Electrical Machine is a puzzle. What was this used for and what form did it take? It surely pre-dates the use of electricity as we know it by many years. The account is at LRO, Ref: PI28/23.

EXTRACT FROM THE DERBY MERCURY - DECEMBER 1790

STILTON CHEESE

The true history of this delicate species of cream cheese is but little known. Mrs. Paulet of Wymondham near Melton Mowbray in Leicestershire, the first maker of it is still alive. Mrs. Paulet being a relation, or an acquaintance, of the well know Cooper Thornhill, who formerly kept the Bell at Stilton (in Huntingdonshire on the Great North Road from London to Edinburgh), furnished his house with cream cheese, which being of a singular fine quality, was coveted by his customers and, through the assistance of Mrs. P. his customers were gratified at the expense of half a crown a pound, with cream cheese of a superior quality, but of what country was not publicly known. Hence it obtained the name Stilton Cheese.

At length, however, the place of produce was discovered and the art of producing it learnt by other dairywomen in the neighbourhood. Dalby first took the lead, but it is now made in almost every village in that quarter of Leicestershire as well as in the neighbouring villages of Rutlandshire. Many tons are made each year. Dalby is said to pay its rent with this produce only. This from a mere circumstance, the produce of an extent of country is changed, and in this case, very profitably. The sale is no longer confined to Stilton. Almost every inn-keeper within 15 or 20 miles of the district of manufacture is a dealer in Stilton Cheese. The price, as present, 10d a pound to the maker and 1/- to the consumer, who takes it at the makers weight.

EXTRACT FROM DERBY MERCURY - MAY 1745

Yesterday morning, Mr. Cooper Thornhill, Master of the Bell Inn at Stilton in Huntingdonshire, set out from his house at four o'clock, came to the Queen's Arms. opposite to Shoreditch Church in three hours and fifty two minutes, returned to Stilton again in four hours and twelve minutes and came back to London in four hours and thirteen minutes for a wager of 500 guineas. He was allowed fifteen hours to perform it in, which is 213 miles, but performed it in twelve hours and seventeen minutes, which is the greatest Performance of its kind ever known.

Several thousands of pounds were laid out on this affair. Some say not less than £50,000.

The Duke of Bedford and several of the Nobility were present, and the Road for many miles, lined with people to see him pass and repass.

He made use of 19 horses and came upon the last (a hunter, belonging to His Grace the Duke of Ancaster) without stopping, from the White Horse at Wormsley.

LRO. P128/10&P128/18

Following our summer visit to Melton these extracts are particularly relevant. Thanks again to Jim for supplying them. Could the latter story be true? The amounts of money seem huge even with inflation over the years taken into account. Perhaps all this publicity was also a factor in selling so much Stilton Cheese?

**EXTRACT FROM THE LEICESTER CHRONICLE & LEICESTERSHIRE
MERCURY - 29/4/1871**

Wigston -Ex Luce Lucellum. The panic that set in on the news of the proposed duty on Lucifers, quickly cleared the stock of the grocers, and on the day before the measure was withdrawn, not a box of matches could be had for love or money. Many careful householders will not require a new stock, if reasonably careful, this century, one person having bought no less than twelve dozen boxes.

Panic buying it seems has always been with us!

OLD FASHIONED EXPRESSIONS

A few more familiar ones with a note of their original meaning. We might:

- 1) Anxiously await some important event 'On tenterhooks.'
- 2) Fear our mistake had 'Blotted our Copybook.'
- 3) Say we would be 'Hard-pressed'¹ to complete a task.
- 4) Know that taking a chance & doing something wrong was "Not worth the candle."¹
- 5) Call a sailor a 'Jolly Jack Tar.'

Origins:

- 1) This is from the fabric trade. Cloth when wet from fulling or dyeing was fixed to a specially constructed board with hooks, known as tenterhooks, attached round the edge. It then dried a good regular shape shrinking to become taut and stretched.
- 2) Before the days of carbon paper a copy of a letter could be made in a special 'copybook' a book of flimsy plain paper. The letter was written, then a chemical solution applied before placing it within the book & applying pressure. Too much solution would cause blotting of the copybook.
- 3) This is connected with number 2. It was possible to produce up to three copies by this method but you needed to use much force with a clamp & would be hard pressed to do more.
- 4) Mining companies would supply their workers with candles for use underground. To prevent them being taken home coloured wax was used. Thus if anyone had a coloured light showing through their window it proved it was their employers & it was not worth the candle to risk this & lose your job.
- 5) Jack (from the Union Jack) is a word for an Englishman. Tar because sailors used to tar their long ponytails to keep them neat & so they did not need washing while at sea! The sailor collar, long at the back, was originally so designed to keep the clothes free of tar.

A WIGSTON WEDDING

Our north of the border member Mrs. Elizabeth Gordon has very kindly supplied the society with photocopy extracts of the personal diaries of her late mother Zoe and Aunt Mabel, two of the daughters of Mr. H.A. Owston. They cover the period 1888/97 when the girls were young and living at Bushloe House with their father, step-mother, elder sister Evelyn and brother Leycester. Much of the girls' social life seems to centre around the nearby Barracks at Glen Parva. The Depot was an outpost of the Leicestershire Regiment at which men were trained for two or three months before returning to the Regiment proper. It was in the charge usually of a Major and Captain and a handful of Subalterns.

This is an account of Zoe's wedding based on Mabel's diary and newspaper reports of the event. She married at All Saints Church, Wigston on 10/11/1897 having first met her fiance, Lovelace Serjeantson, in January 1894 at a dance in London when she was 19. Now nearly four years on she would be 23, the first and youngest daughter to leave home.

Mabel writes: -

9/11/1897: [the day before] "Arranged Zoe's presents in the morning, the nursery for tea etc. Decorated the Church in the afternoon, white chrysanthemums in the tins & in the vases & a group of plants each side the table & all along the lowest step by the communion rails. Mrs. Mason did the tins on the screen, Mrs. Serjeantson, Mildred, Edith & Mr. & Mrs. Anderson came by the 5.8 train. Cecil & Lacy [the bridegroom's brother & the bridegroom, both military men] had gone straight to the barracks. The Rolphs are putting up the Andersons. We were 16 to dinner Mrs. S & the 2 girls, Cecil & Lacy, the 5 of us, Eva Gibbons, Maj. Scott, Mr. Thorold, Mr. Gordon & the Andersons."

10/11/1897: "We cleaned up the silver in the morning, arranged flowers etc. all morning also interviewed the reporter from the 'Harborough Mail.'¹ Lacy came down for a short time in the morning. The presents are all arranged in the library, tea in the nursery. I dressed Zoe & put on the veil, she looked sweet, her dress was quite plain, ivory satin, with train separate from the dress. The bodice had a tucked collar of chiffon edged all round with Honiton lace of her own, a wreath of orange blossoms (not real) in her hair & a veil of tulle. Evelyn, Mildred & Edith Serjeantson & I were the bridesmaids our dresses were white broche, plain skirts & the bodices tucked with tucked chiffon yokes & a little silver cord trimming on the belts & transparent chiffon sleeves. Eve & I had ours made by Madame Widgerys & the others at their dressmaker in Bradford. The hats we got at Bussell's, Brompton Road, violet miroir velvet with shaded plumes, turned up one side with violets under the brim. Lacy gave us bouquets of white chrysanthemums & violets & very pretty brooches gold heart with turquoise. Eric Mosse carried Zoe's train, he had a brown velvet suit & lace collar & cuffs. She arrived at the Church punctually at 2.30. We entered by the West Door & the first part was taken by Bishop Mitchinson at the screen. The Church was simply crammed, 600 tickets had been given away & the chancel was reserved for the guests. Mr. Langley read the prayers & Mr. Mason the first part & the Bishop gave a short address & the blessing & then 'O Perfect Love' was sung kneeling. It all went off without a hitch everyone thought the arrangements perfect. Zoe was kissed etc. by everyone in the drawing room & then came to the nursery to cut the cake, she went up about 3.45 to dress & they left a little after 4.30 to catch the 5.18 at Glen Station [They went to Eastbourne]. She had a green faced cloth coat & skirt with velvet facings edged with beaver & decader muff & a grey miroir hat with wings & a veil of white satin & lace. Everyone says they think it a very pretty wedding. The only thing that went wrong was that they thought they had left the tickets behind & sent Brown back but Zoe had them in her purse all the time. About 40 people came to the reception, Col. & Mrs. Rolph, Capt. & Mrs. Mosse, Maj. Scott, Mr. Gordon, Mr. Stone & Maud, Monty & Millie, Mr. & Mrs. C. Taylor, Mr. Ingram & Miss Chapman, Dr. & Mrs. Barnley, the three Miss Lees, Mr. & Mrs. Mason, Mr. & Mrs. Langley, Bishop Mitchinson, Miss Nellie Stone, Evelyn Macauley, Mr. Willie Simpson & Mrs. Simpson, Mr. Macauley, Cecil Stone, Mr & Mrs. Anderson, Mrs. Meakin, Miss Ridgway & a young Mr. Meakins relations of the Serjeantsons, Mr. Brigg, Mr. Bigge from the office, Mr. & Mrs. Dickinson, Mr. & Mrs. Smith from Nottingham. Everyone left very soon after Zoe. Cecil Stone stayed the night & dined here. We were 14, Col. & Mrs. Rolph, 4 of us, Mrs. S. & Mildred &

Edith, Cecil, Maj. Scott, Mr. Gordon, Cecil Stone, & Eva. There were more than 100 presents between them."

The Leicester Chronicle & Leicestershire Mercury 13/11/1897 says:-

"Marriage of Miss Zoe Owston, youngest daughter of Mr. H.A. Owston took place at All Saints Church on Wednesday. The public were admitted by ticket & the sacred edifice was crowded. Several hundred assembled on the route from Bushloe House the residence of Mr. Owston & the Church. The bells rang merry peals during the afternoon & evening."

The Leicester Advertiser 13/11/1897 gives its readers more information:-

Bishop Mitchinson, Rev. J.P. Langley, vicar of Olney, & Rev. H.J. Mason, vicar of Wigston, conducted the service. Lovelace Serjeantson was the 2nd son of the late Rev. James Jordan Serjeantson & Mrs. Serjeantson of Hanlith Hall, Bell Busk, Yorks. The bridesmaids were Evelyn & Mabel Owston [bride's sisters] & Mildred & Edith Serjeantson [bridegroom's sisters]. The bride's dress was of cream satin trimmed with lace & chiffon & orange blossoms, & her bouquet was white flowers. The bridesmaids wore cream broche silk trimmed with chiffon & steel trimmings, violet velvet hats with violet plumes & steel ornaments. They carried violet & white flowers. There follows a complete list of the presents which in the days before wedding lists were thought of unfortunately contained three sets of silver cruets!

Of the 40 people who came to the reception the following would most likely be from Wigston:

Mr. Ingram probably Thomas Ingram from Hawthorn House opposite.

Dr. & Mrs. Barnley from Kingswood Lodge (or previous addresses Manor House & The Elms).

The 3 Miss Lees, probably daughters of Ambrose Lee of Two Steeples Ltd.

Mr. & Mrs. Mason, vicar of Wigston & his wife.