

**TURNING BACK THE CLOCK
IN THE AREA OF ZION HILL -
PEGG'S GREEN**



DRAFT - ONGOING PROJECT

**BY SAMUEL T STEWART - OCTOBER 2022
UPDATED SEPTEMBER - 2024**

PRE- AMBLE

It was felt that as some interesting old photographs of this particular area have recently become available, then it would be of interest to people living there now to combine these with some basic history of the area. Hopefully, more photographs and information will become available which can then be added to this live publication.

For those who wish to obtain a more detailed history of the area, including the subjects mentioned in this publication, there are numerous related publications which are free to download and read on the author's website samuelstewart.com

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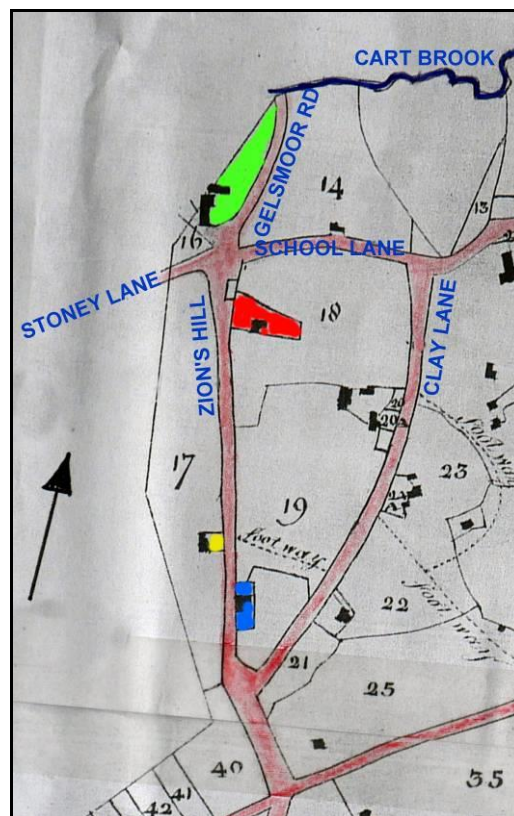
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PEGG'S GREEN & THRINGSTONE 1807 ENCLOSURE

THE INCLOSURE / ENCLOSURE OF LAND ACTS

It is first necessary for the reader to have a basic understanding of the enclosure of land which took place in this locality in the 18th and 19th centuries. In 1803, an Act of Parliament was passed for enclosure at Whitwick, Thringstone and Peggs Green (Swannington had first been enclosed in 1750). The enclosure of Pegg's Green and Thringstone which finally took place in 1807 is applicable to this publication. Over the following four years after the 1803 Act was passed, Commissioners were appointed, and awards / plans eventually drafted. Notices were posted on such places as church doors and the enclosures and allotments were finally agreed, although that is somewhat of an over simplification.

As a result of the enclosure, Pegg's Green became part of the Township of Thringstone, which was a Chapelry of Whitwick Ecclesiastical Parish at that time. Pegg's Green is now part of the administrative Parish of Coleorton, but that did not occur till 1936, when 98 acres of Pegg's Green was transferred into the parish of Coleorton and a small area into Swannington and Worthington parishes



Extract from the 1807 Enclosure map annotated by the author

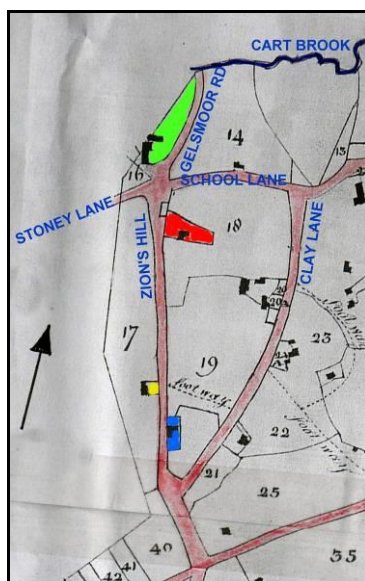
When the enclosure of Pegg's Green and Thringstone had taken place in 1807, only Sion Chapel and three cottages existed between Cart Brook / Engine Brook and what is now the intersection with Tugby's Lane, and that was still the case when the plans for the Coleorton Railway were published in 1833, except by this time, the Sion Chapel described later had closed and later became a school and a residential property, consisting of two small adjoining cottages.

This stretch of road shown on the preceding annotated map was part of the Hinckley to Melbourne turnpike, between the late 18th century and most of the 19th century. The plots of land on which the four properties were built are colour keyed on the map - green (Sion Chapel); red (Weighbridge Cottage); yellow (Hodges cottage); and blue (The White House).

The author, from the age of four, walked to both the infant and junior schools in Griffydam from Stoney Lane for seven years, come rain or shine (no school runs in those days). This involved crossing Zion Hill from Stoney Lane to walk along what is now School Lane, recorded as Occupation Road in the early 1800s and later colloquially called Kidger's or Richard's Lane. At that time, no thought was given to why or how Zion Hill came by its name, other more interesting things occupied a schoolboys mind.

However, since retiring 20 years ago, the author has been trying to find evidence which would offer an explanation for how the name of Zion Hill originated, and it was only in recent years that information on the "Sion Chapel" came to light. The Sion Chapel site has a long and interesting history which is described in the following feature on it.

SION CHAPEL - ESTABLISHED 1795 (Shown on plot of land coloured green)



JOHN NICHOL'S RECORD OF THE SION CHAPEL

John Nichol's, the Leicestershire Historian recorded the following in his "History and Antiquities of Leicestershire", under Coleorton. Volume III, Part 2, page 740, dated c.1820:-

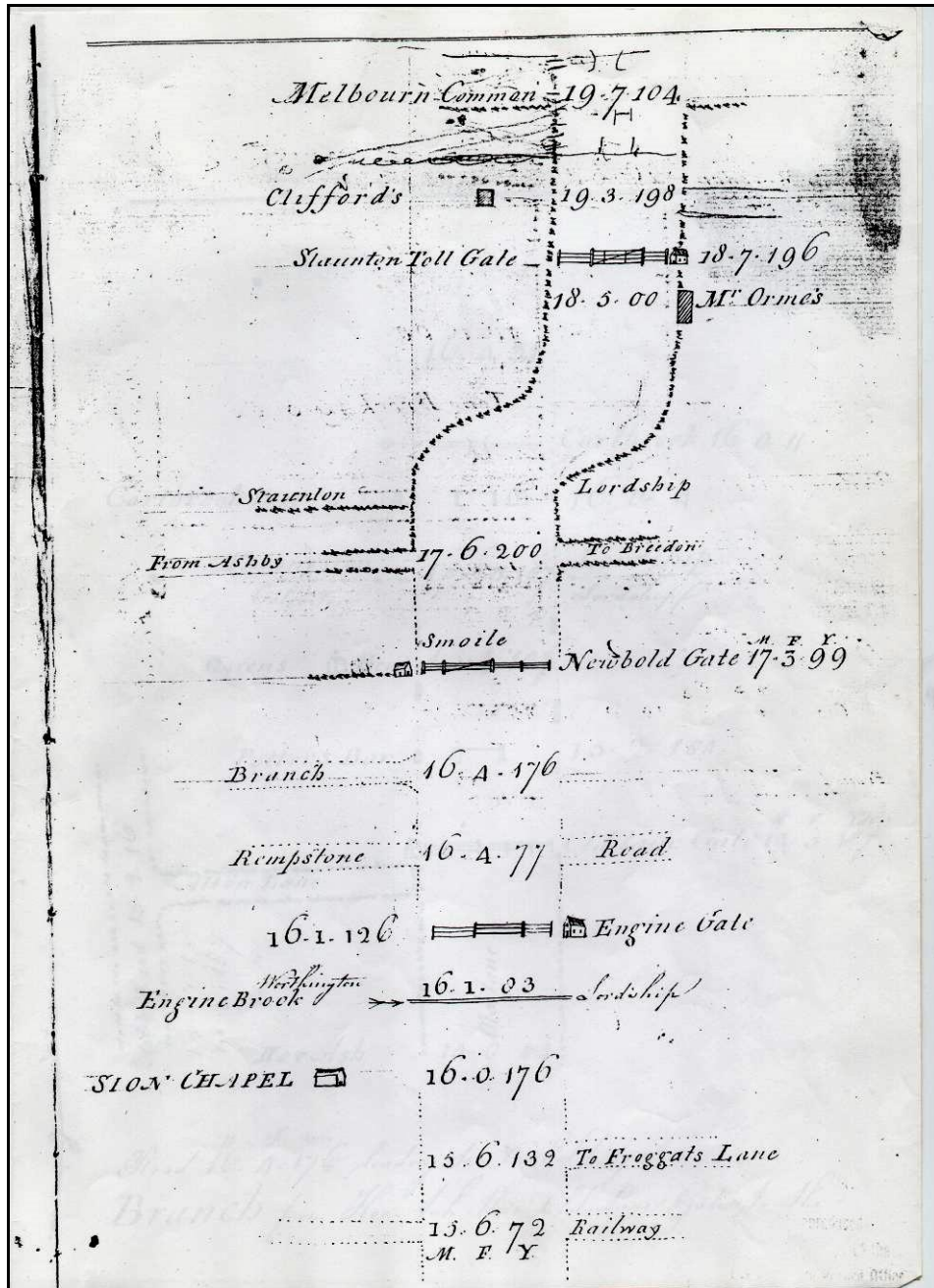
Near the middle of the moor and adjoining the turnpike-road is a place of worship inscribed "Sion Chapel 1795".

John Nichols also makes the point that.....*The Moor and the townships are very extensive, measuring at least two miles in either direction. There are several breaks into it from Worthington, Thringstone and Swannington.....*He is not referring of course to the road currently named "The Moor" in Coleorton, but the extensive Moor and other adjacent areas that existed at that time.

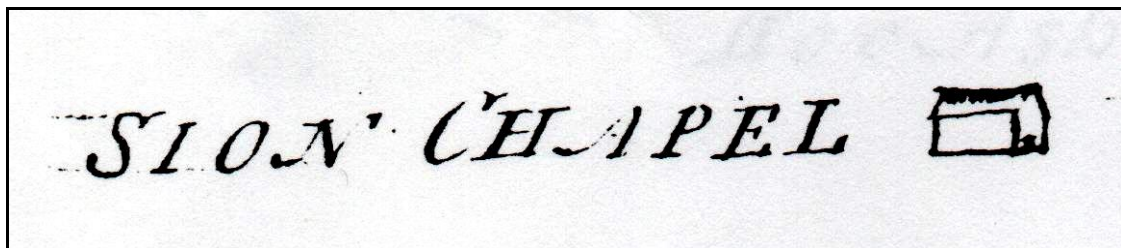
SION BAPTIST CHAPELS

Numerous chapels with the name *Sion* or *Zion* were built in the UK, some small and some large, with architecturally impressive features. The author has gained the impression from his research that Baptists named their chapels *Sion*, in preference to *Zion*.

Many Baptist chapels with the name *Sion* are particularly found in Wales, and it is suggested by certain writers that the name *Sion* is a boy's name of Welsh origin meaning "God is Gracious".



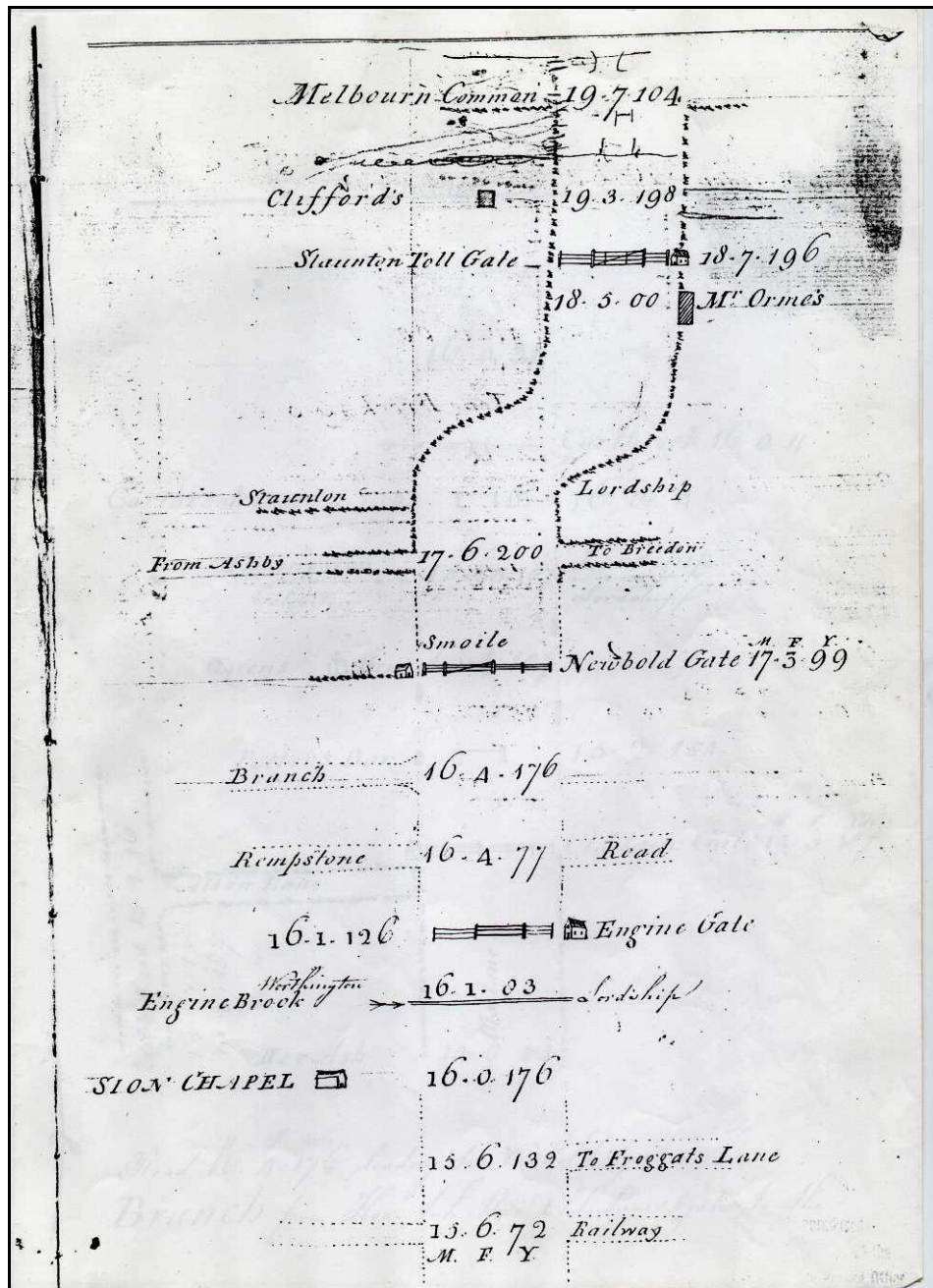
c.1807 surveyor's map of the Hinckley to Melbourne turnpike confirming the location of "Sion Chapel"



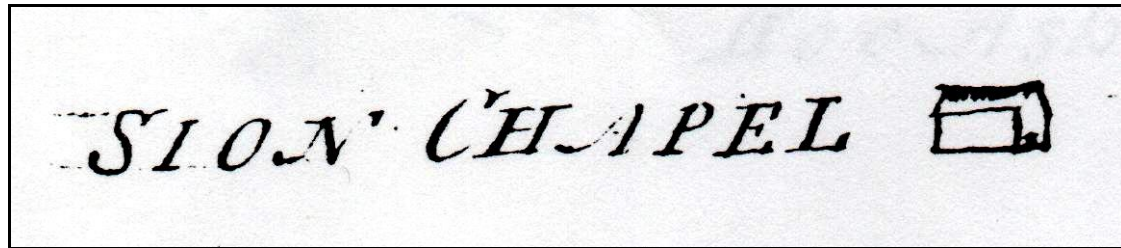
An enlarged view of the chapel extracted from the preceding map suggests the surveyor is indicating a thatched roof with the entrance door at one end. It was likely to have been a former brick barn at that time.

The following c.1800 turnpike surveyor's map clearly defines / confirms the location of the chapel on the Hinckley to Melbourne Common turnpike at the bottom of Zion Hill, just before Engine Brook, as it is referred to on the map. It is given this name because of the fire engine (Newcomen pumping engine) which was installed just north of the brook together with the Engine Toll gate. The brook is also referred to as Cart Brook at the Griffydam end. **If anyone wishes to learn more about the local turnpikes, there is a publication on his website under Griffydam and Pegg's Green, sub-section Transportation entitled "Turnpike Roads in North West Leicestershire".**

There can be no doubt that this was the Sion Chapel referred to by John Nichols, and it is also clear that Zion Hill was named after the chapel.



The distances are given in Miles, Furlongs, and Yards from Hinckley



An enlarged view of the chapel extracted from the preceding map suggests to the author that the surveyor is indicating a thatched roof with the entrance door at one end. It was likely to have been a former brick barn at that time.

THE COLEORTON BEAUMONT'S RELATIONSHIP WITH NON-CONFORMISTS

The Beaumont's antipathy to non-conformists of whatever denomination continued over several generations, and for sure, the 7th Baronet of Stoughton, Sir George Howland would not have been happy about the location of the *Sion Chapel* adjacent to his land. but he did not have jurisdiction over it although he owned the land either side of it. It was built on an enclave of land within Pegg's Green, thought to be owned by the Hinckley to Melbourne Turnpike Trust.

Some examples of the Beaumont's efforts to prevent non-conformism gaining a stronghold in the community are given below:-

- Beaumont would not allow the old Coleorton Primitive Methodist Chapel built in 1836, to be sited on his land and this was subsequently built on adjacent Thringstone Township land at the time, much to his displeasure.
- The Coleorton / Swannington Baptists Bethel Chapel had to be built on Swannington Chapelry land.
- In the 1600s, Beaumont had George Fox, the Quaker arrested and taken to Leicester Gaol.
- In the 1750s, Beaumont hired John Massey and his gang to disrupt John Wesley's preaching.
- In 1857, Beaumont's steward had the Wesleyan Reformers turned out of the house where they had been meeting.

THE CLOSURE OF THE CHAPEL

The following is offered as a possible, but highly plausible scenario of what happened to the *Sion Chapel Baptists*. In order to assist in understanding the contents, please see the publication entitled “The First 100 Years history of the Swannington / Coleorton Baptists” by Samuel T Stewart under Coleorton - Sub section Religion.

A Baptist society was formed in Swannington as far back as 1747. Meetings were held in homes and in the open air. The society waxed and waned depending on the measure of support received from outside.

Around 1795, an empty building on land adjoining the Hinckley to Melbourne Common turnpike, which was an enclave within the boundary of Pegg's Green became available. It is not possible to prove whether this land was owned by the turnpike trust, but that has to be considered as a possibility as certain features on various maps indicate that may have been the case. If we refer to John Nichols record of the Sion Chapel, he was not necessarily referring to a purpose-built chapel, and could equally have been referring to existing premises being used to accommodate one. The building was thought to have been leased by the *General Baptists* and called Sion Chapel. (“Sion” was generally preferred to “Zion” by the Baptist denomination). The acquisition of these premises apparently gave the *General Baptists* a new “lease” of life as there is a record of a Sunday School being established in 1818.

Alongside the *General Baptists* in the area was another branch of the denomination, the *Particular Baptists* who, in 1825, constructed and opened a chapel in the area of the Rowlands’ in Swannington, but within a few years for reasons completely unknown, the *Particular Baptists* had disappeared, though they were still there in 1829 as the return for the number of places of Worship, not of the Church of England, in each parish in pursuance of a Resolution of the House of Commons, dated 19th June 1829, records “*Particular Baptists – 20*”. There is no record for the *General Baptists* but it is thought that returns were only required for purpose-built places of worship, supporting the above theory.

In October 1831, the chapel on “The Rowlands” now vacated by the *Particular Baptists* along with other property came up for sale by auction at the “Queen’s Head” and the chapel on its own again in July 1832 when it was purchased by Mrs. Elizabeth Sherwin. Described as a good Christian, Elizabeth Sherwin gave the *General Baptists* the privilege of its use on agreement to pay one pound per annum acknowledgement. Elizabeth was the wife of the wealthy hosier, banker, and benefactor to the poor William Sherwin (1768-1864) of Coleorton who was a strong supporter of the Church of England in the area. He was one of the main subscribers to the Coleorton Railway. In William Sherwin’s “Will”, it statedand bequest all that buildings situated in Swannington and now used as a “Baptists Meeting House”.....to the use of my wife Elizabeth Sherwin. This suggests that Elizabeth Sherwin had actually purchased the building on behalf of her husband, probably for the reason that there would have been a conflict between the religions and it would not have been in William Sherwin’s interest for a Church of England man to be supporting non-conformity dissenters, particularly in the business circles he moved in and his relationship with the Beaumonts’ and St. Mary’s Church, Coleorton. The *General Baptists* were only too pleased to accept her generous offer to let them have a recently constructed ready-made chapel at a nominal rent. They subsequently vacated the Sion Chapel building adjoining the turnpike and moved into their new place of worship which they called Bethel Chapel.

FRANCIS (FRANK) BARKBY (1808 - 1879) AND THE PENNY SCHOOL

There has been a great deal of hand me down hearsay attached to the Penny School but the author believes that the following account confirms its existence as being in the converted Sion Chapel. Apparently, it was known locally as the "Penny School", as this is apparently what the pupils paid weekly for the use of their school books.

Information has recently been received, that a Sarah (Sally) Davies (nee., Wardle) who lived in Pegg's Green, attended, c.1840s, Frank Barkby's School **which was held in one room of his house**. The enumerator in the 1901 census refers to the Zion Cottages as "Old School, Ditto House", and records that Fred Bailey, James Rowell and their families are living in the two adjoining cottages at that time. This is where it is believed Frank Barkby opened his school in one of the two cottages, although we cannot be certain that he lived in the adjoining cottage. We know from other records that Frank Barkby was Church of England and worshipped at St. George's Church, so an Anglican faith school would have met with the Beaumont's approval.

An extract from an article in the 1950 Loughborough Echo newspaper by William Stacey who lived close by on Gelsmoor Road states:-

"A rather more picturesque figure was that of Frank Barkby, who was often to be seen in the morning at the doorway, dressed in "Box Hat" and "Swallow Tailed Coat" with a cane in his hand, awaiting the late arrivals".

The 1851, 1861 and 1871 Peggs Green censuses records Francis (Frank?) Barkby as a School Master living in Peggs Green. Evidence suggests that the Penny School closed c.1879 when Francis Barkby died. The 1874 to 1899 register for the old "Griffydham Wesleyan Day School 1853-1914", in Pegg's Green, lists many pupils coming to there *"from Mr Barkby's"*, but only up to 1879.

According to the following obituary, Francis Barkby was a school master for 50 years, but whether that was at Zion's Cottages is impossible to say, but it is a possibility.

Continued over page

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION ON FRANCIS (FRANK) BARKBY

Ashby-De-La-Zouch Gazette 15th March 1879

Thingstone Funeral of the Parish Clerk – On Monday, the funeral of the late Mr. Francis Barkby took place at St George's, Thringstone, in the presence of several hundred spectators. The deceased had filled the office of parish clerk for 53 years, and that of schoolmaster for 50. For 26 years he also faithfully discharged the duties of secretary to the Golden Fleece Lodge of the Imperial Order of Oddfellows, Griffydham, the members of which attended the funeral wearing hatbands and scarves. The Vicar (the reverend Mr Pearson) and Mr. Churchwarden Johnson headed the mournful procession. Etc etc.....

THE GOLDEN FLEECE ODDFELLOWS LODGE No. 160

Leicester Journal 16th October 1846, page 3

Odd Fellowship – The Golden Fleece Lodge of the Nottingham Imperial Order of Oddfellows, celebrated their anniversary on Tuesday the 6th instant, at The Waggon and Horses, Griffydham. They assembled at their Lodge Room about ten o'clock in the morning and from thence proceeded through Newbold to Worthington Church, where an impressive and eloquent discourse was delivered to them by the Rev. W. Close of Woodhouse Eaves. After divine service they repaired again to the Waggon and Horses, where an excellent dinner was provided by worthy host Nicklinson. Messrs. John Bostock, Lomas, Sharpe and others favoured them with their company at dinner. The deservedly famous Melbourne Brass Band was in attendance, and performed most efficiently. The party dispersed at an early hour, highly pleased with the evenings engagement.

ZION COTTAGES

It is now well established that the Sion Chapel building was converted into two small cottages, most likely by the Beaumonts' for renting out to future occupiers. The following article records some families who occupied it in the early 1900s.

The 1901 census records that Fred Bailey, James Rowell and their families are living in the two adjoined cottages.



The above photograph taken outside Zion Cottages, is of Clara Hall (b.1851) who lived in the roadside end cottage with her husband George for a number of years in the early 1900s, after moving from Elverston's Yard off Stoney Lane, which was part of Rotten Row within the Township of Thringstone at that time.

The Hall's only child, a daughter named Clara, married James Stewart (a great Uncle of the author). James, Clara and their children lived together with Clara's parents both at Rotten Row and latterly Zion Cottage for a period. **For a detailed account of this family and their lives, see the publication on the authors website entitled "JAMES STEWART 1878 - 1964". Go to publication and on the drop down menu select Griffydam and Peggs Green then sub-section People.**

The preceding photograph is significant in that it shows a view looking up Zion Hill before Eileen Richards, sister of Enoch Richards, who had a bakery business in School Lane, built the row of cottages on the LH side after the turning to School Lane, probably about 1935. These were rented out until she died and the residents were then given the option to purchase. The building next on the left is Weighbridge cottage.



George Hall standing outside the rear entrance to the end cottage which faced the road



This recent photograph was taken from almost the same spot as the one on the preceding page, and shows the row of cottages subsequently built by Eileen Richards.



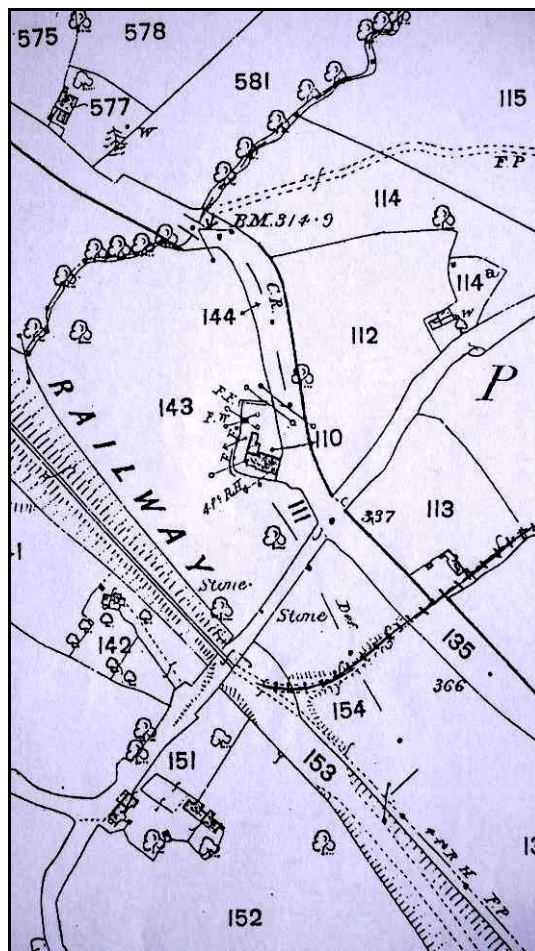
A recent photograph showing the end of Zion Cottage from where the photographs on pages 12 and 13 were taken towards the RH side

In the 1920 Beaumont estate sale, the adjoining cottages and gardens were purchased by the author's great uncle James Stewart together with 2.766 acres of land for £175. The land encompassed the area between Engine Brook, Stoney Lane, the former Coleorton Railway embankment and Zion Hill. The previous occupier was recorded in the sales documents as being Mr. J. Richards who would have rented the property from Sir George Beaumont.

Continued over page



Enlarged extract from the Beaumont Estate 1920 sale map showing Lot 15 purchased by James Stewart for £175



Extract from 1885 O/S map showing plot 110 with the cottages and garden and the surrounding field 143 which were purchased by James Stewart

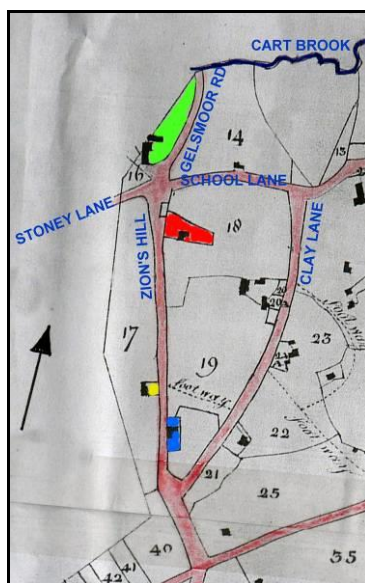


A view looking up Zion Hill c.1950s



A view looking down Zion Hill c.1950s

THE WHITE HOUSE (shown on plot of land coloured blue)



**"The White House" in the early 1900s.
Standing in front of the cottage are Bill and Bessie Wilton**



**THE WILTON FAMILY IN THE FRONT GARDEN OF
THE WHITE HOUSE c.1906**

BACK ROW - L TO R

WILLIAM, HERBERT, THOMAS, GEORGE, JOSEPH, SARAH, EMMELINE

MIDDLE ROW - L TO R

MARY- ANNE, BILL, BESSIE, JOHN (KNOWN AS JACK)

FRONT ROW - L to R

ARTHUR AND HENRY

Leicester Chronicle – June 15th 1940

MARRIED 66 YEARS

Mr. and Mrs. William Wilton, of the White House, Pegg's Green, near Coalville, this week celebrated the 66th anniversary of their wedding.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilton have nine children living, 54 grandchildren, and eighteen great grandchildren. Four grandsons are serving with the forces.

Administrative County		The undermentioned Houses are situate within the boundaries of the										Parliamentary Borough or Division	
Civil Parish		Ecclesiastical Parish		County Borough, Municipal Borough, or Urban District		Ward of Municipal Borough or of Urban District		Rural District		Parliamentary Borough or Division		Town	
of <i>Thringstone</i>		of <i>St Andrew's & St George's</i>		of		of		of <i>Abbydelazanch</i>		of <i>Donghborough</i>		of	
No. of Inhabited	ROAD, STREET, &c. and No. or NAME of HOUSE	HOUSES			Name and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	Age last Birthday of	PROFESSION OR OCCUPATION		Employer, Worker, or Own account	If Working at Home	WHERE BORN	
		Inhabited	Uninhabited	Number of Rooms occupied if less than Five				Condition as to Marriage	Males			Females	13
72	<i>Eglington Hill, Peggs Green</i>	1			<i>James Burton</i>	<i>Head</i>	<i>42</i>		<i>Butcher</i>	<i>Proprietor</i>	<i>At Home</i>	<i>Leicester, Thringstone</i>	
					<i>Kate</i>	<i>Wife</i>	<i>38</i>		<i>Butcher</i>			<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>
					<i>Joe H.</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>17</i>		<i>Butcher</i>	<i>Worker</i>	<i>at home</i>	<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>
					<i>Charles H.</i>	<i>do</i>	<i>15</i>		<i>Iron Millers</i>	<i>Worker</i>		<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>
					<i>Charlotte E.</i>	<i>Daughter</i>	<i>13</i>					<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>
					<i>Frank H.</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>8</i>					<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>
					<i>Eva E.</i>	<i>Daughter</i>	<i>6</i>					<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>
					<i>John A.</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>1</i>					<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>
73	<i>do do</i>	1			<i>William Wilton</i>	<i>Head</i>	<i>49</i>		<i>Coal Miner</i>	<i>Steward</i>	<i>Worker</i>	<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>
					<i>Elizabeth</i>	<i>Wife</i>	<i>48</i>					<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>
					<i>Sarah</i>	<i>Daughter</i>	<i>24</i>				<i>At Home</i>	<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>
					<i>Joseph</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>20</i>		<i>do do</i>	<i>do</i>		<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>
					<i>Thomas</i>	<i>do</i>	<i>20</i>		<i>do do</i>	<i>do</i>		<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>
					<i>George</i>	<i>do</i>	<i>18</i>		<i>do do</i>	<i>do</i>		<i>do</i>	<i>Swansea</i>
					<i>Herbert</i>	<i>do</i>	<i>16</i>		<i>do do</i>	<i>do</i>		<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>
					<i>William</i>	<i>do</i>	<i>13</i>		<i>do do</i>	<i>do</i>		<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>
					<i>Emmeline</i>	<i>Daughter</i>	<i>10</i>					<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>
					<i>Henry</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>8</i>					<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>
					<i>Arthur</i>	<i>do</i>	<i>2</i>					<i>do</i>	<i>Thringstone</i>
74	<i>do do</i>	1			<i>William Walker</i>	<i>Head</i>	<i>34</i>		<i>Coal Miner</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Worker</i>	<i>do</i>	<i>Worthington</i>

The above extract from the 1901 Pegg's Green census shows that the Wilton family were living on Eglington Hill, Pegg's Green at that time, and judging from the ages of the children in the preceding group photograph, they would have moved to the White House c.1906. All of the five eldest sons, as well as their father were coal miners, and Herbert, at the age of 16 was a horse driver below ground. John (aka Jack b.1875) and Mary Ann (b.1876), the eldest children, are missing from the census so they must have left home by then. **Their first four children were born within a period of four years.** For those who do not know where Eglington Hill is, it is the hill that starts just after the turning to Anchor Lane.

It begs the question as to how an underground coal hewer, aged c.54, could afford a property with an orchard such as this.

The author has received information from relatives, that William Wilton who was married to Bessie (Elizabeth), worked in the coal mines from an early age of probably 12 years, and did not retire until he was 72 years of age.

Sarah Wilton, their daughter, married Walter Davies of Peggs Green, who was one of twin boys, the other being named Herbert. From the age of 13 they were both employed at Stableford's Waggon Works, Coalville and Walter worked there until near retirement age when the 1930s great depression resulted in its closure. Sarah died at the young age of 39 leaving Walter with four daughters - Elsie, Emmie and Gerty. Walter subsequently married his second wife, Sarah Morley. They didn't have any children together.

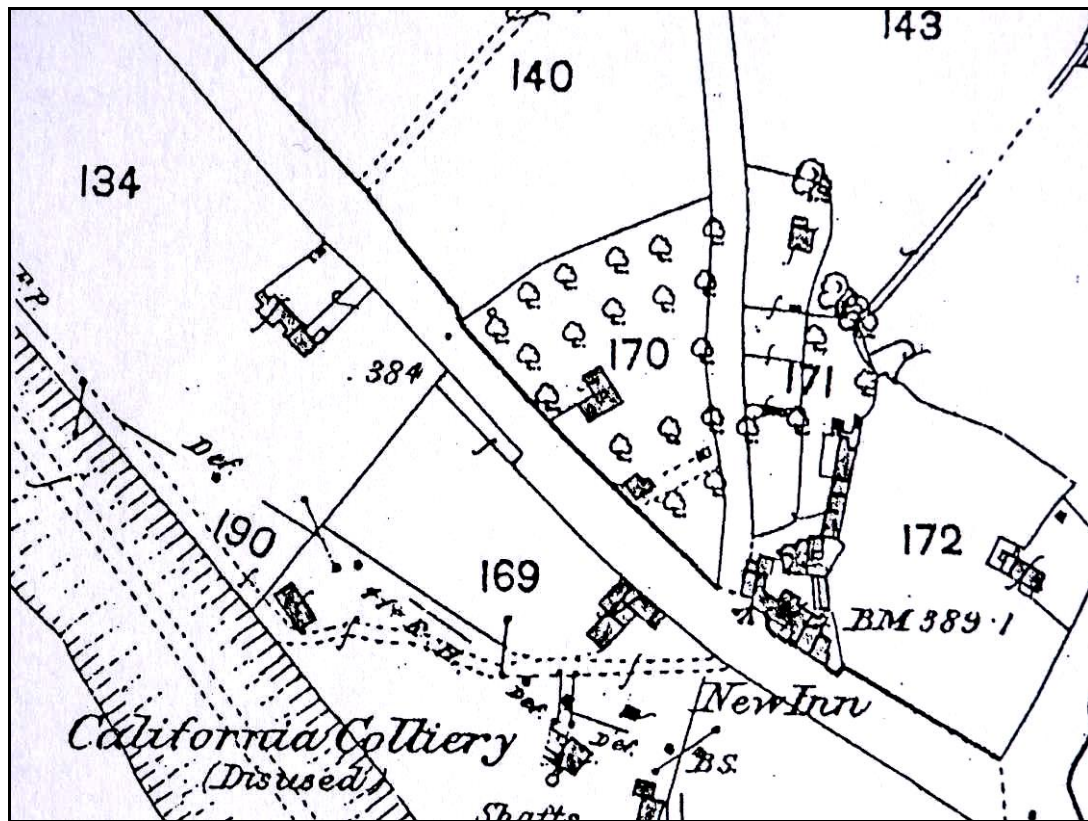
Emmeline Wilton married Frederick Hodges (see the following feature on the Hodges family for more details).

At some point prior to 1885, the field surrounding the White House, was purchased by someone and the whole plot turned into an orchard, which is shown on the following extract from the 1885 O/S map. Although an adjacent house to the White House has now been built on the plot, many of the old apple trees and a large pear

tree surrounding the White House have survived, which have amazingly cropped heavily this year (2022). The author recalls as a young boy c.1947, visiting the White House with his mother to pick gooseberries and black currants when the Marshall's lived there. The fruit bushes can be seen along the front in the preceding top photograph.

The "White House" today, has been tastefully extended, but at the same time retaining many of the old features particularly at the front. The property appears to have two front doors and it is possible that it was two separate properties at one time but that is only conjecture.

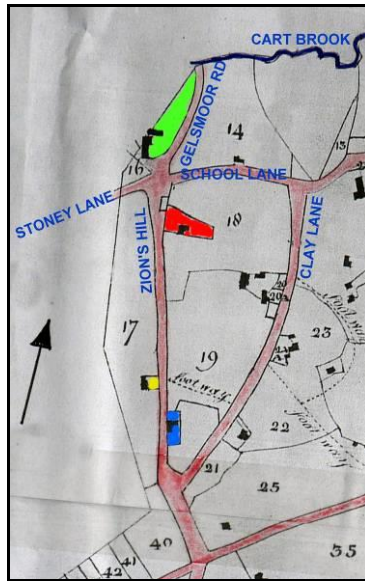
The 1885 map shows a separate small building on the plot, the tumble down remains of which still exist. This is of interest, and requires further investigation. There is also an unusual large diameter shallow well in the garden, the author leans towards the view that it was fed by a natural spring at one time. The 1835 first edition O/S map indicates at that time shows water flowed from this area. The lid of the well can be seen on the photograph on page 18, just to the right of the tree trunk.



The above extract from the 1885 O/S map shows the large orchard and the White House on the plot marked 170 across Clay Lane from the New Inn which wasn't there in 1807 of course.

In 1833, the land on which the White House stood, was owned by the Boulton family.

HODGES' COTTAGE (shown on plot of land coloured yellow)



Photograph taken c.1928 with Annie Hodges, her father Frederick and her brother Herbert Gerald Hodges at the front of the cottage. Annie was born in 1916 and lived all her life at the cottage.

The location of Hodges' Cottage can also be seen on the preceding 1885 O/S map within the plot marked 134, just above the number 384

This cottage was not of course always in the ownership of the Hodges family, but it was known to have been in their possession for c.100 years until Annie Hodges, the youngest daughter, who never married, passed away a few years ago. [The land in 1833 was owned by Sir George Howland Willoughby Beaumont, 8th Baronet of Stoughton.](#)



Annie Hodges, at the front of the cottage c. 1932.

Frederick Hodges (b.1889 in Griffydam) was the son of Herbert Hodges (b.1865 Breedon on the Hill) and Eliza (b.1867, Saffron Waldon, Essex). In 1901, he had three siblings - Annie (9), Herbert (5) and Thomas (1), all born in Griffydam

Frederick Hodges (b.1889), married Emmeline Wilton who features in the preceding Wilton family photograph at the White House. It is thought they moved into the cottage when they got married probably about 1912.

The 1921 census records that they had the following 4 children at that time :-

Frederick Raymond, Annie, Kenneth and Leonard (see below for birth years).

The 1939 register lists the following family members for Frederick and Emmeline Hodges:-

Frederick Hodges	Head	b.1889	Colliery Deputy
Emmeline	Wife	b. 1890	Unpaid domestic duties (she is shown in the group photograph of the Wilton family at the White House)
Frederick Raymond	Son	b. 1914	General labourer
Annie	Daughter	b. 1916	Elastic Web weaver
Kenneth	Son	b.1917	Bakers salesman
Leonard	Son	b. 1919	Boot Heeler
Hilda	Daughter		
Herbert Gerald	Son		Coal miner
Colin	Son		



FREDERICK AND EMMELINE WITH CHILDREN ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR GOLDEN WEDDING

Left to Right seated - Annie, Frederick, Emmeline, Raymond

Left to right standing - Kenneth, Leonard, Hilda, Herbert, Colin

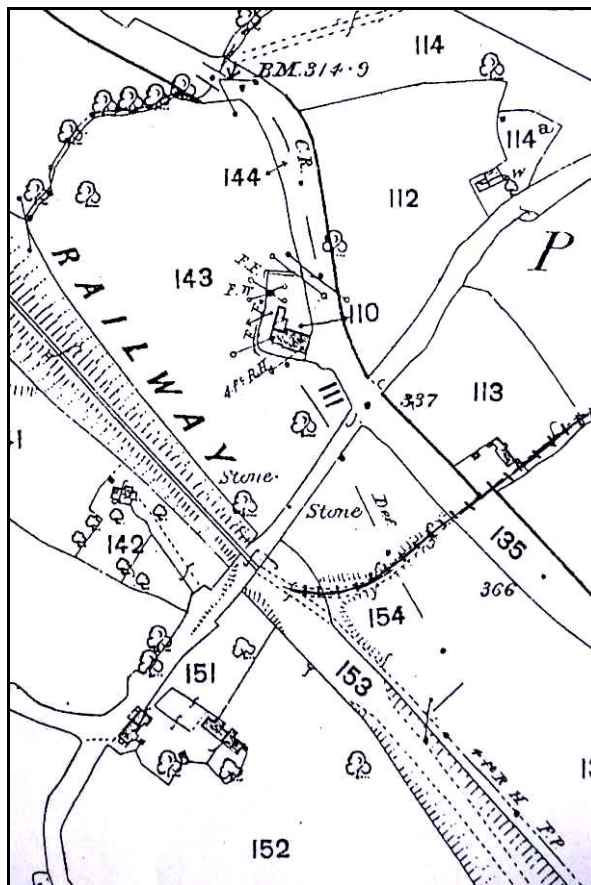
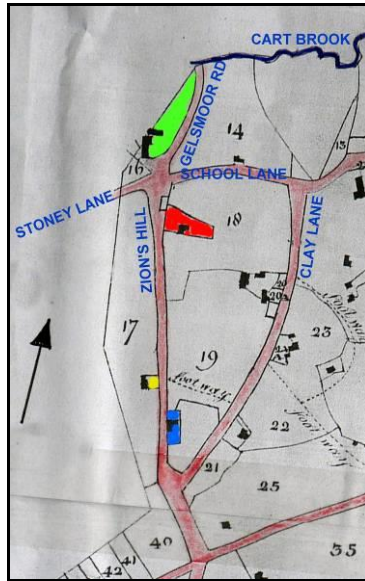


Hodges cottage as it is today



A load of coal waiting to be got in outside Herbert Hodges family home on Zion Hill c.1950s

WEIGHBRIDGE COTTAGE (shown on plot of land coloured red)



Weighbridge Cottage, shown on plot 113 was named after the weighbridge which was installed adjacent to it and the tramway which has been annotated on the map by the author. Horse drawn Coal waggons coming from Pegg's Green Colliery which opened in 1830 were weighed here before being transhipped onto the Coleorton Railway which opened in 1833.



According to the 1833 Coleorton Railway land schedule, the original cottage and garden was occupied by Mary Harris Braithwaite, but in the ownership of Joseph Boultebee, John Boultebee x 2, and John Warren Paget, as trustees of William Boultebee, the Rev. Charles Boultebee and John Clutton.

A large modern house now occupies the site of the old cottage. In the 1950s / 60s, Weighbridge Cottage was occupied by Jim and Betty Wesson. Jim delivered bread for Enoch Richards' bakery on School Lane. [See the publication on the author's website entitled "The Kidgers' and Richards families of Pegg's Green" to learn more about the history of the bakery etc. This can be found under publications - Griffydham & Pegg's Green - sub section People](#)



Photograph of a tramway embankment as it was in 2013, taken from Clay Lane looking towards Griffydham Senior School building marked **B** in the distance The tram rails have now gone of course, but the line of the embankment is highlighted by the white dots. A section in the middle had been taken out for access by the farmer where marked **A**.



The end of the tramway embankment when viewed from Clay Lane in 2017



Weighbridge Cottage as it is today can be see just at the end of the line of trees (RH side). The photograph was taken in 2021 from the front of Griffydam Senior School (now a private residence) on School Lane hill where one part of a tramway ran from a shaft on the land there, which has now been capped. Other shafts were worked in this area in the early 1880s, by local families like the Kidgers prior to the opening of Pegg's Green Colliery in 1830.

Initially tramways were installed to take coal from these locally worked shafts to the Hinckley to Melbourne turnpike road at the bottom of Zion Hill.

This whole area would have been a dirty and foreboding place when the early 19th century coal mining was taking place. Imagine the mine shafts and associated mining gear, buildings and tramways with horse drawn wagons, criss-crossing the area.

In addition to this, the Coleorton railway which opened c.1833, ran parallel and close to the turnpike before it entered the Pegg's Green tunnel on its way to join the Leicester to Swannington Railway at the incline. The route of railway is indicated on the 1885 map on page 24.

A history publication entitled "Coal mining in Peggs Green - Early 19th Century Till 1859", can be found on the author's website under Griffydham and Peggs Green - sub section Coal Mining.

A history of the Coleorton Railway can also be found under the transport section.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

The bungalow next to Hodges cottage was built by Matt Rowell who was a builder and born in the Tentas, Griffydam. He was married to Ada Bird who was the sister of the author's mother Agnes Stewart (nee., Bird). The author used to visit them as a child, the attraction being the large pile of sand that was always at the rear of the bungalow.

There were two similar detached houses built next to the bungalow, the first one was occupied by the author's mother's brother George Wilmott Bird when he got married to Gert. They had a daughter Glenis. These houses are shown at the top of the hill on the RH side in the photograph on page 12.