

COLEORTON WAKE WEEK
AS SEEN THROUGH
THE EYES OF THE NEWSPAPERS



DRAFT - ONGOING PROJECT

BY SAMUEL T STEWART - JANUARY 2023

FRONT COVER PICTURE

The Village Fair by Joseph Parry (1756 - 1826) - Copyright Manchester Art Gallery

PREFACE

Coleorton Wakes Week was an historical event which survived from at least the early 18th century till the 1960s. Using old newspapers as a research tool has enabled the author to put this publication together. Any reader who may be in possession of further information specific to Coleorton Wake Week would be welcomed by the author as would photographs of the Coleorton Wake which was held on the Wake Field. The author can be contacted via his website:-

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PUBLISHED BY SAMUEL T STEWART

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INTRODUCTION

Before reading this publication, the reader needs to understand that the story of "Coleorton Wake weeks" has nothing to do with the "Wake" introduced by the Irish, where a vigil is kept over a corpse before burial and the life is later celebrated, usually with the accompaniment of drinking and festivity.

The roots of the English wake date back to the early years of the Christian church in Britain. They began as a celebration in each parish at the time of the anniversary of the consecration of the church, typically on the saint's day to whom the church was dedicated. These parish festivals usually began on a Sunday, with a prayer vigil the night before the feast-day, attended by most of the parishioners. Many of them lasted for a few days to as much as a week. Initially, only the evening prayer vigil was referred to as the "wake," but later the term was used to refer to the entire celebration. **The Coleorton Wake weeks were held following the first Sunday after August 26th.**

By the early eighteenth century, these wakes had become almost completely secularized. They still lasted for up to a week, and were one of the main celebrations of each village year. However, any residual religious rites were limited to a special church service on the Sunday which fell within the run of the wake.

The English Wake was a time of celebration, often coarse and vulgar, but it was a popular and a traditional event which had been held for centuries in numerous rural villages, and it was often referred to as "Feast". By the early nineteenth century, the Wake had been quashed in some villages and curtailed in others, mainly because of the drunkenness and rowdiness which accompanied it, but it was still a common event across the Leicestershire countryside, including Coleorton.

They were occasions for ample eating and copious drinking, music, dancing, sports and other worldly entertainments. Some of the activities most common at wakes would have been boxing, wheelbarrow races while blindfolded for men, smock races for women, hot hasty-pudding eating contests, pigeon-flying, chasing a greased pig or a large roll of cheese, sack races, or grinning through a horse collar (the grinner considered the funniest won). Some wakes would have also featured blood sports such as cock-fighting, bull, bear or badger-baiting. Morris-dancers were common entertainers at wakes, and travelling musicians attended, playing for the dances held during the festivities to earn a few coins.

In a fair-like atmosphere, stalls would have been set up in an open area, sometimes on the village green and sometimes in the open fields provided by a local landowner, or in the grounds of a local public house as was the case in Coleorton. Treats such as pies, plum-cakes, gingerbread, fresh fruits and nuts would have been sold at the various stalls. Many chapmen (marketmen, Mongers, Merchants) or itinerant pedlars made it a point to attend many of these wakes as part of their rounds, so they could benefit from setting up their own stalls to sell their wares to the merry-making inhabitants. The local publicans would have laid on great quantities of alcoholic beverages and typically offered prizes for those athletes who excelled in the rustic sports played during the wake. Livestock sales might also have taken place during the wake in some locales, although there is no record of this in Coleorton.

The animal-baiting, once no rare phenomenon during the annual Wakes week, gradually gave way to more civilised entertainment like skittles, hand turned small horse roundabouts, boat swings and gypsy shows etc.

Wakes in England by the early nineteenth century were considered by many as such profane and unruly events that there were many efforts being made to suppress them completely. The clergy were joined by the local landowners, who no longer wished to allow the use of their fields in this age of enclosure, and the more prosperous farmers who did not care to have their farm labourers drinking and carousing for several days when they needed them working the land. Others took the attitude that they were protecting the lower classes, who spent so much of their savings on the hospitality provided during their community's wake, and were able to enjoy free food provided by the inn owners.

Due to the numerous public houses in Coleorton and the immediate area, this made for drunkenness to be rife and fighting was a regular occurrence. An attempt has been made here through the newspapers, to provide the reader with an overview of both the positive and negative impacts of the Coleorton Wake weeks which were certainly one of the better supported in the area and attracted hundreds of people from both the good and bad elements of society.

The earliest record the author has found of a Coleorton Wake week was in 1840, and the fact that the tradition survived in principle through until the 1960s, when a fair was held in the Wake Field adjacent to the old layout of Coleorton cross-roads (featured later) is testament to their popularity. This was still known as Coleorton Wakes. The author, based on his research, is of the view that the Coleorton Wake was one of the longest surviving Wake, certainly in Leicestershire.

The "Coleorton Wakes" used to be one of the biggest events of its kind for miles around. There were stalls, coconut-shies, fair ground type rides, and various other attractions around the village pubs, with cricket matches in the paddock involving the "Beaumont Cricket Club" and visiting teams who saw it as an important event to show off their talents. Apparently, Ware's travelling circus became a feature during later years, although little is known of this now. There is evidence that food was provided in the local pubs and one record refers to the village matrons and pretty maids partaking of their annual tea, and enjoying themselves right heartily at Mr. Fewkes house, the Angel Inn, on The Moor in 1879. The Wake of course was the holiday of the year for the working man and particularly revered by the coal miners who were very protective of it.

Coleorton Wakes Week also had a religious association, the "Feast Sunday" was always set apart as a "camp meeting Sunday", and this was the occasion for a large assembly of enthusiasts (mainly Methodists) in the field opposite Coleorton Post Office. They sang and prayed and preached throughout the whole day, under a lovely setting of tall trees. To all intents and purposes, it was a "Nonconformist Rally". It was something far more elaborate than the united open air services established at Coleorton Wake (fair) on the Wake Field in later years.

Apparently stalls , swings and roundabouts for Wakes Week were first introduced in the "Pump Field" behind the George Inn, before being established at the rear of the Beaumont Arms.

A past resident of Coleorton, Mr William Stacey, contributed the following in a 1950 newspaper article :-

*Life in these days was not all work (presumably referring to the early 1900's). There was for instance, the annual Coleorton Wake - always the first Sunday after Aug 26th. **These were held in the field behind "The Beaumont Arms"**, and the main attractions were swinging boats and small horses turned around by hand. There was much drinking in the Beaumont Arms, of which Mr. John Peck Charville was the landlord, and there was considerable custom for a mixture of ale and port wine - known throughout the district as "Charville's Tear Coat". The reaction of any who were reckless enough to consume more than a modicum of this stimulant, was beyond prophecy.*

I think it is safe to say that the focal point for excessive imbibing were the "Beaumont Arms" and the "Blacksmith's Arms" which haven't survived today and have been replaced by modern houses. What a story these two public houses could tell.

Fighting at the Beaumont Arms was a regular occurrence and apparently became even more intense on "Wake Monday". *The Coalville Times recorded one memorable bout between Jack Richards and a travelling showman who had a steel hook as a replacement for a hand which had been amputated, from which Jack received some ugly slashes.*

The following newspaper report provides an example of a fracas which occurred in 1897 as the result of excessive imbibing on "Charville's Tear Coat" :-

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE DERBY MERCURY – SEPTEMBER 15TH 1897

"Tear Coat at Coleorton Wakes"

George Martin and Fred Martin, colliers, were charged with being drunk and disorderly at Coleorton. Sergeant Derby said both defendants were very disorderly and wanted to fight, and strike at Police Constable Adcock. Next day, George came to him and said he was sorry for what had happened, and said that he had been having some of that "Tear Coat" (laughter). – The Chairman: What is that? – Sergeant Derby: At the public house sir, I have never had it myself, but it makes them fairly mad as soon as they get out of the house, although they might be alright inside. – Defendants were found 2s. 6d and 10s costs each, the chairman adding that the bench thought it a disgraceful thing that publicans should sell such stuff.

A SELECTION OF EARLY NEWSPAPER REPORTS RELATING TO COLEORTON WAKES WEEK

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE LEICESTER CHRONICLE - SAT 04 SEPT 1841

COLEORTON

The annual "Feast or Wake", as it is called, took place here this week, and may be said to have passed off more quietly than is customary. The Ranters held a camp meeting on Monday, which attracted considerable crowds from this and the neighbouring villages (This is referred to on page 4)

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE LEICESTER CHRONICLE - SAT, 03 SEPT 1853

A MATCH OF CRICKET was played in the park belonging to Sir G. H. Beaumont, on Monday last, between the Coalville and Coleorton Clubs : the weather being fine, and on the day what is called the "**Wake Monday**", many spectators were present, who appeared to enjoy the sport as much as the players, and certainly with less exertion. Not having room for the score of each innings, it may suffice to state that the men of Coalville bore way the palm of victory, in one innings.

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE LEICESTERSHIRE MERCURY - SAT 08 AUG 1857

THE COUNTIES OF LEICESTER AND RUTLAND FEAST OR WAKES

Sunday, Aug.9. - Nottingham, Gretton, Middleton, Buckminster, Dalby, Parva, Hugglescote, Twcross. **Sunday, Aug.16.** -Ayston, Bulswick, Cottesback, Duddington, Egleton, Greeton, Ketton, Lyffenham Louth, Sutton by Broughton, Willoughby. Sunday, Aug. 23. - Ashby Magna. **Sunday, Aug. 30.** - **Coleorton**, Diseworth, Benefield, Brigstock, Freeby.

TRANSCRIBED FROM LEICESTERSHIRE MERCURY - SAT, 13 AUG 1859

FEASTS OR WAKES

Sunday, Aug .14. - Dulwick, Stanwick. **Sunday, Aug.21.** - Ayston, Cottesbacch, Duddington, Egleton, Greetham, Ketton, Luffenham South, Lutterworth, Sutton by Broughton, Willoughby, Ashby Magna, Ashbourn. **Sunday, Aug.28.** - **Coleorton**, Benefield, Brigstock, Broughton Astley, Willoughby, Waterless, Diseworth, Bozeat, Brayfield

TRANSCRIBED FROM LEICESTERSHIRE MERCURY - SAT 18 AUG 1860

FEASTS OR WAKES

Sunday, August 19. - Ayston, Cottesbach, Duddington, Egleton, Greetham, Ketton, Luffenham South, Lutterworth, Sutton, Willoughby, Ashby Magna, Addington Parva, Higham Ferrers. **Sunday, August 26.** - **Coleorton**, Diseworth, Brayfield. **Sunday, Sept. 2.** - Boughton, Benefield, Brigstock, Freeby, Disweworth.

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE LEICESTERSHIRE MERCURY - SAT 30 AUG, 1862

FEASTS OR WAKES

Within the circulation of this paper:- **Sunday, Aug.31.** - Ashby Magna, Benefield, Brigstock, **Coleorton**, Congerstone, Freeby, Hinckley, Broughton, Astley, Sutton and Primethorpe, Diseworth, Willoughby, Waterless, Cold Overton. **Sunday, Sept 7.** - Snareston, Quarndon.

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE LEICESTER CHRONICLE - SAT 13 SEPT 1862

During the past week, the village of Coleorton has been kept alive by the annual Wake. There were the usual number of stalls, shooting galleries, and wonderful shows to attract the juveniles, and two clubs on Tuesday and Wednesday, at the Beaumont Arms, which apparently satisfied the adults. On Tuesday, there was a grand dinner, which the members did ample justice to, and on Wednesday, being a woman's club, the ladies took tea ; all was enjoyment, and everyone appeared happy.

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE LEICESTER CHRONICLE - SAT 04 SEPT 1869

THE WAKE

This being the "Wake Week", this usually quiet village wore an uncommonly lively aspect. On Monday a cricket match was played between Coleorton and Thringstone, which resulted in an easy victory for Coleorton. with 8 wickets to spare, and only one man out. On Tuesday, another match was played between Coleorton and Loughborough which resulted in a hard and well won victory for Loughborough. The usual stalls, flying horses, &c., were present in great numbers. The children connected with the Primitive Methodist Sundayschool, had their annual treat in a field near the chapel, and tea was provided for the public at half past 4 o'clock ; but as they were preparing to sit down, a messenger arrived to say that a stack of hay was on fire, belonging to Mr. T. Lakin, and all at once left to render what assistance they could to extinguishing it. Not more than five minutes before the alarm was given, Mrs. Lakin was near the stack, and no signs of fire were perceivable then. The hay was stacked about 6 weeks or 2 months ago. It is believed to be the work of an incendiary, as the stack was on fire at one corner only, and that nearest to the outbuildings. A couple of Policemen were soon on the spot making all enquiries, but they could obtain no clue as to the perpetrators of the mischief. The stack was ultimately pulled down, and water being plentifully thrown on it, it was extinguished. It is not thought that Mr. Lakin will be a great sufferer by the occurrence. It was nearly six o'clock when the friends returned to their tea, after which a number of games were engaged in till dusk.

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE LEICESTER CHRONICLE - SAT, 15 SEPT 1877
COLEORTON
LODGE ANNIVERSARY

*The "Templar" of Friendship Lodge (Ancient Order of Druids), held their annual meeting on the **Wake Tuesday**, at the Queen's Head Inn. After an appropriate sermon by the Rev. W. Beaumont, a procession was formed, which wound its way to the Hall, the residence of Sir G. H. Beaumont. On returning to the Queen's Head, the members sat down to an excellent repast, provided by the worthy host. Dr. Hatchett was called to the chair, and had for his vis-a-vis Mr. Horne, M.N.A. Druid. The usual loyal and patriotic toasts were given from the chair. The healths of Sir G. H. Beaumont were enthusiastically drunk. Votes of thanks were given to the Chairman, surgeons and others.*

LEICESTER CHRONICLE – SEPTEMBER 4TH 1880
THE WAKE

The wake this year was ushered in by one of the heaviest thunderstorms remembered by the oldest inhabitants. Happily we have not yet heard of any damage with the one exception of a valuable game fowl, the property of Mr. Thomas Peters, which was killed in the pen by lightning.

On Monday, at Mr. James Peters, the "Queens Head Inn", there was a well conducted party. The attraction was a fine selection of music. Miss Peters presided at the pianoforte, and her efforts to please were greatly appreciated.

On Tuesday, Mr. Porter, distributed soup, &c., to those whose means precluded them from participating in the good things of the festive season. At Mr. Charville's "Beaumont Arms Inn", there was a display of shows &c., on "The Green". There was also a shooting gallery and photographic establishment.

The "George Inn" – a hostelry famed from the grand old coaching days – fully maintained its ancient character. This old road side Inn is one of the prettiest in Leicestershire. The garden adjoining is aglow with sweet and beautiful roses, and the stately and venerable elm tree in front, is the admiration of all who gaze upon its fine and lofty proportions.

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH GAZETTE - 10 SEPT 1881
COLEORTON
THE WAKE

The weather having taken up, the Wake was kept up in this pretty village with greater spirit than would have otherwise been the case. At Mr. Middleton's, the George Inn, on Monday evening, there was the annual meeting of "the social brothers", with vocal and instrumental music. It must have been gratifying to Mr. and Mrs. Middleton to find that their catering gave much general satisfaction. A most enjoyable evening was spent, everything passing off in a very satisfactory manner.

On the green opposite Mr. Charville's "Beaumont Arms", were the usual stalls, swings, roundabouts, &c. Mr. Charville had some nice social parties, with excellent music to entertain his numerous visitors, so that a most convivial time was spent, the contents of the larder and the well stocked cellar being quite equal to the requirements of the visitors.

On Monday evening, the Coleorton Cricket Club played a match with the Melbourne Town Cricket Club, the visitors being victorious. On Tuesday they again played another Melbourne team, the result being a draw in favour of the home team ??? On

Wednesday, they played the Thringstone Club, the visitors defeating the home team. At the finish of the matches an adjournment took place to the large room at the Beaumont Arms, where enjoyable evenings were spent.

On Wednesday, Mrs. Fewkes, The Angel Inn, entertained the maids and matrons of the village to a good and abundant tea. It is needless to say that the ladies did ample justice to the good things so generously provided them. After tea, the pianoforte was brought into requisition, and the evening was passed quite merrily, one and all upon leaving expressing their thanks to Mrs. Fewkes, for the kindly manner which she had entertained them.

LEICESTER CHRONICLE – SEPTEMBER 5TH 1891

COLEORTON - THE WAKE

Coleorton Village, two and a half miles east of Ashby, is celebrating its annual Wake or Feast this week. Cricket plays an important part in this week's fixtures, and sundry amusements are provided in the heart of the village. The wake and its upholders find many friends from the surrounding hamlets, whom the villagers receive with open heartedness.

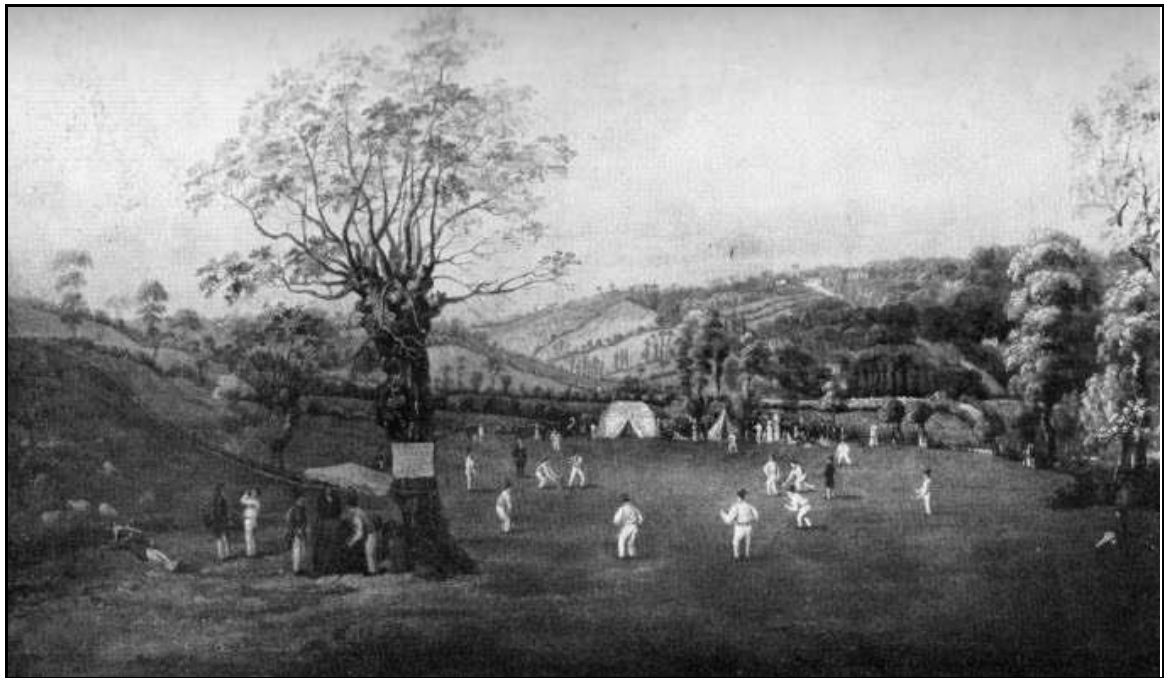
Unfortunately, Monday, in which the Feast opened, was very inclement, rain falling in torrents almost all of the afternoon. The usual dinner took place on Thursday, at the "Angel Inn", and on that evening there were probably few short of two thousand persons enjoying the fun incident to an English wake.

The shows, steam horses &c., were located as in other years near the "Beaumont Arms", and they were largely patronised. Very good conduct was observed by the villagers and visitors. It was long after 11 o'clock before Coleorton returned to its normal quietude, and the round of pleasures was resumed the next morning. Work is tabooed by the miners and others for the week, which is recognised as the holiday of the year.

EXAMPLES OF CRICKET PLAYED IN COLEORTON PADDOCK DURING WAKES WEEK

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE LEICESTER MERCURY - TUES 04 SEPT 1923

COLEORTON WAKES - *This old time "feast" is being celebrated in the charming village where many years ago the Wakes were visited by residents of all parts of the district. "A cricket week" was a particular feature and teams of distinction played "Coleorton Beaumont Cricket Club", which fielded on of the smartest elevens in the county.*



Perhaps reminiscent of the scene when Coleorton Beaumont Cricket Club played their matches on the pitch in Coleorton Paddock during "Wake Week"



The 1897 Coleorton Beaumont Cricket Team photographed
in Coleorton paddock

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE LEICESTER MAIL - SAT, 07 SEPT 1867

**COLEORTON
THE WAKES**

This festival came off in the early part of this week. A cricket match was to have been played by the Coleorton "Lads" and Gresley, but as the latter could not make it convenient to come, some friendly matches were got up between the former, and a good days sport was enjoyed by both players and sightseers. Mr. A. Fowler, of the Beaumont Arms, was on the ground with refreshments, and catered admirably. On Tuesday the Local order of Druids held their annual dinner at loyal Host Fowlers when 40 sat down to an excellent repast, got up in mine host's usual good style, reflecting much credit on him. After the cloth was drawn, the usual matters were gone through, customary on such occasions, and each member enjoyed himself. This festival, which a few years ago was thought would have died away, has this year been more than a match for the knowing ones, indeed many were the expressions of the "old" people that for many years so many out-door amusements had not been seen. Early on Monday morning, they gathered around the Beaumont Arms Inn, to welcome the new host, Mr. Fowler.

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE LEICESTER CHRONICLE - SAT 04 SEPT 1869

THE WAKE

This being the "Wake Week", this usually quiet village wore an uncommonly lively aspect. On Monday a cricket match was played between Coleorton and Thringstone, which resulted in an easy victory for Coleorton. with 8 wickets to spare, and only one man out. On Tuesday, another match was played between Coleorton and Loughborough which resulted in a hard and well won victory for Loughborough. The usual stalls, flying horses, &c., were present in great numbers. The children connected with the Primitive Methodist Sundayschool, had their annual treat in a field near the chapel, and tea was provided for the public at half past 4 o'clock ; but as they were preparing to sit down, a messenger arrived to say that a stack of hay was on fire, belonging to Mr. T. Lakin, and all at once left to render what assistance they could to extinguishing it. Not more than five minutes before the alarm was given, Mrs. Lakin was near the stack, and no signs of fire were perceivable then. The hay was stacked about 6 weeks or 2 months ago. It is believed to be the work of an incendiary, as the stack was on fire at one corner only, and that nearest to the outbuildings. A couple of Policemen were soon on the spot making all enquiries, but they could obtain no clue as to the perpetrators of the mischief. The stack was ultimately pulled down, and water being plentifully thrown on it, it was extinguished. It is not thought that Mr. Lakin will be a great sufferer by the occurrence. It was nearly six o'clock when the friends returned to their tea, after which a number of games were engaged in till dusk.

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE LEICESTER DAILY MERCURY - SEPT 8TH 1879

COLEORTON WAKES

*The weather during the past week having been beautifully fine, **the Wake has been kept with much spirit.***

The various clubs met at their club houses (presumably tents) and dined together (presumably in a Marquee). "The Ancient Druids", headed by "The Sheepshed (former name for Shepshed) Brass Band", proceeded through the village to the Parish church, where an excellent sermon was preached by the Rev. W. Beaumont, Rural Dean.

On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, there were cricket matches between the Coleorton Club, The Forest Rock Cricket Club (Whitwick), Melbourne and the Ashby de la Zouch second eleven. The first match was won by the Forest Rock Team; the other two by Coleorton.

At Mr. Fewkes of "The Angel Inn", the village matrons and pretty maids partook of their annual tea, and enjoyed themselves right heartily. The best of order has been kept throughout the week by P.C. Hancock.

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH GAZETTE - 10 SEPT 1881
COLEORTON
THE WAKE

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On Wednesday Mrs. Fewkes, Angel Inn, entertained the maids and matrons of the village to a good and abundant tea. It is needless to say that the ladies did ample justice to the good things so generously provided them. After tea, the pianoforte was brought into requisition, and the evening was passed quite merrily, one and all upon leaving expressing their thanks to Mrs. Fewkes, for the kindly manner which she had entertained them.

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE LEICESTER CHRONICLE - SAT 27 AUGUST 1892

*Mrs. Charville, (Beaumont Arms) on behalf of her husband, a publican, of Coleorton, made an application for an out-door license from two till ten **on the occasion of a cricket match at Coleorton during wake week.** - The applicant and Mr. Holloway judged the distance of the proposed tent as 500 yards way from the house. - After consideration, the applicant was granted.*

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE LEICESTER CHRONICLE - SAT 15TH SEPT 1900

KEGWORTH V COLEORTON

Played at Coleorton during Wakes Week on Monday. Kegworth finished the season with a weak team and were defeated. Scores:-

KEGWORTH

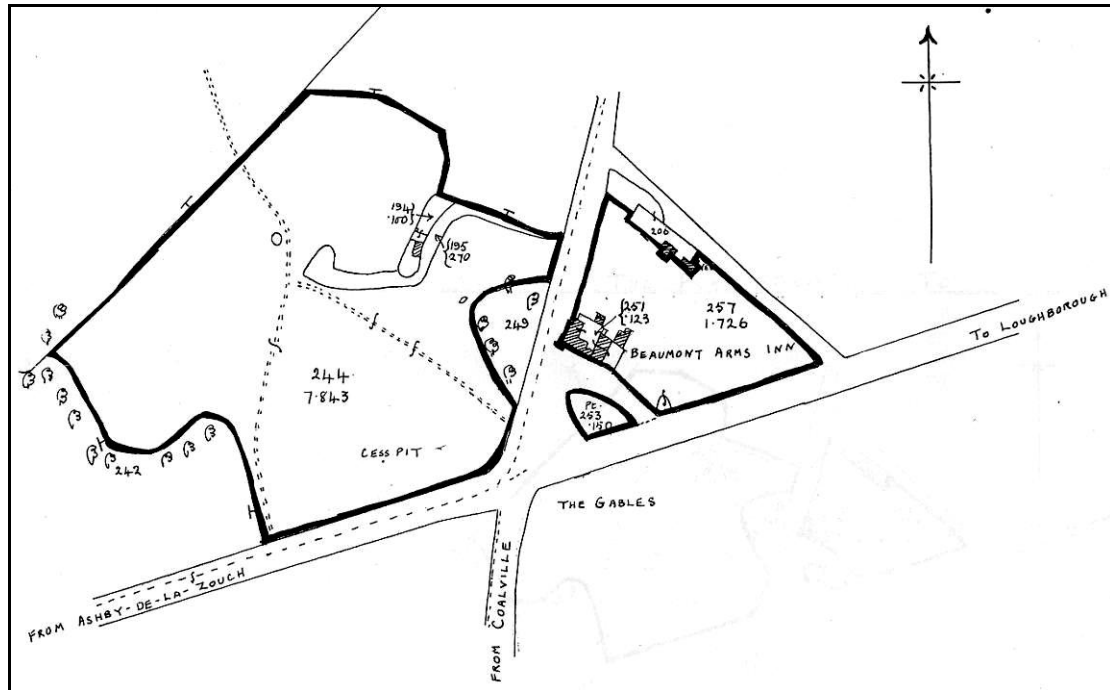
J. Smith c Checkland b Andrews	2
R. Bowley b Robinson	3
W. North b Andrews	8
E. Bostock c & b Andrews	10
W. Bowler b Williams	12
W. Grimley b Williams	6
W. P. Wooley c Smith b Andrews	6
W. Beresford b Williams	0
J. Cook b Williams	0
H. Young not out	0
Extras	8
Total	55

COLEORTON

C. Checkland lbw b Bostock	6
W. Smith b Bostock	12
A. Andrews c North b Bowley	0
J. Williams b Bostock	6
J. Robinson run out	20
J. Hayward b Bostock	3
J. Smith st Bowler b Bowley	2
W. Lord b Bowley	4
J. Charville b Grimley	4
J. Bishop c Bostock b Grimley	8
J. Smith not out	0
Extras	6
Total	71

THE COLEORTON WAKE IN MORE RECENT TIMES

The Coleorton Wake (Fair) was re-sited twice before being finally located, c.1945 in the "Wakes Field" which was sited diagonally across the Loughborough Road from where the Beaumont Arms stood. The Coleorton Churches always held a Sunday night service there, usually, on the dodgem car platform.



MAP SHOWING THE LAYOUT OF COLEORTON CROSS ROADS PRIOR TO THEM BEING REALIGNED in 1992

It survived there for many years, and gave a great deal of pleasure to the locals (including the author) with dodgem cars, pellet guns shooting range, roundabouts, coconut shies and swinging - boats being the main attractions, which were brought there by fairground operators. Unlike today, what seemed great prizes were on offer in those days, and could be won fairly and squarely for a sensible outlay. Amongst these were coconuts and glass ornaments and dishes, (known as Carnival Ware) etc., which can still be seen for sale in antique shops.

NOTTINGHAM EVENING POST – AUGUST 30TH 1949

Services conducted from the "Dodgems"

Conducting evening services from an amusement fair in the village, the Rector of Coleorton Rev. E. A. Eager stood on the "Dodgem Cars Machine" while he preached to a united congregation of about 400, including the fair ground attendants. The fair was lit up as the congregation sang hymns unaccompanied.

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE LEICESTER EVENING MAIL - MON 28TH AUG 1950

**CHURCH SERVICE AT COLEORTON FAIR (WAKES)
PULPIT WAS DOGEM CAR PLATFORM**

The coloured lights of an amusement fair at Coleorton, near Coalville, were switched on at dusk last night, for a religious service held under the gay awning of the dodgem car platform. the congregation - fair people, motorists from the nearby main road, village folk and visitors from all parts of the district - thronged the alley-ways between roundabouts and side shows.

The show people's service, once an institution, inseparable from Coleorton Wakes, was revived a year ago by the Rector, the Rev. A. E. Eagar R.N.

This year the address was given by the Methodist minister, the Rev. S. McCutcheon of Ashby, and the Rector led the prayers.

The caravan dwellers of the fair made special technical arrangements for the service. They started one of their mobile electrical generators to supply power for the hundreds of lights and wired up a barker's microphone to amplify the speech and singing.

In his address to a congregation of nearly 500, Mr. McCutcheon said "There is a certain common denominator between ourselves and the show people. In one way or another, we are each trying to add to the content of life and to enrich it"

Speaking of the world in general, he said there was everywhere evident the same clamour for life.

Some people made the mistake in their search of confusing quantity with quality.

Finally he used the dodgem platform from which he was addressing the crowd as an allegory.

"Here" he said, "as in the world, people bump into one another. In life, if they have a spiritual centre, they may move and revolve in ordered circles.



The Rev. Samuel McCutcheon
Much loved by the Coleorton Primitive Methodists

AN ALTERNATIVE REPORT

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE ECHO - SEPTEMBER 01 1950

COLEORTON WAKES SPECIAL SERVICE

In connection with the Wakes Sunday, a special service was conducted on the fairground by the Rector, the Rev. A. E. Eagar on Sunday evening, when several hundred attended.

The singing was led by the robed choir of Coleorton Parish Church, and an address was given by the Re. S. McCutcheon, the Ashby Primitive Methodist circuit minister.

**TRANSCRIBED FROM THE NOTTINGHAM EVENING POST -
TUESDAY 02 SEPTEMBER 1952**

Coleorton Wakes began on Saturday and continued till last night. On Sunday night, a religious service, conducted by the Rev. Samuel McCutcheon was held under the awning of one of the amusement machines. A collection raised £6 10s. for the Coleorton Toc H old peoples fund.

EXAMPLES OF FRACAS CAUSED BY EXCESSIVE DRINKING AT THE LOCAL PUBLIC HOUSES DURING COLEORTON WAKE WEEKS

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE LEICESTER CHRONICLE - SAT 15 SEPT 1900

ASSAULT AT COLEORTON. - Sarah A. Billings, wife of Joseph Billings, collier, Coleorton was summoned for assaulting Mary Knifton, wife of a collier, at Coleorton on September 4th. - Defendant did not appear, and plaintiff said defendant and she were in the Blacksmith's Arms, and they were both calling each other names, when defendant struck her in the eye with a mug. **It was Coleorton wakes, and defendant was waiting upon customers.** - Fredk. Knifton, husband of plaintiff, corroborated as to the assault. - Defendant said the plaintiff was half drunk at the time, while her husband was step dancing. As defendant passed with her baby in her arms, plaintiff used bad language and attempted to strike her, but knocked against the mug defendant had in her hand. - Mary Ward, called for the defence, said she saw no blows struck. - Fined 5s. 6d., and 13s. 6d. costs, or seven days.

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE COALVILLE TIMES - FRIDAY 07 SEPTEMBER 1906

AT COLEORTON WAKE

James Henry Kirkby, labourer, Coalville was summoned for being drunk and disorderly at Coleorton on September 3rd, also with assaulting P.C. Higgs while in the execution of his duty. His wife appeared. **P.C. Higgs said it happened about 10 o'clock on Monday night at Coleorton Wake.** Defendant was very drunk and used disgusting language to his wife. Witness spoke to him and the defendant then struck him a violent blow in the mouth. With the assistance of P.S. Fox, he handcuffed the defendant, who was very violent. They took him to the parish constable's house, while they got a conveyance to take him to the police station.

Defendant was fine £1 1s. and 10s. 6d. costs for the assault, 14 days in default, and for being drunk and disorderly, he was fined 2s. 6d. and 10s. 6d. costs or seven days, the sentence to be concurrent. The total was £2 4s. 6d.

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE LEICESTER POST - MONDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 1919

SET PIECE OF THE DAY COLLAPSES

The Magistrates Clerk referred to a series of summonses and cross-summonses for assault at Coleorton during the Wakes as the "set piece of the day". The principals were George H. Kilby and Joseph Kilby, colliers, Griffydham, who were summoned for assaulting George Hy. Neville. - Joseph was also charged with assaulting Mrs. Neville, while there was a cross-summons against Neville for assaulting George H. and Norah Kilby. - Mr. J. F. Jesson appeared for the Nevilles, and Mr. J. J. Sharp for the Kilbys. - **Mr. Jesson said it was a family feud arising out of the "Wakes".** - The case had been part heard when the question of the adjournment caused Mr. Sharp to suggest that the peace of the family might be better served if the case stopped where it was. - a suggestion to which Mr. Jesson was not opposed, but he

pointed out that the bench should give a decision on his summonses first against the Kilby's. - After consultation, the Chairman said the bench were prepared to dismiss the summonses against the Kilbys. - Mr. Sharp thereupon withdrew his charges against the Nevilles, and each side paid there own costs.

AN ALTERNATIVE REPORT

**TRANSCRIBED FROM THE BURTON OBSERVER AND CHRONICLE -
SATURDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 1919**

FAMILY DIFFERENCES AT COLEORTON "RUCTIONS" LEAD TO POLICE COURT CASE

What the Clerk at the Ashby petty Sessions on Saturday described as "a set piece of the day", was a series of cross-summonses brought as a result of differences between two families at Coleorton on September last.

George H. Kilby (Coleorton) and Joseph kilby (Griffydham), both colliers, were summoned for assaulting George Hy. Neville, a Coleorton collier, at Coleorton on September 1st.

Joseph Kilby was also summoned for assaulting Sarah A. neville, married woman on the same date ; George Hy. Neville, collier, Coleorton, was summoned by George H Kilby for a similar offence ; and a further summons was brought against him by Norah Kilby, married woman, of Coleorton.

Mr. Fisher Jesson appeared for the Neville family and Mr. J. J. Sharp for the Kilby family. It was stated that George Kilby and Neville were brother-in-laws.

***Mr. Jesson described the case as a family feud arising out of the Coleorton wakes.** George Neville said there had been no troble between the families prior to the date of the alleged assault. George Kilby came to his house in a very drunken condition and offered to fight the best man in the place, tapping witness under the chin and on the arm. With that witness "Let out" in self defence. The two Kilby's returned later, burst open the door of witness's house, and without saying anything, commenced to strike him violently, knocking him senseless. Witness went to Ashby the next morning, and on returning, found that his wash house door had been broken open and a spade removed.*

*Cross-examined : Neville had been a defendant in an assault case previously. Mrs. Neville said that as a result of the treatment which her husband had recieved her husband had been under Dr. Orchard, and had lost a weeks work as a consequence. Joseph Kilby struck her twice on the face, and said "he'd kill both the
*****"*

By Mr. Sharp : she had frequently had to send to the police for protection, but they were living much more happily now.

After hearing further evidence, the bench decided to dismiss the case against the Kilbys, and the summons against the Nevilles were withdrawn.

TRANSCRIBED FROM LEICESTER EVENING MAIL - FRIDAY 04 SEPT 1931

MAN TO APPEAL AGAINST COALVILLE COURT

A sentence of two months imprisonment with hard labour was p[assed] by Coalville Magistrates today on Jacob Harold Moore, aged 30, a Coalville miner, for assaulting P.C. Orgill while performing his duty at Coalville on August 30. Moore was also sent

to prison for seven days for being drunk and disorderly, the sentences to run concurrently. Moore pleaded not guilty and made numerous interruptions during the hearing of the case. The constable said when he spoke to Moore on Sunday night about his conduct in Market Street, Moore struck him a violent blow in his face. They closed and fell to the ground. Later, when arrested at his home, Moore threatened the police. He was drunk and very abusive. **He admitted having nine pints of ale and said it was the result of Coleorton wakes and "mixing it"**