

**A BAZAAR FOR THE RESTORATION OF
ST. MARY'S CHURCH TOWER, OSGATHORPE
SUPPORTED BY THE LADY DOWAGER BEAUMONT**



A 1795 ENGRAVING OF THE CHURCH

This 1795 engraving of St. Mary's Church, Osgathorpe taken from "*John Nichol's History and Antiquities of Leicestershire*" is the earliest known illustration of the church. Note the bell tower encased in wood and capped by the tiled steeple, later to be covered in lead. The church was awarded Grade II listing in 1965. In the distance partly hidden by the church are the Almshouses built for widows of Clergymen, bequeathed by Thomas Harley of Osgathorpe in his will dated 1670.

BY SAMUEL T STEWART - DECEMBER 2023

COMPLIMENTARY READING

For those who wish to learn more about the industrial and social history of our local villages including Osgathorpe, Coleorton, Newbold, Swannington, Staunton Harold, Lount, Gelsmoor and Worthington parish, the author's website includes over 200 publications covering a wide range of subjects which are all free to download and read .

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BAZAAR HELD IN THE FIELD ADJACENT TO THE LADY DOWAGER BEAUMONT'S HOUSE AT SWANNINGTON

Leicester Daily Post – July 22nd 1908

OSGATHORPE CHURCH BAZAAR PROPOSED TOWER FOR 12TH CENTURY CHURCH

Miss Imogen Booth, daughter of the right honourable. Charles Booth, of Gracedieu Manor, on Tuesday at Lady (Dowager) Beaumont's residence, Swannington, opened a bazaar in aid of a fund for the restoration of Osgathorpe parish church tower.

The Rev. H. M. Williams, the rector, says in a statement he has issued "this ancient church dating from the 12th century was restored in the year 1860 when the present beautiful chancel apse was added. For lack of sufficient funds, it was then only possible to erect a temporary wooden turret, which became unsafe and had to be removed in the year 1897 leaving the bells enclosed beneath the roof. Steps were at once taken to raise a fund for the building of a tower on the south side of the church which should both serve to carry the bells and also provide a much needed choir vestry. The late rector (Rev. Walter Augustus Williams 1866-1906) as the result of unceasing efforts, succeeded in raising £600 for this purpose, and a further sum of £250 is now required to complete the work which he began".

Lady Beaumont's residence was an ideal rendezvous for the event, and the visitors including the Rev. Canon Broughton (vicar of Hugglescote); the Rev. C. Shrewsbury (vicar of Thringstone); the Rev. H. Robinson (rector of Coleorton); the Rev. W. H. Hepworth (rector of Shepshed); Mr. T and Miss Cope (of Osbaston Hall), Miss de Lisle, Dr. Hamilton, Miss Chester, Miss Rouse, Mrs. Firth, Mrs. W. and Miss S. Moss, Mr and Mrs. T. Atkins of Swannington, Dr J. C. S. and Mrs. Burkitt of Whitwick and Lady Beaumont.

The exhibits were staged in a tent in a field adjoining Swannington House, and summer weather gave hopes of a successful venture. A surprising rich collection of "goods" common to bazaar were for sale. The stall holders were: L. Beaumont, Lady Morton, Mrs. G. Bailey, Miss Miller, Miss Pearson, Miss Parker, Mrs. H. Walker, Miss Clay and others.

There were concerts, selections by the Coronation band of Coalville, performances by the veteran and popular Signor Trevor, late of Ashby de la Zouch, who gave ventriloquial and conjuring entertainments, and dancing, together with competitions for dolls, cakes, polishing and hat trimming. Mr. Noyes Jones, of Coalville organised the concerts. Mr. A. J. Williams managed a rifle range. Mrs. Baker has a "Baker's Oven" to surprise her patrons; Mrs. Atkinson a "**Blackbird Pie**". Miss Morton of Osgathorpe conducted a "Sally Stall", and there were a number of other amusements.

The Rev. H. M. Williams in introducing Miss Booth, read a letter from the Rev. R. Bailey, vicar of Swannington, wishing the movement success. The rector paid tribute to Mr and Mrs. Booth for their assistance and regretted that Mrs. Booth, who had been announced to open the bazaar, was unable to attend, but said she had forwarded a handsome donation, and her daughter would declare the bazaar open. The Booth family were well known, and it would be impertinence not to compliment

them on their interest in such movements. They had but to turn to Gracedieu Manor for help. Indeed all the parishes round the locality could say the same, and he was obliged to Miss. Booth for her attending.

Miss Booth said she was extremely sorry her mother was unable to open the bazaar, but she would be pleased to hear of the kind references made by the rector. Miss Booth congratulated the organisers on the glorious weather, and beautiful grounds placed at their disposal by Lady Beaumont, and wished the bazaar every success. The bazaar was largely patronised during the day.



Front of the Lady Dowager Beaumont's "Swannington House"



**Painting of rear of "Swannington House" and gardens
by Miss F. E. Fullager – c.1917**