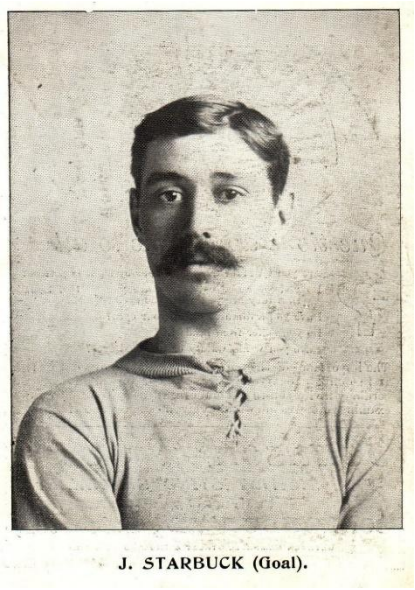
LEICESTER CITY LANDLORD

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: Jonty Starbuck


J. STARBUCK (Goal).

Goalkeeper Jonty was born in Measham 1884 a few months before Leicester Fosse were formed. He played for Burton United in the Football League for two years before signing for the Fosse in 1907, the year that Burton United dropped out of the Footbal League.

This left Jonty looking for a Club. Leicester Fosse signed him on a year's contract paying him £4.00 per week. He stayed at Filbert Street until 1912. His contract for the 1909/10 season is in the Club's artefacts collection. It is the standard agreement imposed by the Football League on clubs and players. Players had to agree to conditions which were so stringent, they were left with virtually no rights. Any infringement of the contract, such as not obeying the trainer's instructions, would result in a £5 fine.

Jonty was unfortunate to be at the Club at the same time as Horace Bailey, the England international goalkeeper who also won an Olympic gold medal as Great Britain's goalkeeper. He neverthrless made 89 first team appearances for the Fossils in his five seasons at Filbert Street. He even made 18 appearances in the Fossils' only season in the top flight in 1908/09.The Club's Minutes Books record that he played in numerous reserve games for the Fosse.

The "Fosse Photo Album" for 1911/12, was a 30 page publication which contained pen pictures and photographs of the Fosse players, Jonty is described as a "player who has been with the Club several seasons who has rendered splendid service in goal". By this time the Club had signed Fred Mearns from Barnsley as their new first team keeper and the Fosse Photo Album reported that "his brilliant play quickly gained him a place in the premier team." Consequently Jonty who played 12 games that season, left the Club in the 1912 close season to play for Ilkeston, before moving back to Burton upon Trent.

The Pub: The Plough Inn, Burton

Like several other of Fosse Players featured in this series 'Leicester City Landlords' Jonty became a publican, becoming the landlord of the Plough Inn in Burton upon Trent's Ford Street in the Stapenhill area of the town. The pub had been built in the 1860s in area where many of Burton's brewery workers lived.

When Jonty died , aged 55, he was still landlord of his pub. Ironically, he died on the same day as his Fosse teammate and team manager, Jimmy Blessington who was also a publican when he died.