

James Goodsons memories of Stapleford

James Goodsons memories of Stapleford in the 1880s and 1890s gives a fascinating insight into the life of the village at that time. Originally in manuscript form a number of typed copies were made, one of which is deposited in our archives. I have reproduced this copy exactly as it was typed, recognising that because of difficulties in reading James' hand writing errors may have crept in.

The account comprises partly narrative form and partly brief notes. In some cases it may not be clear if you are unfamiliar with Stapleford's history whether what is being referred to is the village as it was in the 1880s or as it was in 1969 when the history was written. I have added some comments in [] brackets to help in identifying some of the places mentioned as they are in 2022.

A description of the urban district of Stapleford , Nottingham. copied from the original manuscript written by James Goodson in 1969 at his home , 30 Hickings_Lane Stapleford

Stapleford as I knew it when at school more than 90 years ago was a pretty straggling village situated between Nottingham and Derby. I think it will help you to understand better to make four divisions of the village putting the Roach as centre.

First let me take you down March Lane, now known as Derby Road to the old Midland Railway Station which was a very busy place. No buses ; only horse transport. On the right hand side was the Hall and Park with the R. Erewash running through. The Hall ladies used it for pleasure boating. Only the Lodge now (Hookey's Cycle shop).^[Hyper] There was a high wall down to the pub, the Warren Arms, associated with the family of Lady Warren who at one time lived there. From there to Conery Stile now renamed Sandiacre Road was the Derby Road end of the Hall Park estate. At the top of Conery was Fearfields Farm which reach to the railway station. Four small cottages all occupied was all there was in that day.

On the right hand side from the station to the Roach were Bessel Lane, Brook Street, St James Street and Sand Hole. Row of houses still occupied to Halls Road.

There were no streets leading through to Brookhill then, all farm land known as Rossall's Farm. Shops known as Commercial Building, Pleasant Place, Luther House. The fields were playing fields for William Lilley School, also an old house and a smallholding. Fearfields Lace Factory (now Johnson and Barnes Hosiery), Alexandra Street, Kent Road , Maid Fearfields orchard and House, Doctor's house, five cottages, Wainwrights (who at times were joiners and undertakers and all kinds of work. Now comes Victoria Street and the old blacksmiths shop with tree grown through roof. All these streets led through to Eatons Road and Gibsons [Gibbons] Gardens. Also a footpath to Long Eaton.

Now a walk from Police Station up Nottingham Road as far as Pinfield Lane. Very

little alteration only that the Carr Fastener Firm has taken over the major part which included Whiteley Steven's lace factory and Harrisons lace factory, old silk mill and also M.N.C..Chapel, Orchard street, Upper and Middle they partly claim of breaking up that area. Only Mount Street, High Street, Cemetery Road had only the grave digger's house. Mr. Joseph Fearfield presented the ground also the two chapels in 1880. (inscription over the archway).

Starting at Wesley Place, Stapleford's oldest district : Chapel Street, Lot Street, East Street was a business centre in my day but all have now been demolished and replaced by a recreation ground and council houses. Then on to Baulk Lane, Rycroft area was an old cottage, the last house in Stapleford.

Now back from Baulk Lane to Cemetery Road leaving the house in on the left, walk a little and you will come to Cloud House in lovely surrounds, grazing fields which were to become sand pits during the war (1914-18). You may know it as the Sandiccliffe Garage who took it over some years ago. Row of houses , large house standing back and one in front, five bays, Gissogg(?) shop, short size street leading to Council Yard. Now comes Lady Warren School known in my boyhood as Burleys whose was in the centre of the building, two small cottages one each side. (Little alteration) Now we come to Caravan Sales. In my boyhood stood Mr. Harrison's beautiful house and garden, then Smedley's farm famous because Bob's Rock popular. It was a visiting place for brakes ,waggonettes, demonstrations'

Every first Monday in August was Stapleford Sunday School Festival at Bobby Hallams Square (Now the Council Office) facing Albert Street. The 6 schools were Primitive Methodist, Wesleyan, Baptist, M.N.C. Brookhill and Wesley Place. Singing was at different points throughout the village led by the Town Brass Band.

After parading around, each separate school took their scholars back to the school for a good tea; pastries, cake, sandwiches, bread and butter, with orders to pocket none and eat all.

I think this ends the Nottingham and Derby roads history.

We will now go down Pinfold Lane as far as Church Street. The pinfold is still there for you to see. On the right hand were the clinic, playing field with new houses at the bottom, then the Manor house grounds. On the left houses to Carr Fastener Company Works, Lower Orchard Street . Houses and car park.

(Note: this recent history and may not all apply to 80 years ago)

Now across to Mill Lane: no streets, the Hall and Park covering land as far as S. Road (Conery), R. Erewash was flowing through also the old Midland Railway.

A road known as Church Lane went from the Hall across Church St. up Church Walk to Nottingham Road.

We will go down Church Street as far as the junction with Albany Road and Hickings Lane. On the left were an old fashioned house and shops: you went down steps, a pub known as the Feathers, a few more houses with Mr. Mellors shop and bakery in the centre, now used as a general and grocery business. A row of old cottages now pulled down, a lane with a school. I

went to this when I was four years old and finished when ten years of age, to work for 2/6 weekly. At that time the School was in 3 sections, Infants, Girls, Boys. The Master's house is still occupied. Now back to Church Street: there were four small cottages, one for the school caretaker. Mee), a little further on were one shop (pots), Mrs. Baxters house which used to be Fishers painting business.

We come now to St. Helen's Church, a grand old building with vaults and tombs of the gentry who lived at the Hall. The old cross which now stands in the churchyard used to be outside at the entrance to Church Lane. To continue: then came the vicarage, coach-house and lawns to Mill Lane, but these are now demolished and a row of new houses and a new vicarage complete this side.

Now back to the Roach down the right hand side were a row of old cottages known as Daykins, Hooleys (plumbers) two cottages, Shawcrofts shop then a few more cottages to Middle Orchard Street, Harrisons house (now a mens club), the Old Cross Public House, a park, Church Walk, a hairdressing business, old cottages, fish and chip shop, Albert Street Co-op, (now new shop) Wesleyan Chapel, Chequers Inn yard (car park) Roach Corner. The Police Station at one time was Sam Eatons farm house with outhouses for cattle. On Friday and Saturday nights could be seen Joe Foulgers chips and peas stall, with its old system of frying where we could buy ha'porth or penny boats of chips. A little further on was a coke far with large pans. Next came a flight of stone steps with the old fashioned street gas lamp. At the bottom this led to a footpath which took people to Nottingham Road, the cemetery, or up Cliff Hill to Blue Bell Hill, or down Balk Lane to Nottingham Road. The remainder was all farm to the large house, Quintons house and gardens. Darkie Lane leads to Chilwell Ghost House and down to the R.Trent. The Magpie Hotel which is a reconstructed house, Bardills rose gardens and then farm lands.

In my young days it was only Rossill's farmhouse and outbuildings with a footpath right through to Toton Lane. The rest of the land to near the bottom was Mr. Gibbon's market garden. Filling the bottom land up was John Collins with a coal, carriage and cab business. There were also old cottages known as Foulgers Yard.

Next the Albany Road (Hickings Lane) to Trowell Rd. Farm land belonging to Taylors farm with farm buildings until you got to a row of houses with a water pump in a small square for their use. Then on to Trowell Rd and return on the right hand side. Stanton Gate Lane leading to the railway station and Stanton Iron Works, the R. Erewash and the canal. To continue on Trowell Road where is now the garage there was Stapleford brick yard owned by Mr.. Piggin the butcher. Then a row of houses known as Smedleys row.

Now up Hickings Lane which was impassable in winter owing to bad conditions. On the left were only Taylors farm and out buildings. This land went as far as the new Stapleford Rd, (now Ilkeston Road). Here were a few cottages occupied by I should think farm workers in the 18th cent. I think this completes my recollection of the village in my early life.

Streets, Lanes and Alleys from the Stapleford and Sandiacre Station to the Roach Corner. On the right hand side were Bessell Lane, Brookhill Street to a row of houses (no through road), St. James St., Halls Road with Brookhill Street Terrace at the top, Kent Rd leading to Eatons Rd. Victoria St to Eatons Rd.

Now from the Roach to the railway station on the right side. No roads until you get to the Hall Lodge house. Conery now renamed Sandiacre Rd, the Hall and Park covered the rest and included the Warren Arms and Fearfield House. Further on were four cottages still occupied. Our family lived there for many years.

In concluding this survey I would like to refer to some people who influenced this village 80 years ago. My schoolmaster was Mr. George Spencer whose influence has been with me all my life. Dr. Kingbury, Mr. Birley, William Lilley, Thos. Dalley, Mr Wallis, Arthur Mee (produced famous Childrens Encyclopedia), John Eaton (blacksmith), Thos. Towle, Scattergood (foundry).

Special notes: Board School fee was 5d. a week, haircut 5d. milk 1 ½ d. a pint, poverty poor law in force (own experience as a boy). Today is a golden opportunity for you scholars who will be leaders of future generations. Stapleford Wakes was a red letter day with a holiday from school, rides in swing boats, or on horses or on the switchback for ½d. children, 1d. adults. Sticks of rock were 4 a 1d. Boiled sweets 4oz a 1d. chocolate bars for ½d and 1d sweet oranges 4 a 1d. Eggs were 24 for 1 shilling and nuts ½ d. a bag. You were lucky if you got 3d. a week to spend. Wages were poor then. In conclusion I would like to say to all; work hard at whatever you decide for your career in life; be true to yourself fearing no wrong A credit to your parents teachers and also yourself.

John Goodson born 1881

James Goodson's wife, Florence Goodson of 30 Hickings Lane, Stapleford, holds the original manuscript written by John nearly a year before he died in spite of being almost blind."