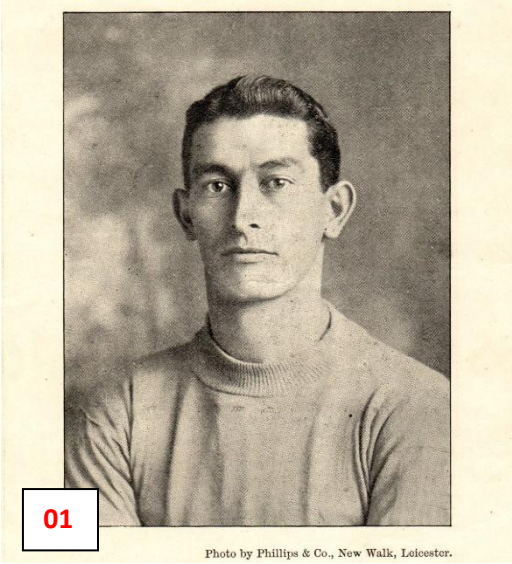
LEICESTER CITY LANDLORDS

Throughout the history of the professional game, players have faced the problem of what to do when they hang up their boots. Many Leicester Fosse and Leicester City players took over pubs, several of which have now disappeared. This season we will be rediscovering and revisiting these 'Players' Pubs' and uncovering the stories about them and about the landlords who ran them.

The Player: Harry Ashby



The 1906/07 'Fosse Football Album' was effusive in its praise of Leicester full-back Harry Ashby.

It stated that, before signing for the Fosse, "*he was invariably a thorn in Leicester's side. He always appeared to be at his best against Fosse, being a difficult man to beat. He is a fine player and if he had been connected with teams which have greater names he must have been considered for higher honours. All through last season he never lost his form and is now playing better than ever. Ashby robs the trickiest forward in the easiest fashion, and his judgement is invariably sound.He is a credit to the club in every way and our only regret is that he was not a "Fossil" years ago. In the Second Division we question whether there are any players who can claim superiority to Ashby at right-back'.*

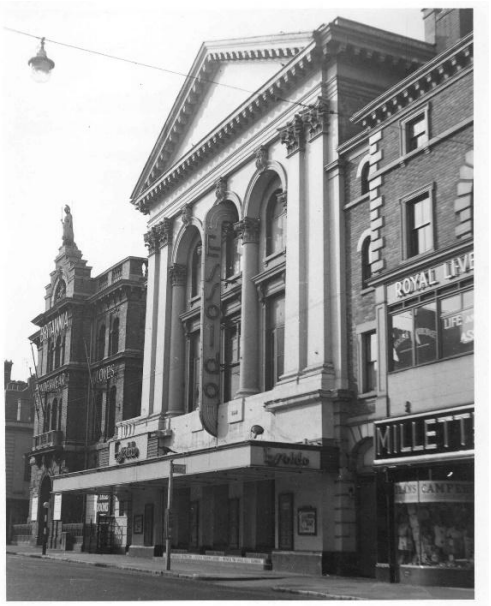
Sadly, Harry's career ended prematurely a few months later when he broke his leg in a game against Hull City in March 1907.

The Pub. The Waggon and Horses

Faced with the premature end of his football career Harry took over the Waggon and Horses Public House at 81 Granby Street.

On the reverse of a photograph in the Club Archive of the Fosse team of 1907/08 is a scribbled note indicating that Harry was awarded a benefit match against Hull City in March 1908. The proceeds from this game would have helped Harry secure the pub which was situated between Dover Street and Calais Hill.

Today a square office building with a ground floor shop stands on the site, four doors up from Dover Street (left below).



Two doors up from the pub, and pictured above on the right was the Temperance Hotel, (empty today, but still standing), and the Temperance Hall, (now demolished after serving as the Essoldo Cinema for years). They were both built by the travel agent Thomas Cook in the 1850s.

It was somehow appropriate that Harry's pub was very near to the Temperance Hall as this building had been the venue for an emergency AGM in 1897 which had saved Leicester Fosse from extinction.

Harry did not stay at the Waggon and Horses for long. Before the First World War he emigrated to Australia where he died in 1926.