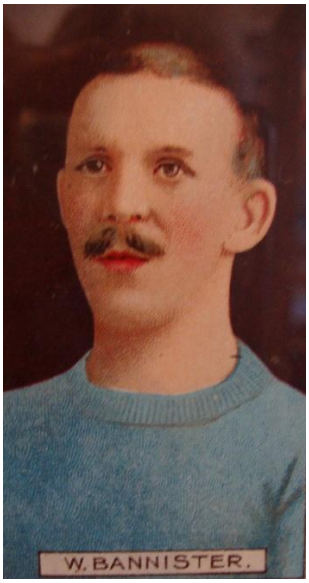
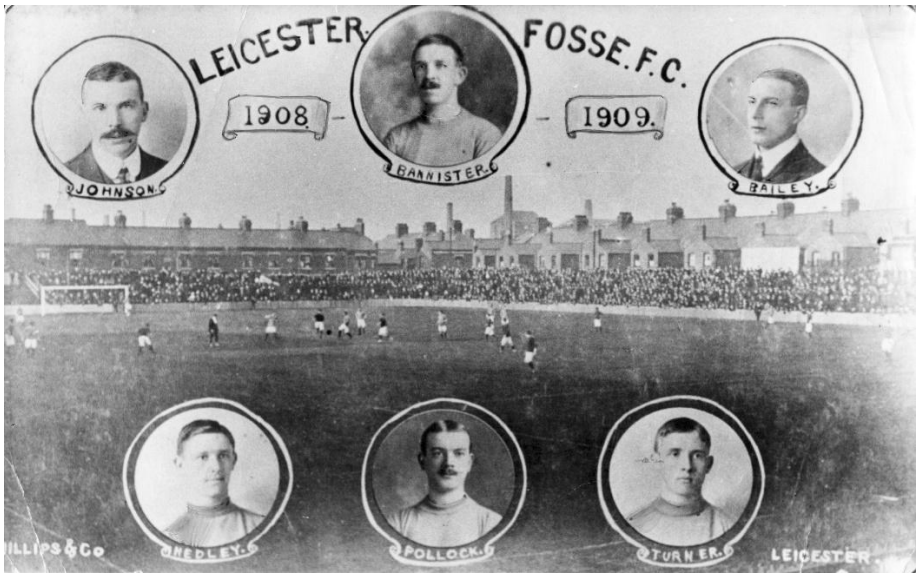
LEICESTER CITY LANDLORDS

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: Billy Bannister





Burnley born Billy Bannister ran pubs in both Leicester and Burnley.

He was only the third England international to play for Leicester Fosse. The other two were goalkeeper Bill Rowley and centre- forward Charles Richards. Like Bannister they won their caps before joining Fosse.

A centre-half, Billy won the first of his two caps in March 1901 in his first season at Turf Moor. Two months later Burnley were relegated. Billy played another season for his home town Club, but they just missed out on promotion. Early the next season he signed for First Division Bolton Wanderers (where he won his second cap) before transferring to Second Division Woolwich Arsenal.

He just missed out on promotion in his first season with the Gunners but was promoted the next year. He then transferred to Second Division Leicester Fosse for a £300.00 fee. In 1907,for the third time in his career, he just missed out on promotion to the top division and for the second time,this time as Fosse's captain, he was promoted the following season.Then, at the end of Fosse's sole season playing in the First Division, he was relegated for the second time. He moved back to Burnley in 1910, before finishing his career at Crewe Alexandra.

GIMSON'S MIRROR BOOT POLISH will not injure the Finest Boots.

W. BANNISTER.

Height 5ft. 11in. Weight 12st. 8lbs.

WE commence our photos with the captain of the team, "Billy" Bannister, one of the most popular players who have ever donned the Fosse colours. He commenced serious football at his birthplace, Burnley, for whom he played two seasons, and then he followed with one at Bolton. He has participated in several representative games, securing International caps against Ireland and Wales, and being reserve against Scotland at Ibroix Park the year that the stands collapsed and so many people were killed.

Besides those above mentioned, Bannister has twice played *v.* Scotland in Inter-League contests, and also for the North against the South.

The Fosse captain had a season and half with Woolwich, and from the latter team he came to Leicester. He is now in his third season here, and we do not think the club has had a more earnest or loyal player. The centre-half position is the most important in the field, for without a tip-top man the opposing forwards are continually breaking through. Bannister has filled the position with credit to himself and the town, for he is very consistent, rarely having an off-day. "Billy" always plays the same game, whether his side is winning or losing, being earnest and eager from start to finish. Under the most adverse circumstances he does his best, and his love for the game makes it impossible for him to take things easy.

This sort of player is always a favourite with the crowd, and Fosse enthusiasts are not slow to recognise his worth to the eleven. Bannister is a difficult player to beat, and he has the necessary weight and judgment to cope with any forward. Whatever the future has in store, the club will never have a more reliable or steady centre-half, and we trust he may long be seen in the Fosse ranks.

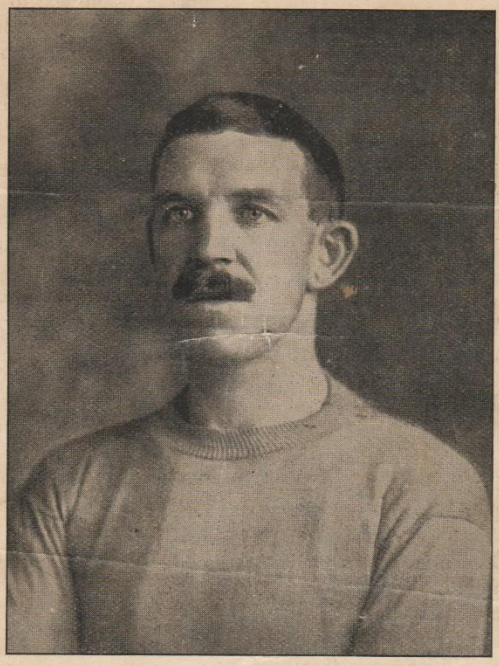


Photo by Phillips & Co., New Walk, Leicester.

Gimson's Mirror Boot Polish. Wholesale Agents, THE GEM CASTOR CO., 83a, WELLINGTON STREET.

The Pub: The Royal Arms

Billy's main pub in Leicester was the Woolcombers' Arms. However this was not his only pub. By 1914 he was running a beer retailers on Welford Road which developed into a pub. He took it over from ex-team mate Jimmy Blessington. This business was sandwiched between a pub called the Prince Leopold and a shop belonging to a Fosse player from the 1890s called Jimmy Brown. This shop was a tobacconist and a parcel and booking office for the Great Central Railway. By 1925, Billy had returned to Burnley where he became a publican. He came back to Leicester in the mid-1930s to run the Woolcombers' Arms in Lower Churchgate.

By this time his first business on Welford Road had become a pub called the Royal Arms which actually brewed its own beer. It survived in this guise until the 1960s when it joined the ever-growing list of Leicester's disappearing hostelries. It is pictured here (first on the right in left hand picture above) just prior to being demolished to make way for the New Walk Centre which has also since been demolished. The actual site of the pub is opposite the still existing York Road.