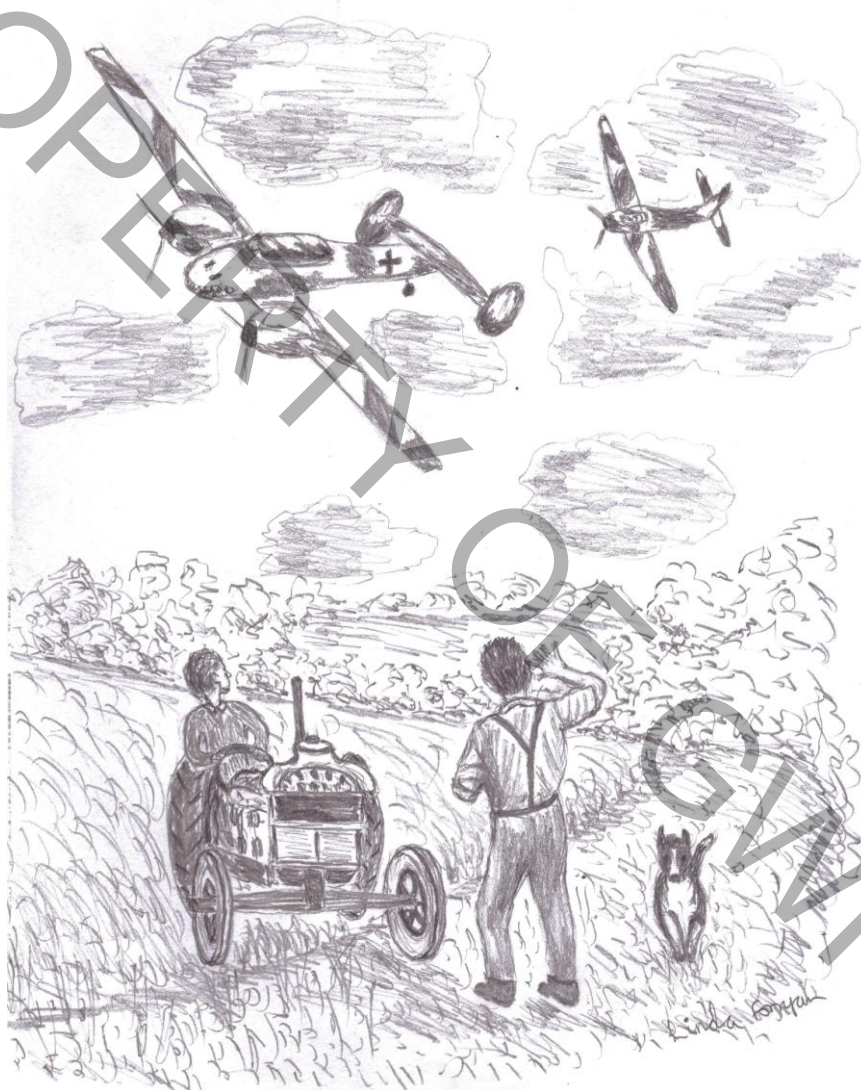


GREATER WIGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
White Gate Lodge, 97 Newton Lane, Wigston Magna, Leics.

BULLETIN 98



A nostalgic wartime farm picture by Linda Forryan

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS – MARCH TO DECEMBER 2014

Wednesday 19th March 2014

Royal Lifeboat Institution – Derrick Young

7.30p.m. The Dining Room, Age UK, Paddock Street, Wigston

Wednesday 16th April 2014

My Life as a Tiller Girl – Margaret Hudson

7.30p.m. The Dining Room, Age UK, Paddock Street, Wigston

Wednesday 21st May 2014 (Normal Evening Outing using own transport – Booking Required)

Guided walk in Market Harborough – Rosalind Willatts, followed by meal at The Sugar Loaf

Meet 5.45p.m. Paddock Street Car Park to share transport. (Note 6.30p.m. start from the Grammar School)

Wednesday 18th June 2014 (Normal Evening Outing using own transport – Booking Required)

Visit to The Manor House, Newton Harcourt, viewing Goddard Architectural Archive & St. Luke's Church – Anthony Goddard, followed by meal at the Dog & Gun, Kilby

Meet 5.45p.m. Paddock Street Car Park to share transport. (Note 6.30p.m. start at Manor House)

Wednesday 20th August 2014

A Walk through Victorian Leicester – Derek Seaton

7.30p.m. The Dining Room, Age UK, Paddock Street, Wigston

Wednesday 17th September 2014

Loughborough Carillon Tower & War memorial – Mel Gould

7.30p.m. The Dining Room, Age UK, Paddock Street, Wigston

Wednesday 15th October 2014

The Medieval Village – Gareth King (in costume)

7.30p.m. The Dining Room, Age UK, Paddock Street, Wigston

Wednesday 19th November 2014

Groby Old Hall – Peter Liddle

7.30p.m. The Dining Room, Age UK, Paddock Street, Wigston

Wednesday 17th December 2014

Christmas Social with nibbles & drinks plus quiz & pictures – Mike Forryan & Colin Towell

7.30p.m. The Dining Room, Age UK, Paddock Street, Wigston

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.

Society's website: www.wigstonhistoricalsociety.co.uk

Chairman, Mike Forryan's e-mail: chairman@wigstonhistoricalsociety.co.uk

NOVEMBER 2013 MEETING

It may have been the title of the talk, Sex, Lies and Parchment, or it may be that we are always going to get a full house these days but our November meeting was full to the rafters; I don't think anyone was disappointed. We welcomed Jess Jenkins of the Record Office to talk about her research into the Records of the Leicester Archdeaconry Court.

In the 10th century the Church organised the country into dioceses which were further subdivided into archdeaconries. After the Civil Wars in the mid 17th century many archdeaconries lost their court powers but Leicester was an exception and retained its courts. Even when Leicester was not a diocese in its own right there would still have been an Archdeaconry of Leicester under Lincoln and later Peterborough dioceses. Today we can still see where the court was held, until 1955, in Leicester Cathedral immediately to the right of the main entrance door (the Vaughan Porch or South Door) where there is the Archdeacon's chair with rails round it guarding him from the accused. These courts were often known as the 'Bawdy Courts' because of the nature of the cases tried in them. The courts dealt with moral issues whereas bodily harm, theft and murder cases were dealt with in the Magistrates Court. At certain times in this country's history, religious freedom has been a contentious matter and those falling foul of the law of the day in this respect were tried in Archdeaconry Courts.

Despite the formal arrangements in the cathedral, cases were often heard in a public house and the Archdeacon then might be represented by others with 'proctors' speaking for each party. Records are difficult to read as they were usually in Latin which was regularly abbreviated. Cases went on so long that they often just petered out with no conclusion being reached. Archdeaconry courts could not impose punishments such as fines or imprisonment, but meted out acts of public humiliation or ex-communication from the church (which left the door open for the accused to be absolved and re-admitted to the church at a suitable later date). The court could not impose fines, but could order costs which were often comparatively high.

As well as misconduct Archdeaconry Courts were also responsible for proving pre 1858 Wills in their area. Though not for the various 'Peculiar Parishes' which were outside the jurisdiction of the diocesan bishop, examples locally were Groby, Evington, Rothley Temple, Knighton and St Margarets in Leicester.

Cases arising from Bishops and Archdeacons 'visitations' were tried in the Archdeaconry Court. Bishops were required to formally visit each Archdeaconry every two years and Archdeacons had to visit each deanery (a group of several parishes) twice a year. One such case involved a man who had been caught 'being naughty with the communion wine' he confessed on this occasion. After the 1689 Toleration Act if a minister signed the 39 Articles and registered a building, a dissenters' church could be established, but in Wigston two people were excommunicated for being Catholics. The courts controlled the professions by ensuring that people who wanted to be recognised as clergy as well as teachers, solicitors and midwives signed the 39 articles. Now only the clergy are required to sign on their ordination, the other professions having their own formal registers. Midwives had strong powers to make the unmarried pregnant mother declare who the father was. This was vital to parish overseers because their parish could otherwise be made responsible for the child.

Many cases involved sexual issues such as fornication, adultery, pre-marital pregnancy and incest. Here the guilty party was required to pay a penance by appearing in church dressed only in a white sheet and holding a wand. There was no form of divorce before 1857 but an Archdeaconry Court

could order a legal separation. The law of incest was complicated and there were long lists of who a person could not marry, e.g. a man could not marry the widow of his dead brother, or vice versa (oh dear Henry VIII and Katherine). One couple were married but the husband left after eight weeks. Ten years later the wife remarried despite the fact that the original husband was still alive. She was found out and the second marriage declared invalid and the children became illegitimate.

Many minor matters were dealt with such as brawling in the churchyard, untimely ringing of church bells, playing football in the churchyard and the small size of the pulpit. This latter matter was eventually controlled by alterations in churches requiring a faculty which only the Archdeaconry court could give; this function becoming one of three duties left to the courts in modern times, the others being supervising the behaviour of the clergy and special marriage licences.

All in all, the talk gave us a fascinating insight into this side of the law in times gone by and perhaps an indication that in some instances law breaking then was not so different from what it is today.

DECEMBER 2013 MEETING

There were over 60 members and guests at the Christmas meeting on 18 December, merely a week before the big day. This year, a slightly new format was introduced in so far as we welcomed a special speaker (no, not Santa Clause), in addition to the usual and very popular quiz and slide show of old Wigston.

Dorothy Wells gave us an entertaining mixture of seasonal bits and bobs, starting appropriately with the history of the date itself. In fact, 25 December was an arbitrary date chosen by the Roman Emperor Constantine the Great, who converted to Christianity in the 4th century, and wanted it to coincide with the pagan midwinter festival of Saturnalia. In Tudor times the party lasted for the whole of the traditional twelve days until farm workers returned to their labours on Plough Monday. This was well demonstrated in the excellent Tudor Farm T V programme shown over the holiday. In the 1640s Oliver Cromwell banned the festivities allowing only fasting and prayer but this caused (not unexpectedly) riots and on his reinstatement Charles II allowed the full celebrations again.

Different countries often emphasise different dates in the whole Christmas cycle starting from the beginning of advent to twelfth night. The anniversary of the death of St Nicholas is 6 December and in one of our favourite holiday destinations, Majorca, 3 ships are sailed into the harbour on this date. But the eastern Coptic Christians fast during Advent (as used to happen in Catholic England) and celebrate on 6/7 January. There are many other national and religious variations.

Although holly and ivy were brought indoors in pagan times, the Christmas Tree was first introduced by Queen Charlotte but made popular by Prince Albert and at the time was not brought into the house until Christmas Eve itself. There were no baubles and of course no lights but paper chains, bells and balls were used to decorate the tree and the room, as well as Chinese lanterns and candles. Mistletoe was hung near the front door which of course was not used, most people arriving through the back door. Another favourite, Father Christmas has a red coat, and was first introduced in a coca cola advert in 1931 but St Nicholas himself is usually portrayed in a purple cloak.

Dorothy's Lancashire accent was emphasised in a local version using farming terms of the Messiah and she reminded us of another 'date' in the Christmas calendar of Stir Up Sunday when puddings, cakes and mincemeat were made, often steamed in a communal oven with a special knot tied in the

cloth of your pudding to identify it compared to your neighbours, not forgetting the silver 3 pence bit for a lucky child.

The subject of which poultry was favourite was then discussed. In times gone by turkey was not popular and most people had a cockerel or two, or if you could afford it a goose. But this involved plucking, which for a goose, was not easy. However the goose did then provide fat, useful for rubbing on the chest at times of illness, the threat of it was enough to produce a cure!

Dorothy concluded a very entertaining and appropriate talk by reading a modern version of the twelve days of Christmas by John Julius Norwich in the form of a poem from Emily to her fiance Edward. This was extremely amusing and went down a treat.

Mike Forryan then presented in his usual highly technical form, his quiz based on local places. The winners being Barry and Janet Horsley and Brian Woodward who achieved 14 marks out of nineteen. Well done to them, it was quite a tricky quiz. The booby prize, if there was one, going to the team with only five marks! This was followed by a tour of the Society's picture archive based on Bull Head Street and Paddock Street which of course stirred up many memories and some questions.

Thanks to all involved in organising another great party night including eats and drinks.

JANUARY 2014 MEETING

For our first meeting in 2014 we welcomed, with great expectations, Dr John Martin, who gave his talk 'War Time Farm' on farms and farming during the two world wars. He is well known for his advisory work on the various TV series on farming over the ages, the latest of which was the Tudor Monastery Farm which concluded at Christmas. Dr Martin has had work published and is a reader in Agricultural History at DMU. His talk, of well over an hour, was without notes and full of facts and information occasionally illustrated by reference to one of several display boards which he brought with him and which members were able to look at more closely afterwards. There were 65 members and 12 visitors present.

After the expansion of production during and immediately after the Napoleonic Wars, agricultural depression settled in from 1870 onwards and lasted well into the 1930s with the exception of the War period from 1914 to 1918. The depression was caused by imports of wheat and frozen meat and other new world products. Because the imports of wheat from America and Canada were at risk during the period of WWI, the state finally intervened when a guaranteed price was introduced for British farmers for wheat and oats. Barley was excluded because it was used only for beer production as opposed to food production.

As labour shortages increased on farms during the war there was further state intervention, however there were three distinct stages over the 1914 -1918 period. In phase one agricultural life continued along pre-war lines but as Kitchener recruited soldiers, labour available for key industries, including agriculture, was depleted. In stage two in 1915 there were coal strikes and a coalition government came into power as food shortages became more severe. Finally in stage three Lloyd George came into power in December 1916 and the government became more dynamic in its intervention.

After the war Britain allowed food imports to increase again and prices went down leading to the return of depression. Britain became the largest market for the world's food production and by 1939 the country was importing more food than it was in 1914. Overall 70% of food was imported but this average covered an actual rate of 88% for wheat. Only perishable food was grown at home and even

eggs were imported in winter. Therefore, as war started again in 1939, the government was forced to intervene once more. Efforts were made to reduce food consumption that was in short supply and to increase production by ploughing up former grazing land. The farmer got the goods to the farm gate but then the Ministry of Agriculture took over to distribute the food. Each county had a committee to oversee production to ensure it was rising to meet government quotas.

Nationally 8 million acres were arable land and this itself was a very low figure. In Leicestershire it was only 5% of the total, the majority being used for grazing livestock which then had to be fed in winter. So the campaign had a disproportionate effect in Leicestershire where 10% of grassland was ploughed up each year during the war. Eventually 2 million acres were ploughed up nationally. Farmers were given incentives but control was in the hands of the much disliked War Agricultural Committee.

To control consumption, the Ministry of Food introduced rationing in 1940 but only for food where supplies could be assured, so wheat and potatoes were not rationed. (The only previous time that rationing had been introduced was for bread in 1802). Consumption of these products was therefore discouraged such as using bran in bread which used less flour. But between 1939 and 1944 potato consumption increased by 100lbs per person per year so 101 different ways of cooking them were advertised, including eating the skins. Egg and bacon production declined by 70% over the war years so the government introduced imported egg powder. Pig clubs were encouraged. A 'Dig for Victory' campaign was started but this was to supplement individual family's rations rather than as a direct way to increase production.

Far more land was put to the plough in WWII than in 1914-1918 and the WWII agricultural campaign was said to be a success. This compared with Germany where there was slow starvation and measures introduced such as the use of sawdust to dilute flour in bread. There is no doubt that regulation of food production and rationing of consumption enabled British people at home during the war to survive. People looked thinner but this was mainly because they were working harder.

Male labour for farming was not available so the Women's Land Army was formed and children were encouraged to work on the land. Women were invited to take their holidays working on the farms under the slogan 'lend a hand on the land'. In addition German and Italian prisoners were put to work in agriculture and by 1947 they made up 20% of the agricultural workforce. Mechanisation increased, the number of tractors went up three times from 60,000 in 1939 to 180,000 in 1945, the use of fertilizer also trebled.

Government intervention in agriculture continued after 1945 in some form, even until the 1990s whereas it ceased straight away in 1918. The ongoing rationing was needed because of the requirement to feed the German and other nations and because of harsh winters, especially 1947.

This fascinating lecture, well delivered, was over all too soon but we came away with a greater understanding of the agricultural picture in wartime especially during 1939 to 1945, something that most of us present were only vaguely aware of. These notes give but a flavour of the huge number of facts given during the talk.

Reviews by Colin Towell

FEBRUARY 2014 MEETING

This meeting, the AGM was again very well attended. The Chairman, Mike Forryan, opened the proceedings by welcoming everyone. The agenda was as follows:

1) Apologies for absence – Ann Cousins and Duncan Lucas.

2) Minutes of February 2013 AGM – read by the Treasurer, Colin Towell, in place of the Secretary, Ann Cousins who was unwell (get better soon Ann). These were signed as correct.

3) Matters arising – None.

4) Chairman's Report – Mike reported another very successful year with meetings well attended, an enjoyable programme of speakers on a wide variety of topics & trips to Southwell Minster & Workhouse, Ashby, & a conducted coach trip by Duncan Lucas. He was particularly pleased to receive positive feed back from a number of members. The committee continue to promote the society, taking tables at local events, displaying programmes on notice boards, distributing our leaflets & featuring three times on Radio Leicester. The web continues to attract interest with 1,500 'hits' & the archive grows with members lending their old photographs of Wigston people & places to include. Subscriptions were raised by £1 from 1st January 2014, it is hoped to maintain this rate for a while. They are now £12 full & £9 concessionary. Mike thanked the committee for their work & support during the year & this was kindly endorsed by Marion Daetwyler to include Mike himself.

5) Treasurer's Report – Colin Towell took us through the accounts, noting Income: subscriptions were up due to the increase in members & visitors. Profits on outings, the Christmas social & July bus trip also helped swell funds. Expenditure: Lecture fees had increased due to us attracting good quality speakers. The surplus for this year is £409 17p.

6) Membership Secretary's Report – Mike Forryan read this on behalf of Linda Forryan. Another good year with new members joining, but unfortunately a few having resigned for various reasons. We also lost Bob Wignall who sadly died on 1 November 2013. Bob had been a member of the society for very many years and was a past Vice Chairman. We had 18 new members enrol during 2013, starting the year with 104 and ending with 117. They are made up of 102 concessionary, 13 full and 2 complimentary. 55 visitors were also welcomed.

7) Election of Officers – As there were no nominations and no resignations it was agreed the present officers should be re-elected. Namely:

Chairman: Mike Forryan, **Vice Chairman:** Vacant, **Secretary:** Ann Cousins, **Treasurer:** Colin Towell, **Membership Secretary:** Linda Forryan, **Bulletin Editor:** Tricia Berry, **Auditor:** Garry Davies, **Committee Members:** Sue Woolley, Paul Knight & Jane Callis.

8) Any Other Business – The Chairman raised the fact that most of the electronic equipment used for presentations belonged to him and it was somewhat inconvenient to bring them to each meeting. It also caused problems when he was away. The Leics. & Rutland Family History Society also use the same meeting room and have a similar problem. Age UK who own the screen have no projection equipment of their own. The three groups have got together & discussed the shared purchase of more sophisticated equipment which would be installed overhead in the building & be available to all, plus other groups which might book the room. Age UK would be responsible for all maintenance & repair. The system would also be much easier to operate. Mike said the cost to the society would not

exceed £500. After some discussion & natural doubts, it was unanimously agreed to go ahead. Members were reminded that subscription for 2014 were now due & should be paid this evening if possible.

There followed a fascinating film of news clips from 1929, which proved to be an eventful year.

The popular King George V was very ill and there were big celebrations when he recovered. The Labour Party were in power under Ramsey Macdonald and the first woman was appointed to the Cabinet. One million people were unemployed and there was dreadful poverty, particularly among miners. A truly sympathetic and shocked Prince of Wales toured affected areas to raise awareness and offer sympathy. Three million people emigrated, mainly to Australia. Fascism developed in Germany and Italy with the rise of Hitler and Mussolini. In America the Great Depression began with the Wall Street Crash, there was prohibition, speakeasy bars, bootlegging and the infamous Al Capone.

Telephones became more common, as did motor cars, with British Bentleys winning the first four places at Le Mans and Britain also winning the first Monte Carlo Rally. The RAF was ten years old and big steps occurred in aircraft development with in-flight refueling enabling the first nonstop flight to India, and first flight over the Pacific. Flying boats were also popular. The R101 was unveiled and the Graf Zeppelin made its second voyage to America.

Britannia ruled the waves, BBC television was launched following the wonderful invention by Logie Baird. England won the Ashes and the scouting movement celebrated their 25th anniversary with a Jamboree. Women were much more liberated having recently got the vote, they entered beauty contests and took a much more prominent role in society. There was a cold winter with the Thames freezing over, followed by severe flooding when it overflowed its banks.

Tricia Berry

CHURCH VISITS - 2013

Through the Leicester Cathedral Walking Group, I have been able to visit some very interesting churches during 2013. The Group is organised by Mick McQuade who had drawn his inspiration for the programme of 7 visits from the Treasures Unlocked initiative highlighting the glorious churches we have in the Diocese, (in a previous year, the abbeys of Leicestershire were the basis). The walking part of the day (Saturdays) is fairly minimal consisting of a ramble lasting about 75 minutes in a circular route beginning and ending at the church. The event starts with lunch at the inevitable nearby hostelry, goes on for the visit to the church in question, often with a guided talk, and then followed by the ramble and usually concluding with tea and cakes back at the pub.

This year the programme included (once per month):

St Michael and All Angels, Hallaton; an ancient church in a former market village with a charnel house below ground level and a former external pulpit for outdoor preaching.

St Peter, Tickencote; on the A1 near Stamford; there is an amazing Norman 5 ribbed chancel arch.

Noseley Chapel; a private chapel on the estate of Lord Hazelrigg, with brightly decorated tombs and box pews.

St John the Baptist, Kings Norton; a very light and plain church with a stand out spire and central three tier pulpit. There is nothing in the church to distract the worshipper from doing what he is there for, to worship. In the tower, apart from a recently refurbished peal, there is an ancient carillon using the main peal of bells which can be rung manually or automatically at the same time each day.

St Peter, Church Langton; A cosy church often used for concerts and well known for one of the first performances, in a church, of Handel's Messiah. John Hanbury, the vicar had grand ideas for a modern (at that time) monastery, but it didn't come off.

Other churches visited by the group were All Saints, Peatling Magna and St Wistan, Wistow, both of which I was unable to attend.

Each visit is preceded by a well-researched written introduction to the history and architecture of the church and village. Each walk is, in the tradition of walking groups, pre walked by the leader so that we don't get lost and we know the hazards coming up.

A second group of churches I visited were on a 'Church Crawl by Charabanc' organised by the Shires Branch of the John Betjeman Society and excellently led by John Florence and Richard Gill. We left Market Harborough on a modern coach (I am pleased to say) and journeyed with a commentary on the lie of the land to St Andrew at Stoke Dry overlooking Eye Brook reservoir, of Dambusters fame. This church is ancient and has visible remains of wall paintings and probable connections with the gunpowder plot in a difficult to access room over the porch.

Following lunch we visited the 'WOW' church of St Mary The Virgin at Wellingborough. Internally, this church, designed by Sir Ninian Comper, and built in the early 20th century is breath taking, highly decorative, very light and furnished for high church worship.

Our next visit was to All Saints, Earls Barton where the externally decorated 10th century tower is one of the best examples of late Anglo Saxon architecture. Finally we went to St Mary and All Saints at Fotheringhay, a wonderfully light and lofty church, again originally part of a much larger collegiate church endowed by Edmund Plantagenet and birthplace (in the nearby castle, now only a mound) of Richard Duke of Gloucester and later King Richard III.

These churches were not in themselves connected to John Betjeman but the concept for the day was very much in his style and was thoroughly enjoyable with one of his poems read at each church.

Here's to Churches to visit in 2014.

Colin Towell

FOUND AT LAST!!

Whilst researching the life and times of Orson Wright the builder of South Wigston, and in the course of writing his biography "Champion Of The People" a lot of time was spent to no avail searching for a photograph of Orson's wife Ada.

Recently I was put into contact with one of his Great Granddaughters Alison Tebbutt who now lives in Devon. She told me she thought she had seen a family photograph amongst her papers of Orson with his wife and children and she would look for it. Several weeks went past and then, returning from a family history meeting one evening, I checked my e-mails and to my amazement the picture below was attached to an e-mail from Alison.



Orson and his wife had ten children, four of them died in infancy under 2 years old, and the picture shows the surviving six children.

On the extreme left is Sidney, the older girl at the back is Ada Ann, next is Albert and then Herbert Charles. At the front are Shirley and Orson Stanley.

Peter Cousins

For details of the book "Champion of the People" go to:

www.pcgenealogyservices.co.uk/orsonwright or call 0116 288 4638

A HISTORY OF YORK HOUSE, 67 CENTRAL AVENUE, WIGSTON (originally York House, 91 Central Avenue)

Society member, Colin Hames, very kindly lent me the old deeds to his house. The information they contain forms the basis for this article, but with some extra detail added from other sources. The plot on which the house was built was once part of Fulwell Farm, Long Street, Wigston. The farmhouse survives today, it is situated on the Long Street/Central Avenue corner, and now houses the veterinary practice, Bell Brown and Bentley. Its land once stretched from the rear of the farmhouse up and beyond the railway as far as Aylestone Lane, to an area known as Goldhill at the Wigston/Aylestone parish boundary.

At enclosure in 1766 the farm was described as being owned by the late John Noon and consisted of c.111 acres with a further separate 13 acres of meadow. In a 1775 poll book Thomas Smith is listed as the owner/occupier. By 1834 it belonged to John Smith who lived elsewhere and rented it to James Williams. A valuation book for 1838 listed Mrs. Smith as the owner and George Tailby as the tenant. On 14 October 1852 the property was conveyed to Alfred Cooper, a Whetstone born General Practitioner and member of the Royal College of Surgeons, who lived with his wife Ann, and their four children at 6, Welford Place, Leicester. Alfred Allen Cooper, the eldest son, moved to Wigston and farmed the land.

When Alfred Cooper, the father, retired he and his wife moved to Wigston taking a lease on the nearby Wigston Hall also in Long Street. Alfred Allen Cooper moved to live with them and continued to farm the Fulwell land. Alfred Cooper died on 22 June 1878 and his wife Ann, the following year. Alfred Allen Cooper then continued to live at the Hall until the lease expired when he moved to 38 Bell Street, which is sadly now demolished. It stood on the right of Shipp's drapery shop, when viewed from the front.

Alfred Cooper's will stated that he wished to treat all his four children equally, except for allowing some extra for his son James Thomas Cooper who suffered from defective vision. It offered Alfred Allen Cooper the option to purchase Fulwell Farm but he decided against this and so on 10 October 1896 he and his brother Charles William Cooper M.D. and Thomas Ingram the local solicitor, as executors and trustees, sold "the messuage, land and hereditaments for £4,250" to the Great Wigston Industrial and Provident Society Ltd., of Long Street (a part of the local Co-operative Society). The property was described at this time as "a dwelling house, messuage or tenement, in Long Street with yards, garden and outbuildings, land and appurtenances containing 2a 1r 30p. Also all the closes Home Close 3a 3r 29p, Upper Cow Close 6a 2r 23p, Lower Cow Close 4a 1r 24p, Fulwell Close 7a 3r 1p, Fulwell Meadow 5a 1r 12p, Far Fulwell Close formerly 10a 1r 18p but now revised to 9a 0r 34p, all now in the occupation of William Cook". These closes only total 34a 2r 33p about one third of the original acreage of the farm, so the rest must have been disposed of separately at some time.

The Co-operative Society retained the farm and no doubt produced milk for their dairy round the corner in Bushloe End. The house was let to John Wignall, a senior employee, who in a 1910 Valuation is described as occupying the house, garden and 34a 2r 23p of land at 16 Long Street. A new road, Central Avenue, was laid down the centre of Home Close with building plots staked out on each side for houses and for their new headquarters. On 20 November 1906 the Society sold to Henry Crowe a piece of land on the north side, measuring 803sq yds, for £100 8s 6d. This represented four plots, plus another narrow strip on the western boundary, of 48sq yds, sold the following year for £7 14s 6d which was part of a fifth plot. Henry Crowe was described as an

evangelist of Burgess Street. Further research reveals he was a Yorkshire born Wesleyan Methodist Minister, presumably at Frederick Street chapel.

Henry had to agree to the sale terms which stated that within six months of the erection of any dwelling house on the land he must pave with Victoria Stone a side causeway, 8ft wide bounding the land, pave a gateway entrance with granite sets and keep in repair half the width of the road until it should become public property. He was also to be responsible for half of any repair costs for a culvert under the road and within two months erect a dwarf wall and iron palisade fence, nothing to be nearer than 6ft from the road except the wall and fence. There were also clauses against selling wines and spirits or any other goods from the premises. The conveyance was signed by John George Waterfield and W.E. Broughton, two members of the committee, and William Spencer of Long Street, the Secretary.

Henry Crowe built a pair of semi-detached houses on his land, York House, 91 Central Avenue for his own occupation, and the neighbouring property which was named Suffolk House. On 14 June 1912 Henry sold York House for £400 to Thomas Betts of Blaby, a relieving officer. Thomas later became the local Registrar for Births and Deaths so there would have been a steady stream of visitors to the house at that time. On 14 April 1923 he sold York House for £755 to Sydney Josiah Mason Bott of Leicester, a manufacturing chemist's assistant, and Mary Hartley Bott his wife. On 9 October 1930 Sydney and Mary Bott sold York House to John Bodycote of the King William IV Hotel, Leicester Road, Mountsorrel for £690. John Bodycote died in 1939 and the house was transferred to his wife Amelia Bodycote, and was described at this time as "York House, 67 (formerly 91) Central Avenue". Amelia died in 1941 and the house was transferred to her son Frank Bodycote, an engineer's clerk of the same address. On 6 December 1960 Frank Bodycote conveyed York House to Colin Hames.

The remainder of this article concerns a 690sq yd piece of land which was situated at the rear of, and adjoining the gardens of York and Suffolk houses. It was part of the Wigston Hall estate which had been owned by the Clarke family, passing to the first born son of each generation who was always named John. Wigston Hall was situated where the Elizabeth Court flats now stand, opposite the Peace Memorial Park. Much of its land bordered that of Fulwell Farm. The last members of the Clarke family to actually live there were Captain Charles Holland Baddeley and his wife Ann nee Clarke (an aunt of John Clarke 1813-1889). They were in residence from 1832 occupying the house and grounds, an area of 11a 3r 37p. Following Ann's death in 1851 the Captain moved away and the hall was let to various tenants including Alfred Cooper as mentioned previously.

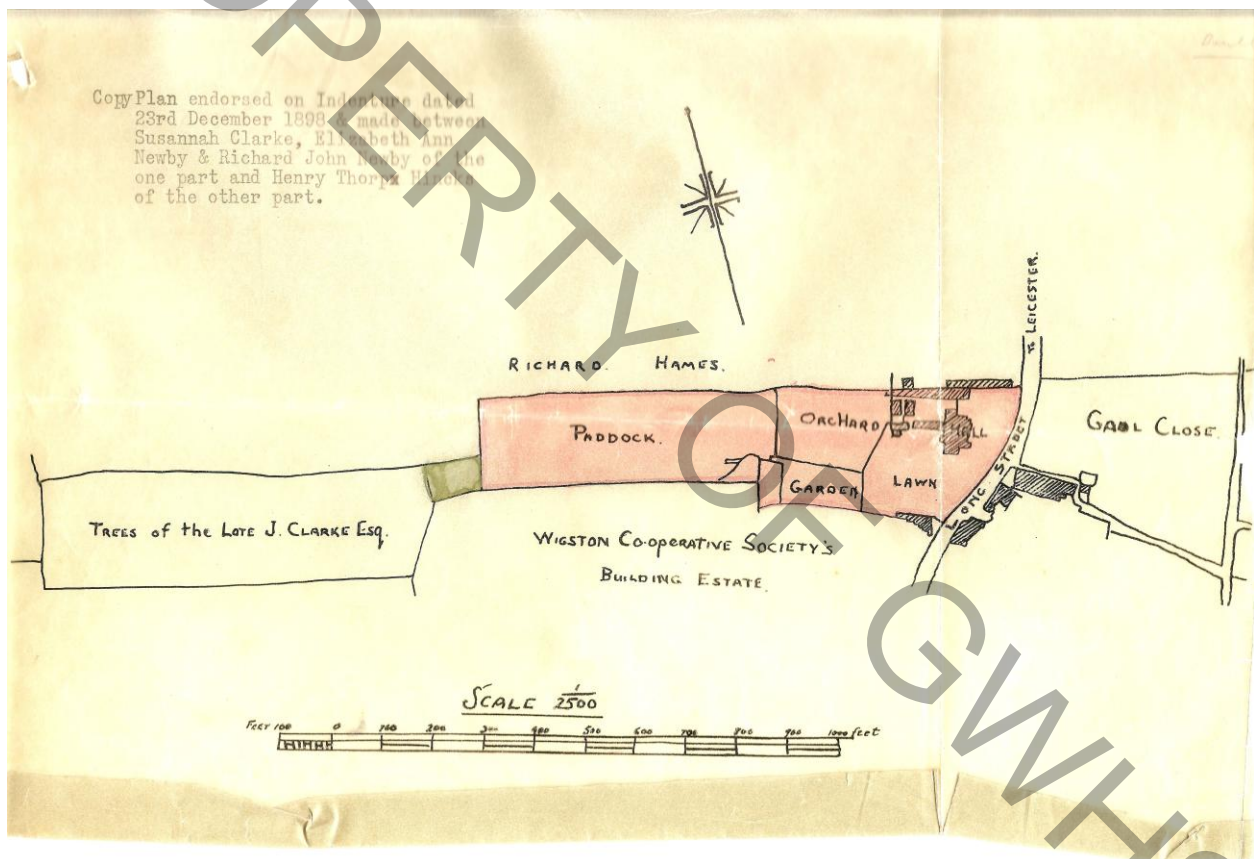
During the time this John Clarke owned the hall he lived and farmed at Whetstone Pastures, and then moved to continue farming in Norfolk. He died at Yarmouth on 4 April 1889. His executors, Susannah Clarke (his widow), Rev Richard John Newby (son-in-law) and Elizabeth Ann Newby (daughter) advertised the hall for sale in 1895 but it was not sold until 23 December 1898, and was at this time described as the "hall, gardens and paddock". The purchaser was Henry Thorp Hincks, a land agent and valuer with offices at 35, Friar Lane, Leicester, who was also described as a farmer and gentleman. On 1 January 1919 Henry Hincks sold the property to Benjamin Toone, a boot and shoe manufacturer (Toone & Black in South Wigston). Following Benjamin Toone's death in 1921 the hall was transferred the following year to Thomas Birkett, also a boot and shoe manufacturer.

On 10 October 1927 Thomas Birkett sold the 690sq yd piece of Wigston Hall land mentioned above to Fred Boulter then living at Suffolk House, 65 Central Avenue, as an extension for his garden. Fred Boulter had moved from his previous home at 9 Central Avenue. He was the manager of Wigston Hosiers in Paddock Street and father of William Ewart Boulter who was awarded the V.C. during

WWI. On 14 June 1968 George Boulter of 65 Central Avenue, the son of Fred Boulter, sold the 690sq yd garden extension to his neighbour at York House, Colin Hames.

Tricia Berry

Sources: In addition to the deeds, Enclosure Records, Poll Books, Valuation Records for 1838 & 1910-15 (for Wigston) Directories, and the Will of Alfred Cooper are all at the Record Office for Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland.



This plan was prepared in 1898 when John Clarke's Trustees sold Wigston Hall, with garden, orchard and paddock to Henry Thorp Hincks. The small piece of land joining the paddock to the field on the left is the 690sq yd garden extension to the rear of York House.

GREATER WIGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

Receipts and Payments for the year ending 31st December 2013

Receipts

Opening Balances as at 1/1/2013:	
Current A/c	740.91
Unpresented Chq	153.60
Deposit A/c	998.13
	1892.64
Subscriptions	886.00
Visitor fees	88.00
Christmas Social	179.00
Donations	28.00
Sale of books	16.00
Radio Leicester Night	8.60
Bank Interest	.71
Coach Trip	424.00
Visits (2013)	894.00

4416.95

Payments

Lecture Fees	290.00
Bulletins & Programme	182.20
Christmas Social	75.00
Room Hire (2013)	287.50
Secretary's expenses	64.98
Coach Trip	221.96
Visits (2013)	943.50
FWK Museum Ltd	50.00
Closing Balances at 31/12/2013:	
Current A/c	1263.95
Unpresented Chq	39.02
Deposit A/c	998.84
	2301.81

4416.95

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Please note that subscriptions for 2014 are now due. If you have already renewed, thank you very much. Your receipt should be attached to this bulletin.

If you have not yet done so, we would be grateful if you could renew as soon as possible using this cut off slip if you like. The rates are £12 Full and £9 Concessionary. Cheques should be made payable to GWHS. We hope you will continue your membership but if you are not doing so, it would be very helpful if you could let the Membership Secretary know.

Member(s) Name & Address

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Please send to the Membership Secretary:

Mrs. Linda Forryan,
21 Blakesley Road,
Wigston,
Leicester. LE18 3WD