

Spanish 'Flu 1918/19

We thought this item would be topical.

The origin of the name "Spanish Flu" comes from the pandemic's spread to Spain from France in November 1918. Spain was not involved in World War 1 and had remained neutral. Wartime censorship was not imposed, which meant that newspapers were free to report the epidemic's effects, giving a false impression that the country had been particularly hard hit.

The pandemic was caused by the influenza A virus and infected 500 million people which was about a third of the world's population at that time. The death toll is estimated to have been anywhere from 17 million to 50 million, and possibly as high as 100 million.

In contrast to other pandemics which mostly kill the old and the very young, there was a higher than expected mortality rate amongst young adults. Some research has shown the virus to be particularly deadly amongst this age group because it triggers an over-reaction in their strong immune systems. This was called a cytokine storm. The weaker immune systems in children and mature adults resulted in fewer deaths. Later research suggests that the viral infection became a "superinfection" which took hold due to malnourishment, overcrowded medical camps and hospitals and poor hygiene, all made worse by the recent war.

The influenza pandemic started in January 1918 and probably originated in North America but was first observed in Europe, America and areas of Asia, before spreading to almost every other part of the world in a matter of months.

It was reported spreading in Germany in July and later the same month deaths were being reported in Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Sunderland and Leeds. By mid July, cases in Loughborough were being reported, with nearly a quarter of the town's children absent from school, which forced the authorities to bring forward the school holidays.

In Leicester all parts of the town were affected and medical staff were reported as "run off their legs". By October, the schools were closed due to very low pupil attendance and absence of teaching staff. By November, the flu had become milder in character and the epidemic was on the wane.

Following Government advice, which included "healthy and regular habits" the manufacturers of medicinal & hygiene products took advantage of the situation and advertised them on the basis that they prevented infection.

This advertisement appeared in the local press on 14 February 1919: KT

Link up with LIFEBOUY for Health's Sake.

The Influenza Scourge

Remember LIFEBOUY SOAP is more than soap, it is a reputable germicide and a sure disinfectant.

has no greater enemy than real antiseptic cleanliness—cleanliness of house, cleanliness of clothes, cleanliness of person. Ordinary soap, however plentifully used, will not give this antiseptic cleanliness, therefore link up with Lifebuoy. Lifebuoy Soap cleans and disinfects at the same time. Disease germs can find no lurking place where Lifebuoy Soap has been used.

LIFEBOUY SOAP will safeguard the children—keep them healthy as well as clean—protect them from contagious diseases.

USE LIFEBOUY SOAP FOR CLEANING THE HOME—WASH YOUR HANDS AND FACE WITH IT—BATHE WITH IT—SHAMPOO WITH IT.

LIFEBOUY SOAP

MORE THAN SOAP—YET COSTS NO MORE.

LEVER BROTHERS LIMITED, FORT SUNLIGHT.

It wasn't alone!

By Royal Warrants of Appointment during Three Successive Reigns

JEYES' FLUID

THE BEST DISINFECTANT

Guard against Influenza, Scarlet Fever, Small Pox, Measles and all Infectious Diseases by the daily use of

Jeyes' Fluid

The Ideal Disinfectant. Safe. Efficient. Economical. USE it in your Bath. SPRAY the atmosphere of the Home, Factory, Office, Cinema, etc. DISINFECT all Lavatories, Sinks and Drains. Invaluable for use in Schools. All Chemists sell Jeyes' Fluid and Jeyes' Cylind Soap. JEYES' SANITARY COMPOUNDS Co., Ltd. 64, Cannon Street, London.

Influenza

Avail yourself of the latest results of Science—Carry a Tube of

CRIMSON CROSS Influenza Tablets

HANDY TO TAKE! SAFE TO GUE! Price 2/6. Of all Leading Chemists

CRIMSON CROSS DISPENSARY, DERBY.

SPANISH OR BRITISH?

HART'S Influenza Mixture

WILL CURE IT.

A DOSE IN TIME SAVES NINE.

1/8 and 2/9 Bottles (post paid extra)

HART & Co., Chemist, 38, Corn Market.

INFLUENZA RAGING

No home safe without

MILTON

MILTON kills the influenza germs. It did great work in past influenza raids. A bottle of Milton will save a family. Don't wait for influenza to attack you—take the initiative. Protect your children too. Milton is clear and pure like water—harmless to the human constitution, but death to the disease germs.

How to use MILTON for fighting Influenza

Pour half-a-teaspoonful of Milton into a tumbler of tepid water. Gargle the throat or sniff it up the nose. An ordinary spray can be used for the latter purpose. Do this three times a day. Any man, woman, or child who does this, and takes ordinary care, will ward off the influenza.

Sold in 1/3 and 2/6 Bottles.

To be obtained from all Dealers.

Milton Manufacturing Co., Ltd., 125, South Row, London, E.C.1, and 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

Newsletter No. 2 June 2020

Hi and welcome to our second Kirby Muxloe Local History Group Newsletter!

Since the Covid-19 virus pandemic continues, we've produced another newsletter to keep in touch with you. We hope to return to "normal" (whatever that turns out to be) as soon as we can, but for now, we hope you enjoy reading this.

So please accept it with the compliments of our Committee:

- Mike Gould (Chair)
- Val Knott (Secretary)
- Kate Traill (Treasurer)
- Judith Upton (Archivist)
- Kerry Burdett

We start by again turning back the clock and continuing on our virtual walk around the Kirby of 1945 and the following years – see map for numbers.

- As we continue our journey down Main Street, we arrive at no. 36, which is named "Ivy House". Back in 1911, Lizzie Chesterton had sold "baby linen" there, but in around 1930, she moved over the road with her nephew, Jack Forman, to live in a bungalow at no. 39, named "Oak View". She runs a shop in the front, selling mainly tinned food and groceries. She has always worked as a shop assistant and over the years has sold many different items. The front of Oak View will continue to be used as a shop until 1980. Lizzie will continue to run the provisions shop until her death in 1953.
- Jack Forman took over his father's transportation business in 1923. Eventually, due to fierce competition from the Midland Red bus company, he sold his buses and moved with his Aunt Lizzie out of Ivy House to Oak View, which was a new bungalow at that time. Jack built a new workshop behind Oak View. Now, there is also a large glass lean-to at the side of the bungalow where Jack displays all his bicycles and accessories. During WWII, bicycles were very much in demand and so Jack was classed as being in a reserved occupation. Jack married his wife Ann in 1940. She will eventually take over running the grocery shop and some older residents will remember she always kept a large round cheese in a cupboard on the rear wall. The cupboard is still there to this day! In future times, Jack will close down the bicycle shop and eventually the bungalow will become a normal residence.
- George Barkby's boot and shoe repair shop can be found on the same side of the road as Ivy House but a little further down, at number 45. George has always been referred to as "Tin Tack" Barkby, as if you enter the shop you will most likely see him with a mouth full of tacks. 13 tacks, to be precise! His shop walls are covered in cigarette cards and you will often see friends popping in with cards to add to George's collection.



On Saturdays, the noise of the boot and shoe repairs will be punctuated by the sound of the treadle sewing machine operated by George's daughter Joyce. Joyce repairs leather goods such as satchels and then puts them into her bicycle basket and delivers them to customers around the village.

At No. 47, we find George Russell in his butcher's shop. As we look in, there are no covers over the meat and George's apron doesn't look very clean, but everyone says his meat always tastes good! His niece & nephew, Marjorie (Madge) and Bert Bosworth, might be working in the shop or out in the walk-in cold store at the back. Perhaps we see delivery drivers carrying half sides of animals in. George had also been appointed Churchwarden at St. Barts in 1932. In 1975, as the age of 90, he would be made a Churchwarden Emeritus (lifetime) to thank him for all that he had done for the church and parish over a lifetime of service.

Over the road at No. 60 are Burdetts, the grocery and off licence. Mr and Mrs Burdett had taken over the shop in the 1930's from Albert Davey, who had converted it from a farmhouse. Its origins go back to the 14th century, with beams from that period and bricks that are identical to those used in our Castle. If we look in, we'll see a long counter with a bacon slicer and cheese at one end and large square glass-fronted tins of biscuits at the other. With food still rationed, Mrs Burdett has a stamp and ink pad at the back of the shop where she will diligently stamp our ration book as we make our purchases.

Back across the road and we reach St. Bartholomew's Church Hall. Back in 1920, the Parish Church had purchased an old thatched cottage and some land around it. The hall was built and opened in July 1924, at a cost of £1,730. The thatched cottage was not demolished until 1934, when Blaby Rural District Council decided to widen the road. The hall is used for many parties and social occasions, as well as plays, musicals and pantomimes staged by the Kirby Players. There's a snooker table upstairs – fancy a game?

To be continued.

Kirby Muxloe in the Bronze & Iron Ages 2000 - 500 BC

The finding of stone tools in the area in and around the village has shown that during the Neolithic or 'Stone Age' period people were passing through here following herds of wild animals and then increasingly beginning to settle and create farmsteads to grow crops and keep domesticated animals. Around 2500BC people coming into Britain from mainland Europe began to introduce a new technology using metal to fashion tools and weapons – this was the Bronze Age. Bronze was made from a combination of copper and tin and artefacts made from bronze were highly prized and were looked on as objects that brought wealth and status.

Other changes were taking place as well – Bronze Age people began to use pottery vessels such as beakers for cooking and urns to hold the cremated remains of their dead. They established small communities with farms and built barrows to cover their burial sites. This part of Leicestershire does not have any significant earthworks to show that people were living here in the Bronze Age, but barrows and ring ditches around burial sites have been found in other parts of the county.

Artefacts from this period, however, have been found in and around the village. A Bronze Age settlement is thought to have been established and evidence of round houses has been found. A barbed and tanged flint arrowhead was also found dating from the early part of the Bronze Age (see below).



A reconstructed Bronze Age round house

Example of a flint barbed and tongued arrowhead

Around 1000BC the climate began to decline in Britain, becoming colder and wetter, but the introduction of iron used to make tools and weapons helped people to establish settlements. Studies of pollen found in Kirby from this time show that people were growing cereals such as barley, bread wheat types, spelt and emmer.

An excavation in the Hastings Road / Stamford Road area in 1997 prior to redevelopment revealed a late Iron Age/early Roman settlement. Two thirds of a roundhouse was found, with pits, postholes and concentric ring gullies. Ditches, gullies and postholes are typical features of a timber constructed settlement that show that this was an Iron Age or early Roman settlement. Tribes of people began to be established during the Iron Age and the local tribe here in Leicestershire were known as the Corieltauvi. Defensive structures known as hill forts, such as the one at Burrough Hill, were established to defend tribes from each other but there is no evidence of a hill fort in this area. An important find of Iron Age coins of the Coriel-

tauvi was discovered in Hallaton in 2001 and is the largest hoard of Iron Age coins ever found in this country. Also found was an iron helmet which has since been restored – these are on display in Market Harborough Museum and are well worth a visit.

At our meeting in September 2018 we were fortunate to have John Thomas from ULAS who gave a talk on the recent excavations at Glenfield Park between Kirby Muxloe and Glenfield. The following information is taken from the ULAS document "Glenfield Park: Living with cauldrons. Excavations in Leicestershire has uncovered unique evidence for Iron Age feasting and ritual at a long-lived, changing settlement".

A very significant Iron Age settlement has been found between Kirby Muxloe and Glenfield. Work carried out prior to the construction of the A46 showed that the area had been settled since the Bronze Age and continued into the Iron Age and Romano-British era. Excavations carried out prior to the development of the warehouse site at Glenfield Park found an extensive area of settlement which showed inhabitation throughout most of the Iron Age and Roman periods. This settlement was long-lived and was organised into paired roundhouses combining living space and craft and food preparation. Later enclosures were constructed around paired roundhouses and finds such as pottery, quern stones used to grind corn and burnt bone as well as metal objects have been found in ditches.

A large enclosure was discovered away from the main living area – this surrounded a post-built roundhouse and nearby were found eight complete or near complete Iron Age cauldrons. These appear to have been deliberately buried perhaps to mark the end of feasting activities associated with this building. Further cauldrons have been found in other areas of the site along with dress pins, a brooch and a range of iron tools such as sickles, chisels and blades, demonstrating their use in agricultural, craft and domestic activities. A complete Iron Age sword and scabbard were found and it is thought these were deliberately buried to mark the end of the use of this site. The cauldrons would have been the centrepiece of major feasts and are only the second find of complete Iron Age cauldrons to be discovered in Britain. The quality and quantity of the finds at the Glenfield Park settlement are believed to be of international importance.



Iron Age Cauldron and Iron Age Sword

VK

The Wilshere Family of Kirby Muxloe

On January 1st, 1893, the Wilshere family moved from Sibleby to Kirby Muxloe, travelling through a fierce snowstorm in order to reach their new home. They had only lived in Sibleby for around 10 years, having previously inhabited a house on St James' Road Leicester. Herbert William Wilshere was a stockbroker by trade and perhaps the easy connection to Leicester via the fairly new railway network in our village was very appealing. The Wilshere's purchased the Georgian house, named at the time "Kirby Fields". As the area itself was becoming to be known as Kirby Fields, they decided to rename the house "The Old House". It was the oldest house in the area. We are told by a late member of the family that everyone spoke of the house in revered words, it was "heaven on earth" to them. Mrs Maud Wilshere was known to employ many of the women and girls in the village; she was very hospitable and it is said that the house had a very happy atmosphere and seemed to have some sort of spell.

The Wilshere family comprised Herbert and Maud and their six children. They were Marjory, Gladys, Owen, Roger, Olive and Ernest Edward, always known as "Teddy". Gladys passed away at the age of 12, following a bout of rheumatic fever. We have been told that she was taken for a final trip round the drive in the family brougham, just before she died. "Teddy" was so desperate to go to fight for his country that he tried many times to enlist whilst still underage. Eventually, he became a Lance Corporal in the London Regiment. Sadly, he was taken prisoner in France during WWI and died from malnutrition. He was only 19 at the time of his death and is buried in Tincourt British Cemetery in Peronne, France.

Marjory and Olive lived out their lives in Kirby Muxloe, never marrying but taking a great interest in the village and the surrounding area. They eventually built a house on the unadopted part of Gullet Lane and named it "Guillet Close", which is thought to be the name of the original field. In later years, the house would be renamed as "Woodlands". At the time, there were no more houses on the lane until reaching the Homestead, right at the top near to the Farm. The road was full of potholes (unfortunately it still is!). Marjory was well known in the village as a Sunday School teacher. Olive trained as a nurse at Kettering Hospital. She was trained before State Registration came into place and upon completion nurses were given a special badge. When Olive died, the family decided to return the badge to Kettering Hospital. The badge and Olive's story were then published in the Kettering Hospital magazine. Both Marjory and Olive were involved in the Boy Scouts but were never actual Scout mistresses.

In November 1940, when the village was bombed, it has

Are you enjoying our Newsletters? Are there any history-related subjects that you would like us to cover? We welcome feedback, either directly to a Committee member or by email – see right:

been said that on realising that a bomb had fallen very near to the house, Olive put a saucepan on her head for protection and marched down into the village to give whatever help or assistance that was needed.

In 1911, Owen and his brother Teddy formed the first Scout Troup in the village, aptly named the "15th Leicester (Kirby Muxloe) Scouts". During WWI, Owen was commissioned into the 12th Battalion, Leicestershire Regiment and was later attached to the West Indies Regiment and the Italian Expeditionary Force. H. Owen Wilshere became a senior partner of Wilshire Baldwin and Co., stockbrokers. He was a life-long member of the Free Church and served as Treasurer from 1932 to 1955. After WWII, Owen was very involved in work for the War Graves Commission and also assisted with the negotiations with the Ministry of Works, regarding rebuilding damaged and demolished property in the village. One of his offspring remembered that at the time he used to arrive home from work, ate a quick meal and then was straight out again to attend meetings in the village. In 1950, he was awarded the M.B.E. for his work as Secretary of the Local Savings Committee.

JU

Next time: Jonathan, local historian, and the next generation of the Wilshire family.



Marjory Wilshere laying the foundation stone for the new Free Church in 1952

Future KMLHG Meetings and Membership

At the time of writing, it is not clear when we will next be able to hold meetings. We will continue to review the situation and post any announcements on our website, in Your Local magazine and in the Library. If you are currently a member, your membership will be extended until May 2021 at no cost to you.

Our Website and Email Address

www.kirbymuxloelocalhistorygroup.org
info@kirbymuxloelocalhistorygroup.org