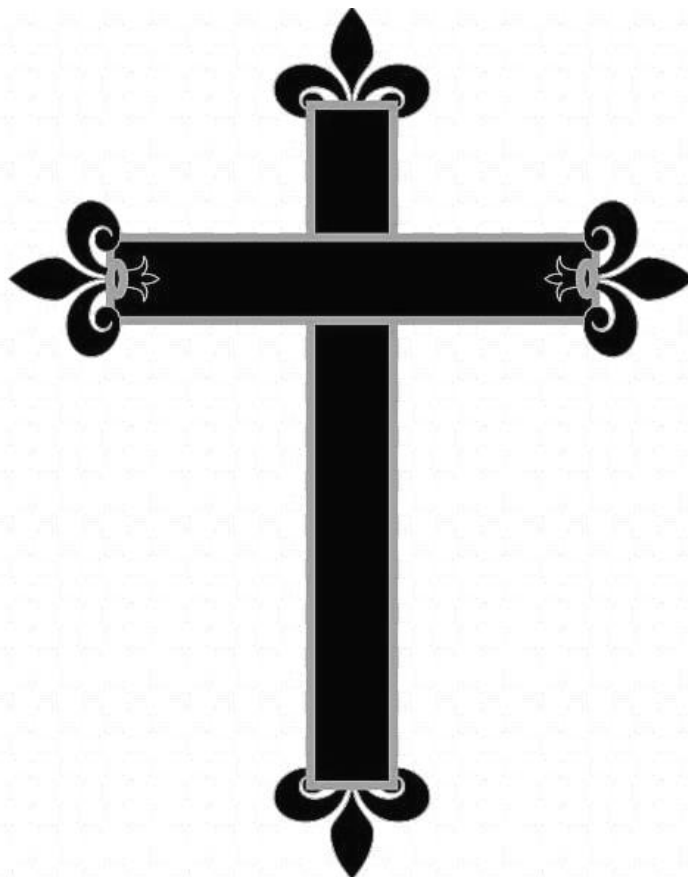


**THE SION BAPTIST CHAPEL -
PEGG'S GREEN
ESTABLISHED 1795
FOLLOWED BY THE "PENNY
SCHOOL" & KNOWN
OCCUPANT'S OF ZION
COTTAGES**



**BY SAMUEL T STEWART – APRIL 2020
(Updated - February 2022, March 2023, Sept 2023 & May 2026**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks to Michael Green and Terry Ward for their support.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

- Griffydham Wesleyan Day and Sunday School register
- The Coleorton Railway route proposal map 1833
- The 1807 Peggs Green and Thringstone Township enclosure map
- An untitled enclosure map thought to pre-date the above c.1803.
- The Coleorton 1842 Tithe Map and register
- The 1881 surveyed 1885 published 6 inch O/S Map
- Other bibliography references are included within the text.

COMPLIMENTARY READING

- A publication entitled "The First 100 Years history of the Swannington / Coleorton Baptists" by Samuel T Stewart is free to download and read on his website samuelstewart.com

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LATER OCCUPANT'S OF ZION COTTAGE'S

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PART 1

INTRODUCTION

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 Richards Lane. At that time, no thought was given to why or how Zion Hill came by its name, other more interesting things occupied ones mind.

However, since retiring 20 years ago, the author has been trying to find evidence which would offer an explanation for its unusual name, and it was only in recent years that this came to light.

JOHN NICHOL'S RECORD OF A SION CHAPEL IN COLEORTON

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.1800 states:-

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.

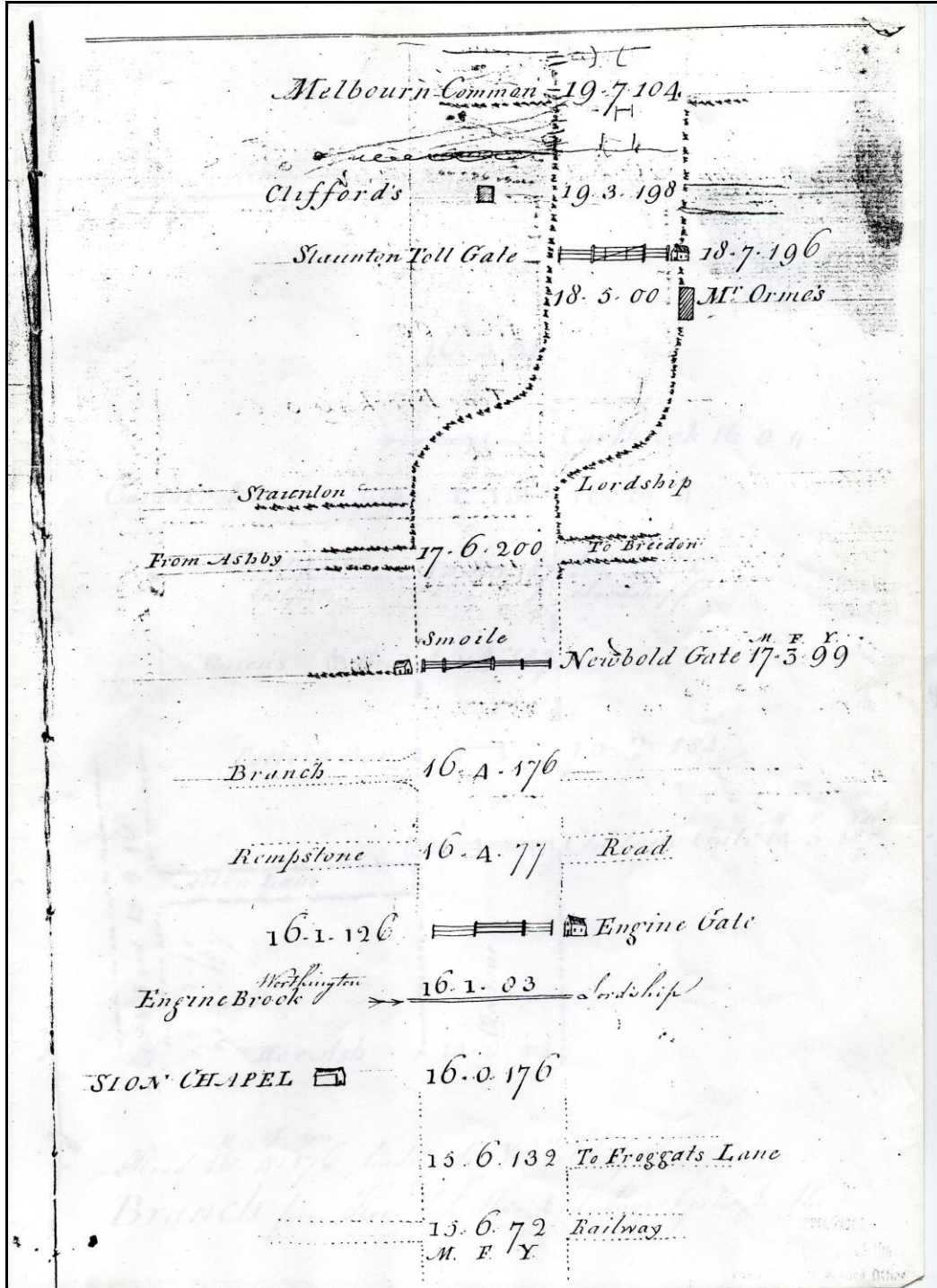
SION BAPTIST CHAPELS

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.

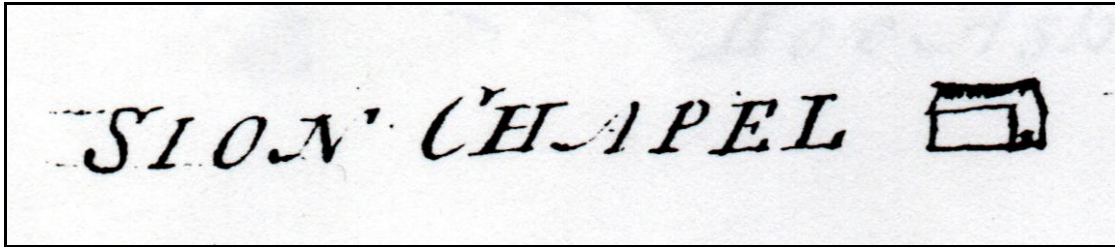
Many Baptist chapels with the name *Sion* are particularly found in Wales, and it is suggested by certain writers that the name *Sion* is a boy's name of Welsh origin meaning "God is Gracious".

PART 2

LOCATION OF THE SION CHAPEL
ILLUSTRATED BY A SERIES OF OLD MAPS



c.1807 surveyor's map of the turnpike showing the location of "Sion Chapel"



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

The map clearly defines 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 here, which formed the boundary between Coleorton and Worthington parishes, as it still does today. The brook is elsewhere referred to as Cart Brook.

There can be no doubt that this was the Sion Chapel referred to by John Nichols and dated 1795. It is also clear that Zion Hill was named after the chapel.

THE INCLOSURE / ENCLOSURE OF LAND ACTS

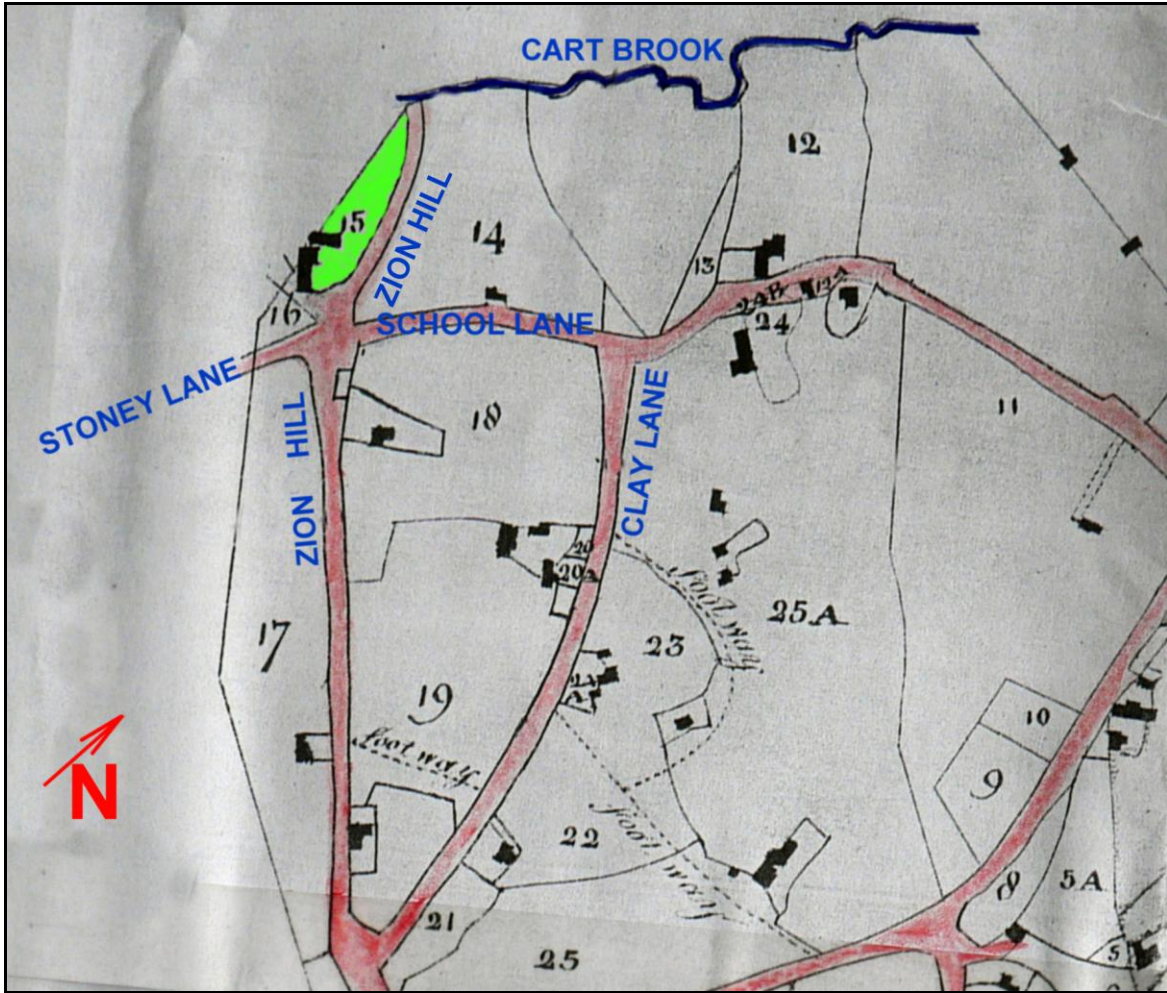
In the 18th and 19th centuries, the enclosure of land in this locality took place. In 1803, an Act of Parliament was passed for enclosure at Whitwick, Thringstone and Peggs Green (Swannington had first been enclosed in 1750). One of the areas which specifically applies to our subject matter was Peggs Green. Over the following four years after the Act was passed, Commissioners were appointed and awards / plans eventually drafted, notices posted on such places as church doors and the enclosures and allotments finally agreed, although that is somewhat of an over simplification.

Peggs Green became part of the Township of Thringstone, which was a Chapelry of Whitwick Ecclesiastical Parish at that time. Peggs Green is now part of the administrative Parish of Coleorton, but that did not occur till 1936.

EXTRACT FROM THE OFFICIAL 1807 THRINGSTONE & PEGGS GREEN ENCLOSURE MAP

The following map is important in that it established the Thringstone Township boundary in the area where the "Sion Chapel" was located. The following extract from the map drawn by William Henry Smith (surveyor) for the commissioners in 1807, shows land to the west of the start of Zion Hill (plot 15 coloured green), where Sion Chapel was located, as being within the Township of Thringstone.

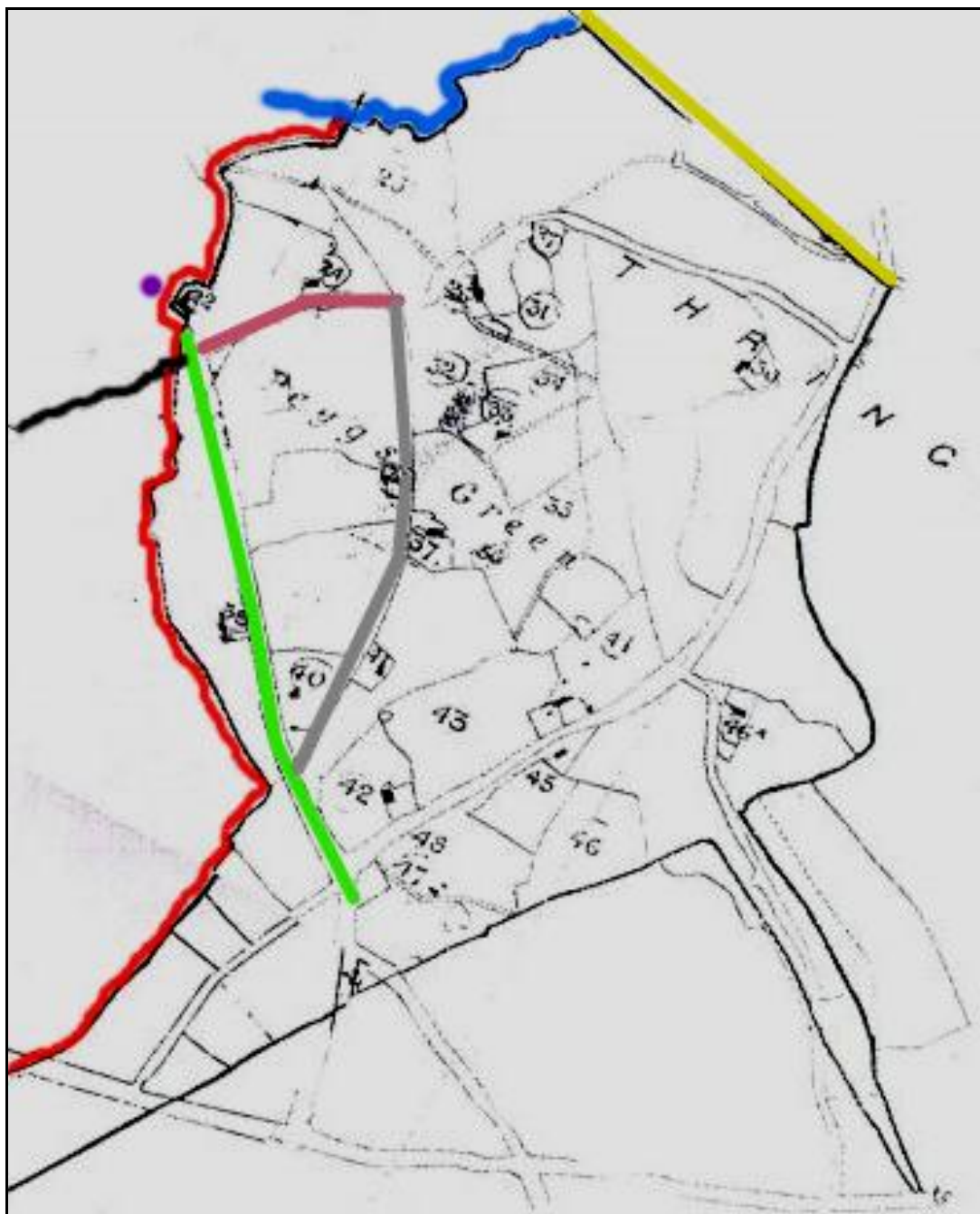
It appears to show an additional building to the chapel, which are thought to be the two semi-detached cottages which still exist today. With a bit of draughtsman's license, these can be construed to compare with those on the 1833 Coleorton railway proposal map shown on page 9, when both are rotated into the correct north facing orientation.



Extract from the Thringstone & Peggs Green enclosure map drawn by William Henry Smith (Surveyor) for the commissioners in 1807. This has been annotated by the author with current road names for clarity.

A number of maps have been included for the benefit of future researchers and it is important to understand that maps of this age vary in their scale, accuracy and geographical orientation and buildings were often just a pictorial representation. Understanding the maps used in this publication is complicated by the fact that different systems of plot numbering were used on all of them.

EXTRACT FROM A PRE 1807 DRAFT PLAN WHICH CAN BE RELATED TO
THE PRECEDING OFFICIAL 1807 MAP

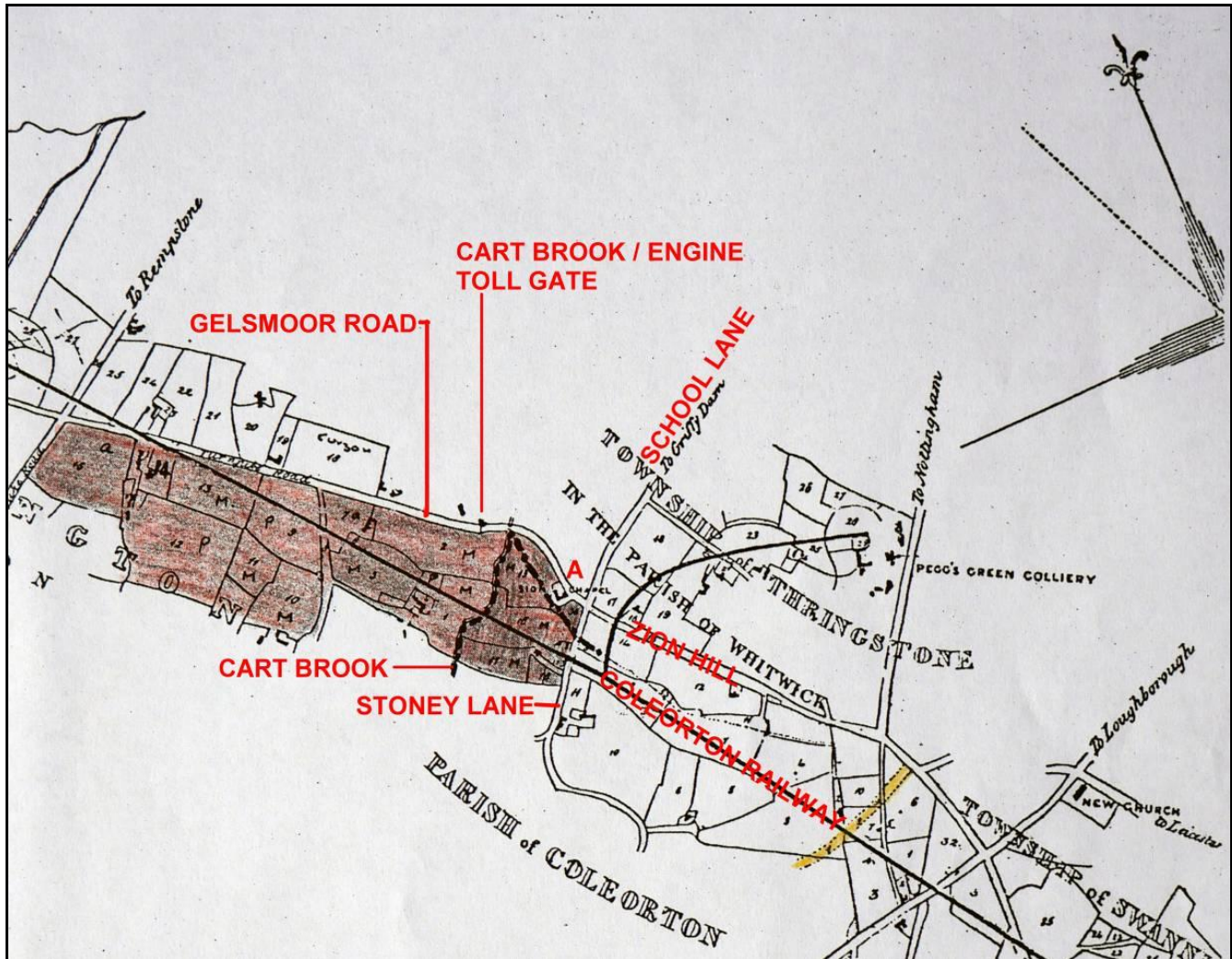


The above map is an extract from an undated draft plan, thought to show the plots of land pre the final 1807 enclosure plan shown on the preceding page. A different numbering system was used to identify the plots of land. **This plan is extremely important** in that it shows plot 22 with a building on it identified by a purple dot as being an enclave within Peggs Green at that time. This is the *Sion Chapel* plot. The map has been annotated by the author so it can be related easily to the preceding map. The key for the plan is shown on the following page.

KEY TO PRECEDING MAP

- Red line** – Old boundary line
- Purple dot** – Sion Chapel plot 22
- Green line** – Zion Hill..... Part of the Hinckley to Melbourne
Common turnpike road
- Black line** – Currently Stoney Lane, Coleorton
- Pink line** – Currently School Lane, Peggs Green
- Grey line** – Currently Clay Lane, Peggs Green
- Yellow Line** – Griffydam / Pegg's Green boundary line

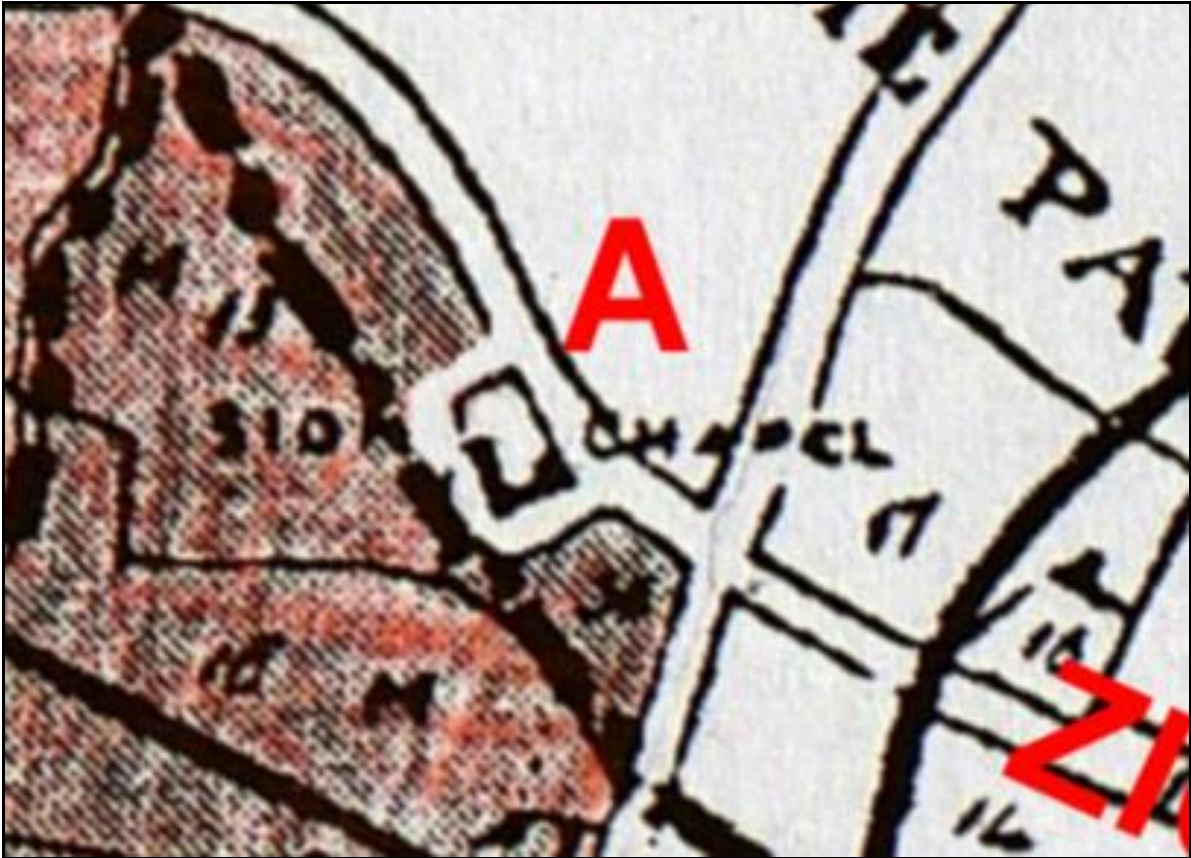
THE 1833 ROUTE PROPOSAL MAP FOR THE COLEORTON RAILWAY



The above map is an extract from the 1833 route proposal map for the Coleorton Railway. Please note the direction of the north facing arrow. This map identifies the location of the *Sion Chapel* marked **A** adjacent to the Hinckley to Melbourne Common turnpike road. The map has again been annotated by the author to provide the reader with a clearer understanding of the location of the chapel using modern road names etc. Cart Brook formed the boundary between Coleorton and Worthington Ecclesiastical parishes and still forms the boundary of both administrative parishes today. The heavy dotted line to the west of the chapel plot indicates the boundary between Coleorton Ecclesiastical Parish and Thringstone Township in Whitwick Ecclesiastical parish. This can be related to the boundary on the preceding 1807 enclosure map on page 6 (plot 15 coloured green).

The land to the west of the Thringstone Township heavily dotted boundary line down to Cart Brook was in Coleorton Ecclesiastical Parish and part of the Beaumont Estate which at that time was owned by Sir George Howland Willoughby Beaumont, 8th baronet whose seat was Coleorton Hall. He was the main driving force behind the Coleorton

Railway project and subscribed £5,500 to it. Beaumont also owned the land coloured brown to the north west of Cart Brook which was in Worthington Ecclesiastical parish.



If we now refer to the above map which is an enlargement of the area around the *Sion Chapel* site, it is important to note that Sir George Beaumont also owned the land coloured brown, on the Thringstone Township side of the boundary but only on either side of the isolated chapel plot.

He **did not** own the chapel site which was part of Peggs Green within the Township of Thringstone as explained earlier. **See the following 1842 Coleorton Tithe map for further clarity.**

PART 3

THE COLEORTON 1842 TITHE MAP AND REGISTER REFERENCES

This enlarged extract from the Coleorton 1842 Tithe Map, annotated by the author, is included for further clarification on the plots of land on either side of the *Sion Chapel* site that were owned by Sir George Beaumont, 8th Baronet. The *Sion Chapel* site coloured pink, which is only a pictorial representation, does not have a plot number as it was in Peggs Green and part of the Township of Thringstone at that time following the enclosure as explained earlier.

The register describes the plots as follows:-

Plot 297 – Croft, Pasture – 1 acre 3 roods 7 perch (outlined in brown)

Plot 298 – Part of Garden – 10 perch (outlined in green)

Strangely, the Coleorton railway and its embankment is not shown on the Tithe map, although the cottage currently named “Bank House” is shown just over the railway embankment on plot 296.



PART 4

CONCLUSION

There are a number of scenarios to consider regarding why and when the *Sion Chapel* closed, and what happened to members of the congregation following its closure. The following is offered as a plausible explanation for this.

THE PERIOD LEADING UP TO THE CLOSURE OF THE SION CHAPEL

Perhaps one of the most important reasons that lead up to the closure of the *Sion Chapel*, would have been the construction of the Coleorton Railway for which the Bill was passed by Parliament on 10th June 1833. The construction was officially started in November 1833 although it has been recorded that Sir George Beaumont had already started work in certain areas where he owned land on which it was to be built. Considering that a considerable embankment was to be built directly behind the *Sion Chapel* site (see the earlier 1842 Coleorton Tithe map) and the Peggs Green and Cart Brook tunnels within close proximity, it is difficult to imagine that the chapel could have survived this major disruption to their activities. Certainly Sir George Beaumont would not have offered any support and the site and buildings may well have been useful during the construction as possible offices or sleeping quarters for the many navies who would have been employed.

THE BEAUMONT'S RELATIONSHIP WITH NON-CONFORMISTS

The Beaumont's antipathy to non-conformists of whatever denomination continued over several generations, and for sure, the 8th Baronet would not have been happy about the location of the *Sion Chapel* adjacent to his land, but he did not have jurisdiction over the land it was built on as previously explained.

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 which is free to download and read on his website samuelstewart.com :-

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 Peggs 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 the maps indicate that may have been the case. If we refer to John Nichols record of the Sion Chapel on page 3, 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. There should be a record of an application being made to the Bishop’s court to register the premises as a dissenting meeting house, but it is not possible to access this at the time of writing due to the coronavirus lockdown situation.

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.

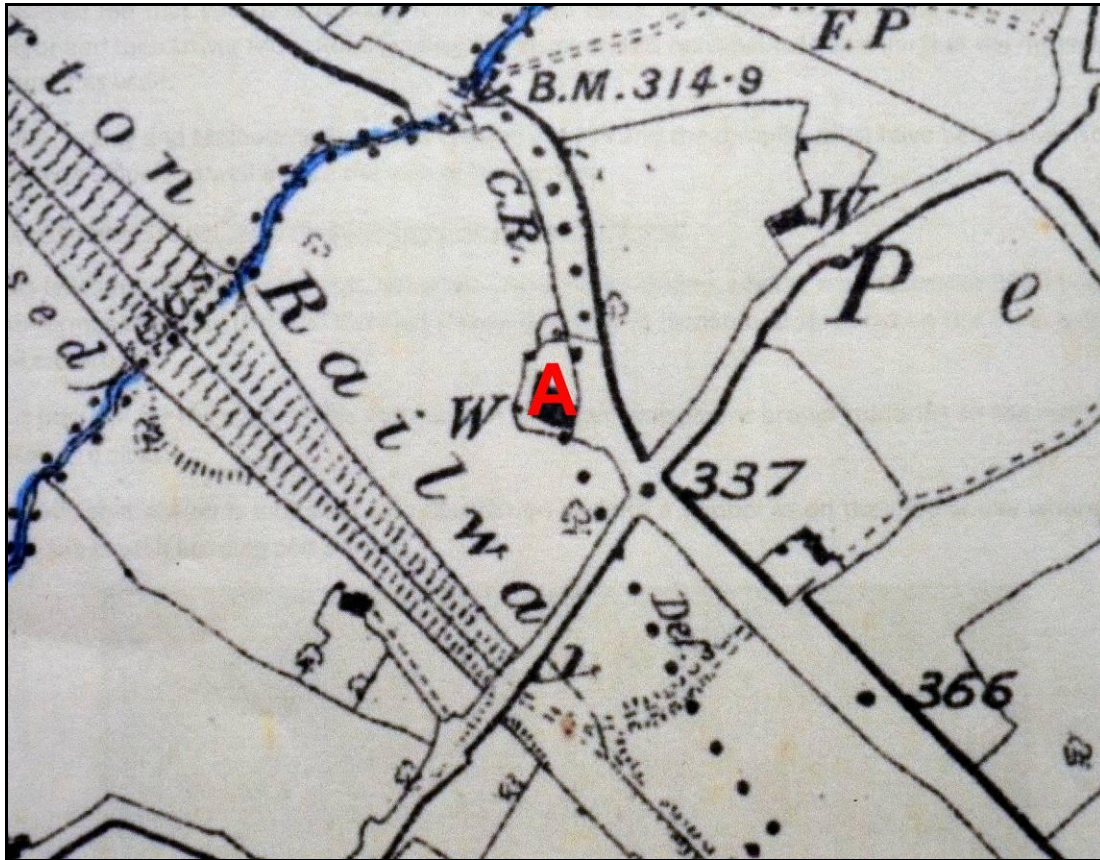
Elizabeth was the wife of the wealthy hosier, banker, and benefactor to the poor William Sherwin (1768-1864) of Coleorton who was a strong supporter of the Church of England in the area. He was one of the main subscribers to the Coleorton Railway. In William Sherwin’s “Will”, it statedand bequest all 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 building adjoining the turnpike and moved into their new place of worship which they called Bethel Chapel.

PART 5

FOLLOWING THE CLOSURE OF THE SION CHAPEL



1885 PUBLISHED 6 INCH O/S MAP
(SURVEYED IN 1881)

THE PENNY SCHOOL (c.1850 to c. 1880)

A different shaped building is now shown on the plot marked **A** on the 1885 map. In the 1901 census for Peggs Green, two semi-detached cottages on the site are described as "**The Old School House**". It is believed that the Sion Chapel was re-built / altered to form a small school house. "*Hand me down hearsay*" tells us that the school apparently got its name of "The Penny School" on the basis of what the children paid weekly for the use of the school books.

The children of the **poor** did not go to school at all in the early years of Queen Victoria's reign. They went out to work as soon as they were old enough to help bring in money to feed the family. The children of the **wealthier** landowners and businessmen were taught at home or sent to local private schools. By the end of the Victorian age, **free schools** had been set up, and all children had to go to school.

The Penny School was later converted into two semi-detached cottages. The building still exists to day and is named "Zion Cottage".

Apparently, references were required for children to attend these Penny Schools and the weekly payment of one penny was very strictly adhered to, but even this small amount was too much for some families. Children from poor families who were getting financial assistance from the parish to feed and clothe them did not have to pay, neither did those living in the "Workhouse" (one existed in Coleorton) who were called "the paupers"

An extract from an article in the 1950 Loughborough Echo newspaper related by William Stacey who lived 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".

William Stacey also related that another school existed in one of the cottages behind the Railway Inn (now the Gelsmoor). The headmaster of this school was Mr. Woods, a stately personage, with a long beard.

The 1851, 1861 and 1871 Peggs Green census' list Francis (Frank?) Barkby as a School Master living in Peggs Green. In the 1871 census he is living with his wife Elizabeth, and they are aged 63 and 61 respectively, but they are not mentioned in the 1881 census. However, the "1887 History Gazette and Directory of Leicestershire and Rutland' lists him as being a Cow keeper, Boot and Shoe maker and School Teacher. It is assumed that it was this Francis (Frank) Barkby that Mr. Stacey was referring to in the preceding newspaper article.

Evidence suggests that the Penny School closed c.1880 as the 1874 to 1899 register for the old "Griffydam Wesleyan Methodist Day School & Sunday School 1853-1914", in Peggs Green, listed a number of pupils coming to there "from Mr. Barkby's", but only up to 1880. Below is a table listing those pupils who came from Frank Barkby's school to the Griffydam Wesleyan Methodist Day School.

NAME	ADMITTANCE DATE	PARENT OR GUARDIAN	DATE OF BIRTH	ADDRESS
Mary Oliver	24.8.1874	John Oliver	6.3.1867.	Griffydam
Thomas Oliver	24.8.1874	John Oliver	6.2.1869	Griffydam
Ellen Oliver	27.8.1874	John Oliver	5.1.1863	Griffydam
Clara Earp	25.1 1875		16.3.1869	Griffydam
Elizabeth Wilton	5.4.1875	John Gough	4.11.1867	Peggs's Green
Mary A Holland	17.3. 1878	William Holland	17.1.1866	Griffydam
Fanny Saddington	15.9.1878	John Saddington	28.6.1871	Griffydam
Selina Saddington	15.9.1878	John Saddington	16.3.1868	Griffydam
Edward Edwards	27.2,1879	John Edwards	1.7.1871	Peggs's Green
William Massey	17.2.1879	John Massey	23.12.1870	Peggs's Green
John Massey	17.2.1879	John Massey	8.9.1873	Peggs's Green
Sarah Jane Bailey	16.3.1879	Thomas Bailey	31.1.1871	Peggs's Green

Charles Bailey	16.3.1879	Thomas Bailey	31.1.1871	Pegg's Green
John Bailey	16.3.1879	Thomas Bailey	11.1.1872	Pegg's Green
Isiah Hodges	5.5.1879	William Hodges	15.12.1871	Griffydam
John Curtis	5.5.1879	John Curtis	14.6.1873	Pegg's Green
Emily Curtis	5.5.1879	John Curtis	17.2.1871	Pegg's Green
Frederick Curtis	12.5.1879	John Curtis	7.2.1870	Pegg's Green
Annie Morley	12.5.1879	Joseph Morley	3.12.1874	Pegg's Green
Mary Lord	13.5.1879	Thomas Lord	6.5.1873	Pegg's Green
Mary A Hodges	19.5.1879	William Hodges	21.7.1873	Griffydam
John Edwards	16.6.1879	John Edwards	31.12.1873	Pegg's Green
Mary A Hurst	16.6.1879	William Hurst	14.1.1869	Griffydam
Elizabeth Shakespeare	16.6.1879	Thomas Shakespeare	27.7.1868.	Pegg's Green
Kate Shakespeare	16.6.1879	Thomas Shakespeare	23.9.1870	Pegg's Green
Mary Ann Shakespeare	16.6.1879	Thomas Shakespeare	10.5.1873	Pegg's Green
Edith Hallam	26.1.1880	Thomas Hallam	29.9.1869	Swannington
Oscar Hallam	26.1.1880	Thomas Hallam	12.9.1871	Swannington

In the Coalville Times dated Friday, Oct 9th, 1953, "Lavengro" recorded the following article based on interviews carried out with members at "**Coleorton Darby and Joan Club**" when the subject of Frank Barkby's school was raised.....*Mr. Barraclough has been deaf for many years, through the effects of an experience at the old school many years ago. There was a violent thunderstorm one afternoon, and he saw every single scholar home safely through the downpour, becoming seriously ill as the result of the drenching. A number present at the meeting, were greatly interested to learn that Mr. Barraclough, now a great age and residing in Wales, remembers his associations with Coleorton and district.*

In the annual report of the Wesleyan committee of Education for the Griffydam Wesleyan Methodist Day & Sunday School" at Pegg's Green, 1880-1884, Samuel Barraclough is listed as the teacher / master at Griffydam - No. of children 145 with average attendance of 100. In the 1881 census for Pegg's Green, Samuel Barraclough was recorded as a school master aged 24 and born in Manchester. At the time he was lodging with Mary. A. Tugby, a widower aged 49. This would have probably been after the Penny School closed.

The author takes the view that at some point, Samuel Barraclough moved from the Griffydam Wesleyan Methodist Day School, at Pegg's Green, to become a teacher at the "*Penny School*", hence the report by "Lavengro" following his meeting with the Coleorton Darby and Joan Club.

The author believes that the Penny School would have been a non-conformist school (possibly Wesleyan), based on the fact that Samuel Barraclough had moved from the Griffydam Wesleyan Methodist Day School at Pegg's Green, to teach at the "Penny School".

The author has not found any information suggesting that the Coleorton Beaumont's, who were opposed to non-conformism in all its forms, contributed at all to the Penny

School for obvious reasons. In 1884, the land on which the Sion Chapel and Penny School were sited came back into Coleorton Parish and became part of the Beaumont estate, although it is quite likely that Beaumont got his hands on it prior to that. This would be a plausible explanation as to why the Penny School eventually closed and pupils were transferred to the non - conformist Wesleyan Methodist Day School, which was not on his patch.

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PART 6.

DETAILS OF KNOWN OWNERS / OCCUPANTS OF ZION'S HILL COTTAGES

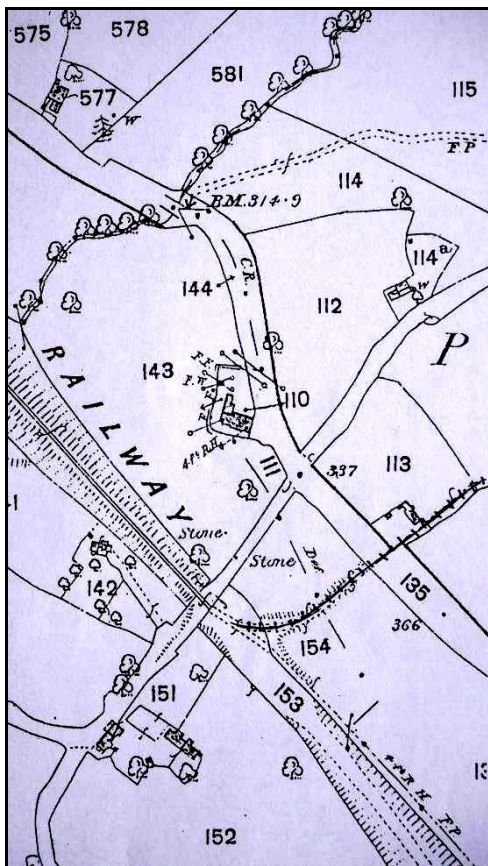
1901 - The 1901 census for Pegg's Green describes the old Sion Chapel / The Penny School building as the 'Old School House', which had obviously been converted into two adjoining cottages by then with Fred and Mary Bailey with daughter Clara living in one and James Rowell with his wife Edith and children living in the other

1920 - 1964 - In the 1920 Beaumont Estate sale, the two adjoining Zion cottages and gardens, Lot 15, were purchased by 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 existing occupier was recorded in the sales documents as being Mr. J. Richards. See extract from Estate sales map below - Plot 15

1920 - George and Clara Hall rented one of the adjoining cottage from James Stewart.



Extract from the 1920 Beaumont estate Document



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

BIOGRAPHY OF JAMES STEWART 1878 - 1964



**James (aka Jim) Stewart aged 23
b. 28th Feb 1878 - m. 1900 - d. 2nd June 1964**

James Stewart was the oldest son and first born child of Samuel and Annie Stewart, parents of the large Stewart family of Lount who were a staunch Methodist family. He was the great uncle of the author of this publication. As a young lad, living on the family small holding in Lount, opposite Coleorton Pottery, Jim was required to walk into Ashby de la Zouch before attending Staunton Harold school to pick up the daily newspapers. When he first left school, he was hired as a farm labourer whilst he was visiting the Ashby De La Zouch Statutes Fair. He worked away from home at the farm, which was reported to be along the "Top Brand" towards Tongue. Jim was allowed one day off a month and had to walk several miles to his home in Lount and back. The living and working conditions were apparently so bad, that his parents eventually brought him back home. Jim, being the oldest son, was the first to follow his father into Coleorton Pottery. The 1891 census confirms he was a potter at 13 years of age, and he continued to work there until c.1900. when he married Clara Hall (see below). Jim played cricket for "Staunton Harold Cricket Club", along with three of his younger brothers.

George and Ann Hall (b. 1850 and 1851 respectively) were the parents of Jim's wife to be Clara, and are shown in the 1891 census as living in Rotten Row, an island of land

within Coleorton which was in fact part of the Township of Thringstone which was in turn part of the ecclesiastical parish of Whitwick. Clara was aged 11 at that time. They lived in the far end cottage in the row in Elverston's Yard off Stoney Lane. George Hall was a coal miner at the Coleorton "Bug & Wink" colliery but later in life worked at Whitwick coal mine.

It is not known how Jim and Clara met, but they were married in 1900. The 1901 census for Rotten Row shows that George and Ann Hall, Jim and Clara Stewart with daughter Gertrude are living together in Elverston's Yard. The living condition would have been quite basic at that time. By 1901, Jim, like his father-in-law, was also working as a coal miner, an occupation which obviously paid better than a pottery hand, which was clearly the attraction, although Coleorton Pottery at that time was in a parlous state anyway.

If the reader refers to the publication entitled a History of Elverston's Yard which is free to download and read on the author's website they will see that the first evidence of building in Elverston's Yard took place in 1650 when a farm house was built by John Elverston.

Jim and Clara subsequently had two further daughters Evelyn, and Hilda Noreen (the youngest). Hilda never married. Jim and Clara continued to live with her parents, **who eventually moved to Zion Cottages on Zion's Hill, Peggs Green, Coleorton, Leics on the site of the former "Sion Chapel" following the above described purchase by Jim of the two cottages.**

The 1921 census shows that George Hall (b. Thringstone) and Ann Hall (b. Osgathorpe), both given as aged 71, with two granddaughters', Evelyn and Gertrude, aged 21 and 19 respectively are living at Zion Cottage. Gertrude's employment is listed as "Home Duties" and Evelyn's as "hosiery Mender - Own Account - At home. This poses the question as to where their mother and father Jim and Clara were. Bearing in mind that it was a tiny one up one down cottage at that time and there would not have been room, even in those days, for everyone in the family. The adjoining cottage was apparently occupied by someone else who would have been paying rent to Jim who owned both cottages.

The 1921 census reveals that Jim, Clara and their youngest daughter Hilda Noreen, aged 11, were boarding at 46, Crescent Road, Hugglescote with Jim's sister Annie Elizabeth (aka Liz) and her husband William (aka Bill) Fowkes (both age 39). Bill was recorded as an out of work miner at Snibston Colliery, so presumably the rent from Jim and Clara would have been welcome. Jim was recorded as a coal hewer at Whitwick Colliery Company Ltd. Interestingly, the enumerator had crossed out Visitors and replaced it with Boarders.

Annie Elizabeth (Liz) Stewart (b. 4th Feb 1883 - m.1903 - d. 9th Nov 1982)



Liz, great auntie of the author, went into service after leaving Staunton Harold School. She was twenty years old when she married William (Bill) Fowkes in 1903. He was from Coleorton and worked at Snibston Colliery. They didn't have any children. Liz and Bill lived in Crescent Road, Coalville and Later Vaughan Street, Coalville. Liz passed away 3 months short of her 100th birthday. **Bill was very artistic and a brilliant musician, and it was generally recognised that his talents were wasted at the pit. He tragically died as a result of thrombosis after breaking a tibia at work.**

Jim, Clara and the family would presumably have moved into Zion Cottage soon after Jim purchased them, and it is thought that Clara's parents would have occupied the adjoining cottage. George Hall was given as a trustee of Coleorton Methodist Chapel in 1924, so at least one of the parents would have been alive.

Hilda, Jim and Clara's youngest daughter, moved into the small adjoining cottage to her mother and father when it became vacant and remained there until she passed away on 20th June 1975 aged 65. She was outlived by her sister's Evelyn and Gertrude. Their daughter Gertrude (Gertie) Stewart (died 1st Feb 1998 aged 97) married Alf Bird (died 24th Oct 1953 aged 55) who lived in "Rotten Row" when they met. They lived opposite her dad Jim's cottage, but further up Zion's Hill in the row of cottages which Eileen Richard's (daughter of Jim Richards' the baker) had built. Following Alf's death, Gertie incorporated a small shop selling general groceries into their property, which would seem impossible nowadays in such a small place, considering they had a son Dennis, and two daughters, Gwenda and Margaret. Dennis married Joan and they had a son Jeremy who had a serious road accident in his early teens and was severely brain damaged. Gwenda married Maurice Leeson who was a teacher and they didn't have children. Margaret married her second cousin Henry Menzies who worked for 3Ms and they moved to America where they raised a family and still live there.

Evelyn married Ernie Williams who became a deputy at New Lount Colliery and they had a daughter Rita who became a teacher. Evelyn Williams was always known as Peb, it seems she received this nick name because that is how her younger sister Hilda pronounced her name when she was a baby. Ernie had a new house built in Lower Moor Road, Coleorton. Ernie and Evelyn (Peb) worshiped at Coleorton Primitive Methodist Chapel where Evelyn played the organ for a number of years.

Jim Stewart was known for being surly and abrupt by his family. Jim, his wife Clara and

the family worshiped at Coleorton Primitive Methodist Chapel, following the Stewarts' methodist tradition. He was a teacher at Coleorton Sunday School. Trevor Stewart (his great nephew) remembers suggesting rather unwisely during one of his Sunday school lessons, that we were all descended from monkeys, to which Jim replied "yo may bay mi lad, bur I anner".

Jim was 'called to rest' on 2nd June 1964 aged 86 and Clara followed him later that year on 4th Oct aged 84. Jim, Clara and family members are buried in the Griffydam Wesleyan Methodist Chapel Graveyard.



Clara Stewart's mother Ann Hall - b.1851
photographed at the end of Zion Cottages on the site of the former
"Sion Chapel"

This photograph of Ann Hall is historically important in that it shows Zion Hill (part of the old Hinckley to Melbourne Common turnpike) prior to the row of terraced cottages that

were built on the left by Eileen Richards, the daughter of James Richards, baker on School Lane. The turning to School Lane is immediately on the left and Weighbridge Cottage is further up the hill on the left.



**Clara's father George Hall - b.1850
photographed at the rear of the Zion Cottage nearest the road**



Photograph taken outside Coleorton Primitive Methodist chapel during the Golden Jubilee celebrations showing Clara Hall - Jim Stewart's wife

Ladies Bottom Row Left to Right :-

Mrs Freerson Mee, Mrs Wright, Polly Whyman, Clara Stewart (Nee. Hall) wife of Jim Stewart, Ada Stewart, Greta Stewart (Grandma and sister of the author respectively)

Men Second Row Left to Right :-

Freerson Mee (Conductor of choir), Laban Clifford, Samuel Stewart (grandfather of the author) Frankie Bailey, Jim Stewart (uncle of the author and husband of Clara on bottom row)

Men Top Row Left to Right :-

John Whyman, Charlie Wright, Jack Richards, Billie Benson, Herbert Rowell