

# WIGSTON BUSINESSES



PAST & PRESENT

Front Cover Illustration: Leicester Road, Wigston Magna.  
Photo Tony Danvers, May 2012.

# WIGSTON BUSINESSES PAST AND PRESENT

Based on an exhibition of photographs by Stuart Brown and Tony Danvers  
at the Wigston Library, Bull Head Street, Wigston, March 2013.



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## Introduction

At the turn of the last century it was very common for photographers to take pictures of shops with their owners standing proudly outside. It was these old photos which inspired us to attempt a modern version of this format, and we would like to thank all the owners of the shops involved for their unfailing generosity in giving up their time to allow us to photograph them standing outside their businesses.

From there it was only a natural step to try to find old photographs of the two Wigstons that would match the modern ones, or at least show the street where the shops stood many years ago. We would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank Duncan Lucas for not only writing a foreword to this book but also for his very kind generosity in giving us permission to use many of his photographs of Wigston.

The book is in two sections, in the first section are photos taken by Stuart Brown of the shops and businesses in Wigston Magna. In the second section are photos taken by Tony Danvers of the shops in South Wigston. In the middle of the book there is an overlap of pictures all of which were taken in the arcade in Wigston Magna by both of the photographers.

There is an index at the back of the book detailing the names of the shops and also the old photographs of Wigston and South Wigston.

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'Ticker' Payne standing outside his shop at 58 Blaby Road, South Wigston in 1908.

## Foreword

Tony Danvers has excelled himself again in his second book bringing “Top” Wigston, alias Wigston Magna, into his previous story of South Wigston businesses past and present with the able assistance of fellow photographer Stuart Brown.

Using their photographs of the present day small shops and businesses in the two Wigstons together with their owners and managers and comparing them to old photos of Wigston brings into focus not only the changes in each of the premises but also shows the continuity of the shopkeepers who, despite the big supermarkets, continue to survive by giving that personal service which money cannot buy. Long may they prosper and maintain our heritage.

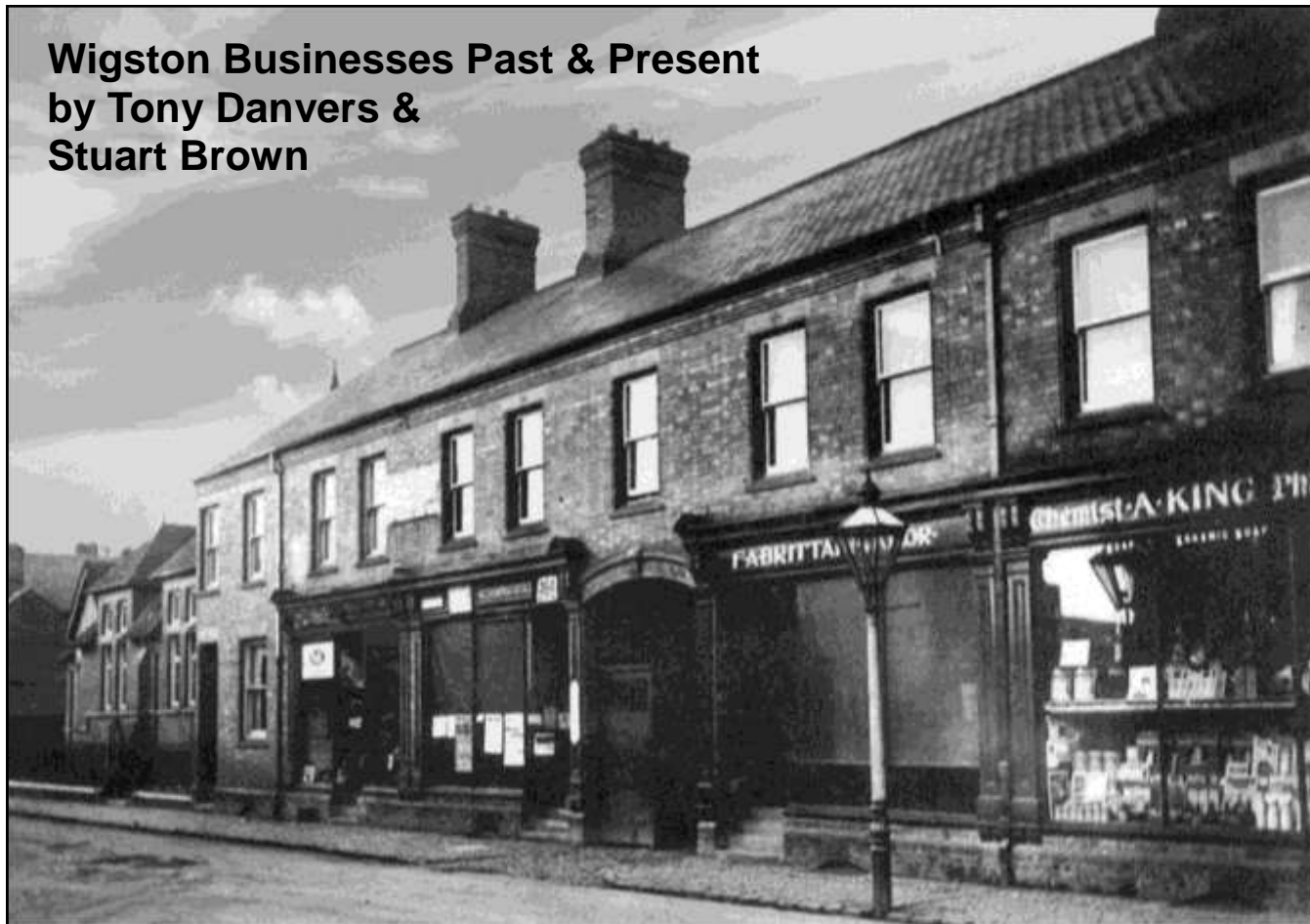
Old photographs from my collection together with those of the late Peter Mastin have been used to complement the modern colour photos taken by Tony Danvers and Stuart Brown and I trust that others will continue to use and enjoy this book as much as I have.

Thanks again Tony and of course Stuart for your efforts in reminding Wigston people of their fascinating heritage which we all must strive to keep alive for future generations.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Duncan Lucas". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Duncan" and last name "Lucas" clearly distinguishable.

Duncan Lucas, January 2013

## Wigston Businesses Past & Present by Tony Danvers & Stuart Brown



From left to right the three nearest shops are as follows, the Wigston Post Office, then F. A. Brittain, a tailor followed by Alfred King the chemist. The photograph was taken in the 1920s.



Leicester Road & Long Street, Wigston. Compare the present shops with those on the facing page.  
Photo Tony Danvers, May 2012.



Aylestone Lane, Wigston Magna, circa 1912, showing the houses opposite Kings Drive, which is where Willow Hairstyles, on the facing page is presently situated.





Willow Hairstyles, 30 Aylestone Lane, Wigston with Lorna Harris, owner Elaine Hodges and son Peter.  
Photo Stuart Brown October 2011.



Pennywise Discount Store, 42 Bell Street, Wigston with owners Sahir Suleman and Hanif Malida.  
Photo Stuart Brown June 2012.



Shipp's Outfitters, Bell Street, Wigston, circa 1920, very close to where Pennywise is today.





Heards of Wigston, 69 Long Street, Wigston with owners Paul and Tim Preston.  
Photo Stuart Brown June 2012.



Bell Street, Wigston Magna, circa 1935, close to the corner on Long Street, where Heard's the Butchers is presently situated.



Penneys Florist, 32 Leicester Road, Wigston, with Leanne Harbat, Denise Jacobs and owner Deborah Pickering. Photo Stuart Brown September 2011.



Penney's the Florists now stands where Oliver's shop once stood on the corner of Aylestone Lane, Wigston, c 1905.





Moat Street, Wigston Magna, circa 1906, in the middle distance on the left is where D. Wilson & Sons is now situated.

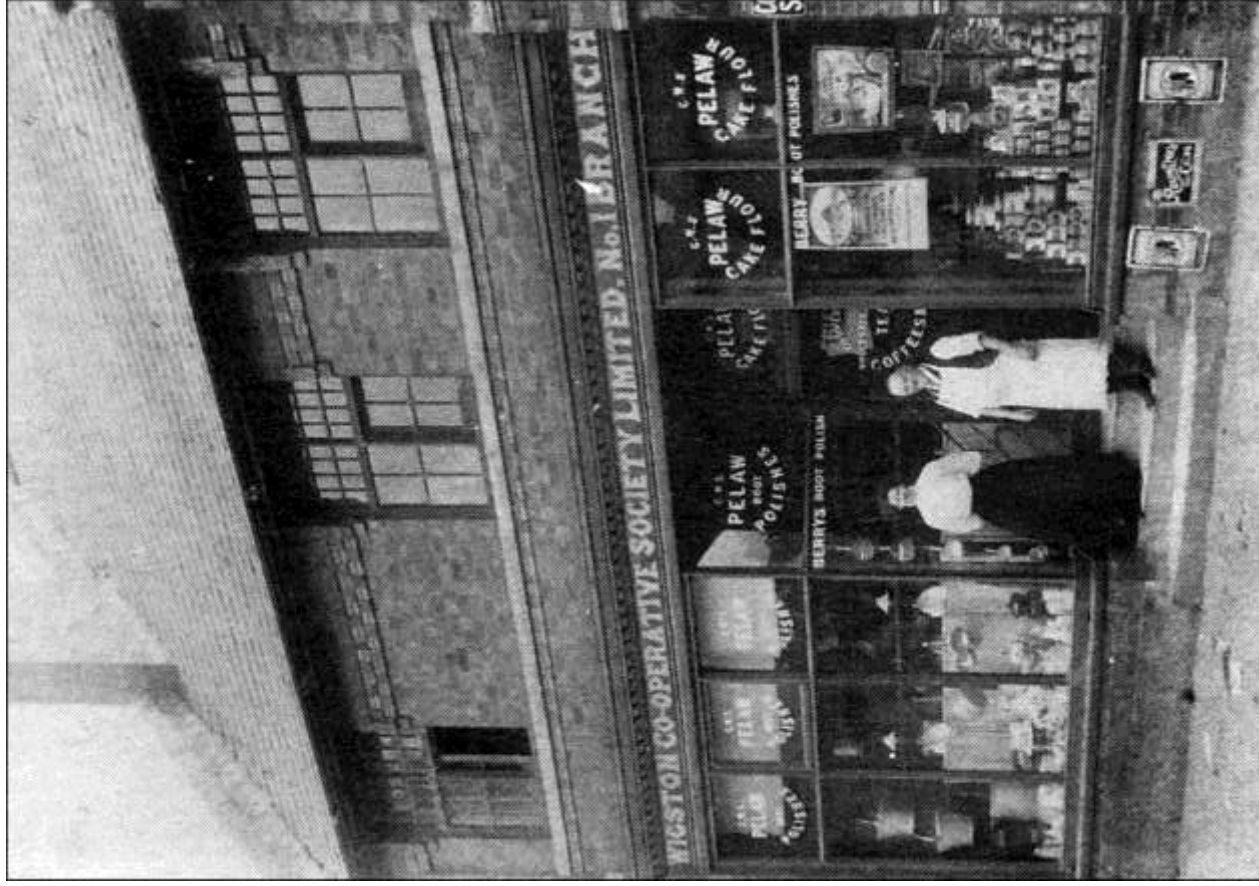




D.Wilson and Sons, Moat Street, Wigston. Darryl Wilson and wife Sandra, Mr Dave Wilson (Snr) and son Dave. Photo Stuart Brown. December 2011.



Another photo of D.Wilson and Sons, Moat Street, Wigston, to compare with the old photo of the Co-op opposite  
Darryl Wilson and wife Sandra, Mr Dave Wilson (Snr) and son Dave. Photo Stuart Brown. December 2011.



Wigston Co-operative Society No 1 Branch, Moat Street, Wigston Magna.  
circa 1902. Now D. Wilson and Sons see opposite page.





Wigston Jewellers, 33 Leicester Road, Wigston Magna, with owner Ravi Popat.  
Photo Stuart Brown November 2011.



Leadley's Drapery Store, Leicester Road, Wigston Magna, circa 1920, close to where Wigston Jewellers now stands.



PC Active, 46 Long Street, Wigston Magna, with Krzysztof (Chris) Formela and Lee Newman.  
Photo Stuart Brown October 2011.



Long Street, Wigston Magna, in the 1920's. The first shop after the archway is now P.C. Active, see opposite.





Joseph Morris Butchers Ltd, 2-10 Newton Lane, Wigston, with Jonathon Preston,  
Kevin Smart & Michael Mason. Photo Stuart Brown. June 2012.





Bull Head Street at the corner of Moat Street & Newton Lane in 1905 where Morris Butchers is situated today.



Wigston Co-operative Butchers on Long Street in 1902 opposite Central Avenue,  
where Heart Kitchens are now based, see opposite page.



Heart Kitchens, 33 Long Street, Wigston with owner Tony Greenwood.  
Photo Stuart Brown January 2012.



W.H. Cox (Fruiterer) 2 Leicester Road, Wigston with owner William (Bill) Cox.  
Photo Stuart Brown September 2011



Alfred King's chemist's shop 50 Long Street & William Cox, Fruiterer, at 2 Leicester Road, Wigston Magna, circa 1916





Another view of Leicester Road, Wigston Magna, c. 1906. Bill Cox's greengrocery shop is in the background on the right hand side of the street.



Tartan Coffee Shop, 69 Leicester Road, Wigston Magna, with owner Gary Deacon. See page 37.  
Photo Stuart Brown October 2011.



Leicester Road, Wigston, circa 1904 at the corner of Frederick Street which was once called Mill Lane, where the houses once stood on the near left is where Fins, Furs & Feathers now stands, see opposite.





Fins, Furs & Feathers, 54 Leicester Road, Wigston Magna, with owner Mark Glasper,  
Photo Stuart Brown August 2012.



Leicester Road, Wigston at the corner of Aylestone Lane, circa 1919,  
on the near left is where the Health Store now stands.



The Health Store, 17 Leicester Road, Wigston Magna, with owner Mark Cleaver.  
Photo Stuart Brown October 2011.





Direct Carpet Supplies, 61-65 Long Street, Wigston with owners David and Dennis Bingham.  
Photo Stuart Brown June 2012.



Long Street, Wigston in 1912, a view looking towards where Direct Carpet Supplies is situated today in the middle distance on the right of the picture.



Wigston DIY, 94 Leicester Road, Wigston with Mohammed and Hussein Essajee.  
Photo Stuart Brown August 2012.



Leicester Road in 1914, the Star & Garter is the only building remaining today. Wigston DIY is situated on the distant right.  
The Tartan Café, see page 27, is now on the left not far from where the building with the posters on the wall stands.





All Star Tattoos, Frederick Street, Wigston with Benji Pearce and Heidi Gilbert.  
Photo Stuart Brown September 2011.





Frederick Street, Wigston Magna, 1925. The Wesleyan Chapel, at the end of the road on the left, is the only building left standing today. All Star Tattoos is situated on the left several yards behind where this picture was taken.



Derek's Barber Shop, 289 Leicester Road, Wigston, with owner Bob Brown.  
Photo Stuart Brown December 2011.



The Royal Oak, Leicester Road, Wigston, circa 1930 prior to it being rebuilt. Derek's Barber Shop is situated not far from the present Royal Oak on the other side of the duel carriageway, almost level with the car in the background.







Kens Barber Shop, 8 The Arcade, Wigston with owner Paul Kilby.  
Photo Stuart Brown June 2012.





John Heath Seafoods, 11 The Arcade, Wigston, with Scott Booth and owner Glenys Heath.  
Photo Stuart Brown June 2012.



Wigston Fruit & Veg, 9 The Arcade, Wigston Magna, with owner Mike Cheaney.  
Photo Tony Danvers August 2011.



Robinsons Jewellers, 7 The Arcade, Wigston Magna, Leicester, with manager Simon Wells.  
Photo Tony Danvers August 2012.





Woods of Wigston, 4 The Arcade, Wigston with owners Mr Vinod Chudasama and wife Hansa.  
Photo Stuart Brown, June 2012.



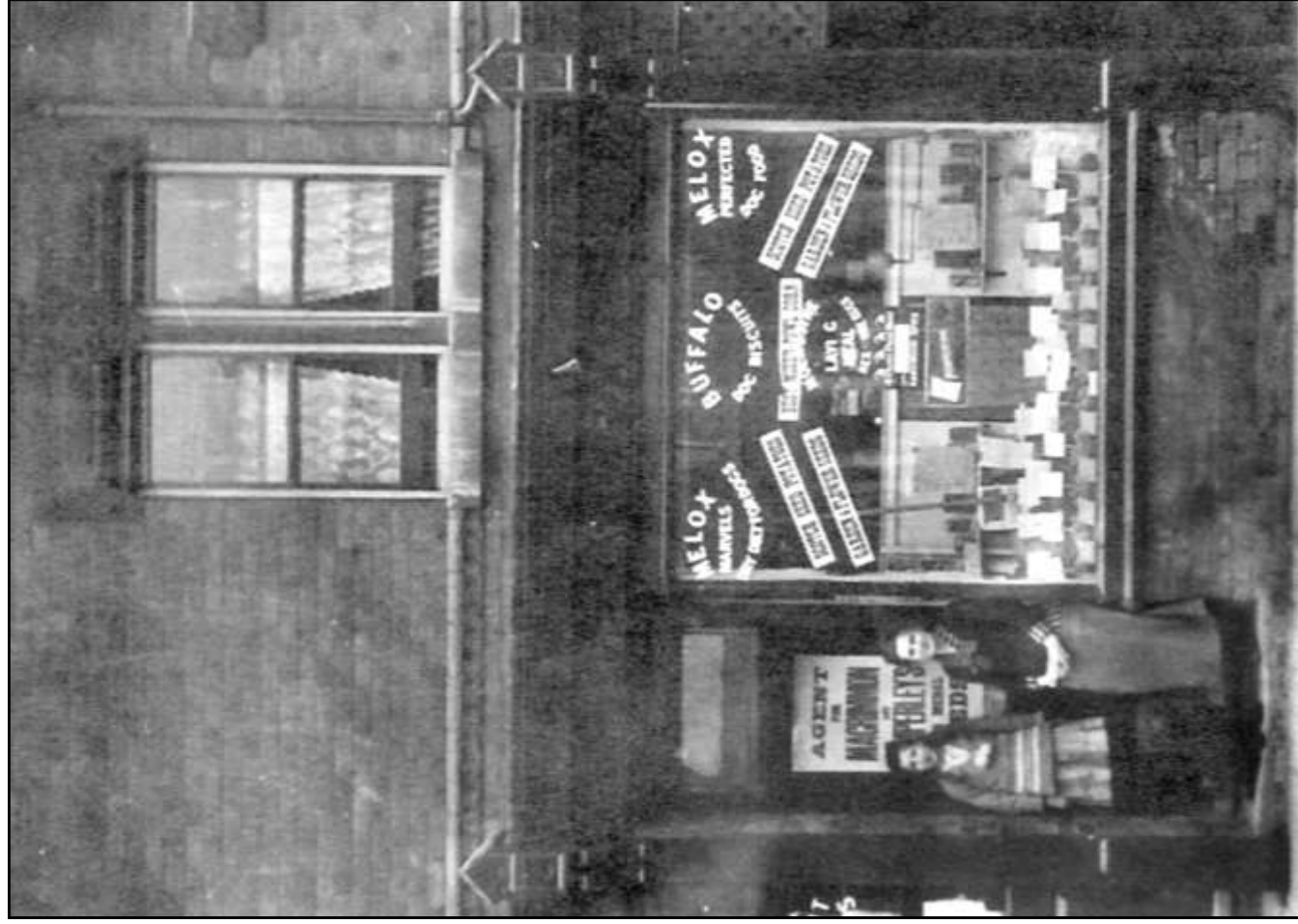
A photograph of Blaby Road in South Wigston taken in 1903, showing a much more tranquil scene with very few shops compared to the picture on the next page.





Blaby Road, South Wigston. Compare the number of shops with those on the previous page.  
Photo Tony Danvers December 2011.





Fitchetts Shop, 19 Blaby Road, South Wigston, with owner Mrs. Fitchett and daughter Marjorie, c. 1924. Now Heating Studio. see previous page.





South Wigston Cycle Centre, 60 Blaby Road, South Wigston, with owner Graham Bishop.  
Photo Tony Danvers August 2011.





Birkett & Elwes, London House, 60 Blaby Road, South Wigston. Circa 1910.  
Now the Cycle Centre seen on the opposite page.

Magic Moments, 13 Blaby Road, South Wigston, with owner Mary Turner.  
Photo Tony Danvers September 2011.





P.M. Wray's shop, 13 Blaby Road South Wigston celebrating 50th anniversary of V.E. Day in 1995. Now Magic Moments. See opposite page.









Warwick House, on the corner of Canal Street and Blaby Road, has been variously a clothing store and later a gents clothiers. Then in 1922 it became a music store, trading as Charles Moore and Son selling musical instruments for the next fifty years.



Jhoots Pharmacy, 115/117 Blaby Road, South Wigston with Dhiraj Mody, Oksha Shah, Jaswinder Battu, Leanne Gallagher and Megan Donnes standing on the corner outside. Photo Tony Danvers August 2011.



Charles Moore & Son, 115/117 Blaby Road, South Wigston, circa 1940. Now Jhoots Pharmacy, see opposite page



Body Bliss, 50 D Blaby Road, South Wigston, with owner Nicky Glover.  
Photo Tony Danvers September 2011.





The row of shops on the site of Ashbourne House, Blaby Road, circa 1970. A.F.Morris is now Body Bliss see opposite.



Hensons PVC Suppliers, 17-19 Canal Street, South Wigston, with owner Dave Henson.  
Photo Tony Danvers August 2011.



Mr. Higgs standing proudly outside his butcher's shop on the corner of Canal St and Bassett St. c.1910. See opposite.



Buy-Cycles, 6 Countesthorpe Road, South Wigston, with owners Peter & Deb Goodger.  
Photo Tony Danvers August 2011.





Mary Holmes grocery shop on the corner of Countesthorpe Road and Bassett Street. Her son Eric Holmes took over the business and turned it into his first cycle shop moving later to the corner of Blaby Road and Countesthorpe Road. It is now trading under the name of Buy-Cycles, see opposite page.



Moments Card Shop, 2 Fairfield St, South Wigston, with owner Mrs. M. Thakrar & Mrs. B. Thakrar.  
Photo Tony Danvers July 2011.



W. A. Deeming, South Wigston Post Office, 2 Fairfield St, circa 1930. Now Moments see opposite.



Blaby Road, circa 1911. On the right is the South Wigston Co-operative Society Store and the house next door is now Elite Chique.





Elite Chique, 81 Blaby Road, South Wigston, with owner Ruth Cooke. See opposite.  
Photo Tony Danvers August 2011.



Ashbourne House, 50 Blaby Road, South Wigston, sadly demolished in 1962 to make room for shops, see opposite.



Chip Stop, 50B Blaby Road, South Wigston, with owner Ranjit Singh and interested customer.  
Photo Tony Danvers August 2011.



Looking down Countesthorpe Road towards Orange Tree House built by Orson Wright for his sister, see opposite.





Chris Norman, Hair and Beauty Salon, 2 Orange Street, South Wigston, with owner Chris Norman and her assistants, Beth, Carrieann, and Paige.

Photo Tony Danvers July 2011.



Blaby Road with Clifford Street on the left, circa 1915. Three shops down on the right hand side from Worthington's is now Head to Tail, see opposite.



Head To Tail, 15 Blaby Road, South Wigston, Leicester, with owner Dee Milligan.  
Photo Tony Danvers September 2011



Eric Wright Carpets, 12-14 Blaby Road, South Wigston, with owner Chris Wright.  
Photo Tony Danvers September 2011.





Leon's Mens Hairdressing, 2 Leopold Street, South Wigston, with owner Leon Ellias.  
Photo Tony Danvers July 2011.



Eric Holmes Cycle Shop, 3 Blaby Road, South Wigston, circa 1960, now Castledines, see opposite.



Castledines Motorcycles, 3 Blaby Road, South Wigston, with owners Clive, Linda, Adam & Vanessa Castledine.  
Photo Tony Danvers August 2011.



S. W. Wines, 2 Clifford Street, South Wigston, with owner Sailesh Pattni & Nephew Rahul Lakhani.  
Photo Tony Danvers August 2011.





Blaby Road with Eagles Chemist Shop on the left and on the next corner Harding's store now S W Wines, circa 1960



Blaby Road, South Wigston. Mick Phipps Hairdressing Salon recently occupied the house with the sign for Jack Lester on it. Circa 1950.



Mick's Barbers Shop at No 42 Blaby Road, South Wigston, with owner  
Mick Phipps. Photo Tony Danvers August 2011.



Sapphire & Steel, 8 Blaby Road, South Wigston with owners Tony & Kay Bingham,  
Photo Tony Danvers July 2011.





Blaby Road in South Wigston c.1910, with Holmes Chemist shop on the left and H. Smith's cycle shop on the right corner.  
Note the lack of shops on the stretch of road on the left past Clifford Street where Sapphire & Steel are now trading



Stones Bathroom Studio, 38 Countesthorpe Road, South Wigston, with owners Al & Paul Stone & son Dan.  
Photo Tony Danvers August 2011.



Voyles Shoes, 5 / 7 Canal Street, South Wigston, Leicester, with owners Jack & Jean Voyle.  
Photo Tony Danvers July 2011.

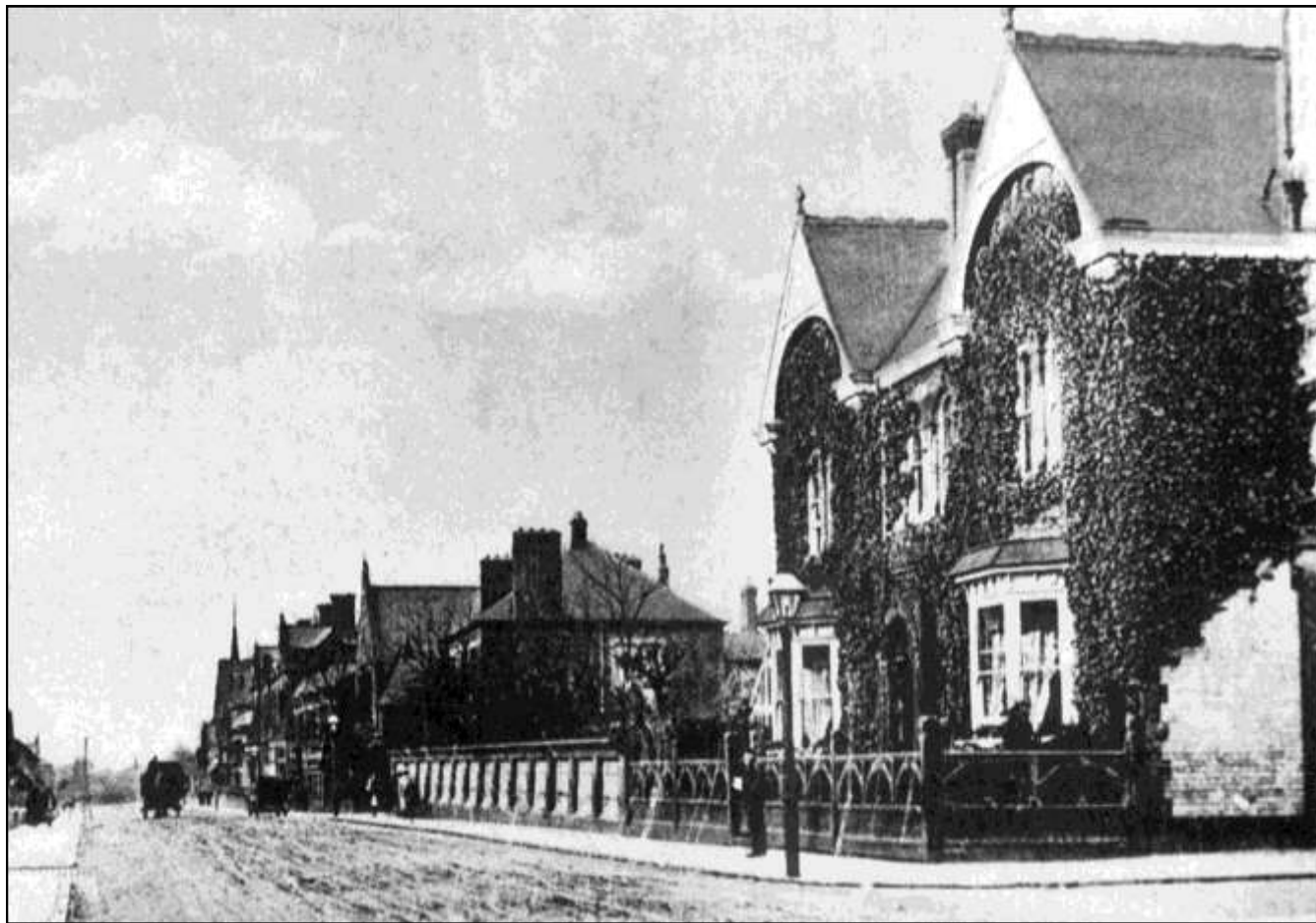


Skins & Needles, 32 Blaby Road South Wigston, with owner Beverley Ardley.  
Photo Tony Danvers August 2011.





Blaby Road, South Wigston, circa 1955. Skins & Needles is now situated close to where the van on the right is parked.



Ashbourne House, 50 Blaby Road, South Wigston, the home of Orson Wright, circa 1912. See also page 70.



Milners Bakery & Cake Shop, 50C Blaby Road, South Wigston, with owner Tammy Milner.  
Photo Tony Danvers May 2012.



R GO BED, 1 Clifford Street, South Wigston, with owner's son Ashley Goutam, see opposite  
Photo Tony Danvers June 2012.





The Leicestershire Regiment marching along Blaby Road, South Wigston circa 1945,  
passing by Eagle's the Chemist , now R GO BED.



Tree House Café, 23 Blaby Road, South Wigston, with owners Samantha Dunkley & Guillaume Letellier.  
Photo Tony Danvers July 2012.



The Sandwich Bar, 62 Blaby Road, South Wigston, with owner Jessica Kava, see page 97.  
Photo Tony Danvers September 2012.



The Co-op pharmacy, 64 Blaby Road, South Wigston, with manager Reena Tailor and Teresa Gibb. See page 97,  
Photo Tony Danvers September 2012.





Blaby Road, South Wigston, showing Timothy Whites & Diggles Grocery,  
note the bus stop, circa 1960. See pages 95 & 96



W. Heighton & Son, 25 Blaby Road, South Wigston, with managers Alison Dalton & Gaynor Love.  
Photo Tony Danvers June 2012.



Blaby Road, South Wigston in the late 1950's viewed from the roof of the Ritz Cinema. W. Heighton & Son, are presently situated close to where the couple of the left hand side are standing, see opposite page.

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## About the Authors



Tony Danvers has lived in South Wigston for almost 46 years. When he retired from teaching he took a keen interest in digital photography and is currently a member of the Leicester Forest Photographic Society. One of his photographs of Stonehenge appeared in last year's Oxfam World Travel Calendar. Tony is very interested in local history and also in genealogy and has recently published a book on the history of the Danvers Family of Swithland and Shepshed. This book on "Wigston Businesses Past & Present" is a follow up to his previous book on the shops & businesses in South Wigston which he has now combined with the superb photos of the businesses and the shopkeepers in Wigston Magna taken by his friend and co-author Stuart Brown.

Stuart Brown, a resident of Wigston and South Leicestershire for almost 50 years has produced national award winning images and is also a member of Leicester Forest Photographic Society. Stuart's work often depicts life in the street and the urban environment. A street photographer with a keen eye for detail Stuart has witnessed the many changes to people and the towns and villages they live in. Stuart has teamed up with his friend Tony to provide an interesting record of Wigston shopkeepers and businesses for future generations to see. Stuart commented, "People ask why record what we see every day? So many times I have been thrilled to see pictures from 100 years ago, yet disappointed that there are so few from the recent past. This book is for the generations yet to come".



Photo by Ian Davies

Rear Cover illustration, Leicester Road, Wigston Magna, circa 1916

# WIGSTON BUSINESSES



PAST & PRESENT

£10.99