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 Turner

When Leicester born inside-left Billy Turner signed professional forms for Leicester Fosse in February 1906, he faced stiff competition for a place in the first team. Although we do not have Billy's contract in the Club's archives we do have the contracts of a couple of his team mates of a similar status and he would probably have been earning about £2.00 a week, on a contract that would have been renewed annually.

The Directors always selected the Fosse teams and Billy's name, entered as R. W. Turner, (his name was Richard William) makes frequent appearances in the Directors' Minutes books between 1906 and 1909. This is because he was regularly selected for the reserves.

He played little part in the team that won a place in First Division in 1908, but he had a run in the side toward the end of the First Division season, scoring against FA Cup winners Manchester United at Filbert Street.

Unfortunately, one of his games was the record 12-0 defeat at the hands of Nottingham Forest. This startling scoreline led to a Football League enquiry, but the Fossils were exonerated on the grounds that they were suffering from a collective hangover after celebrating the marriage of former teammate, Billy's namesake, 'Leggy' Turner.

It is highly likely that Billy was part of these inebriated celebrations and this would have stood him in good stead for his career as a publican which he developed when his playing days were over.

The Pub: The Granby Hotel

Billy retired from football at the age of 29 following spells at Portsmouth and Leyton. By 1916, he is listed in the local directories as running a beer retail business at 47Wharf Street. He was there until 1928 when he is recorded as running the Granby Hotel in Morton Road, in West Humberstone. His Wharf Street business passed to a Percy Turner, who was probably his son. Billy was still running the Granby Hotel in 1941, but had disappeared from the records by 1947. Meanwhile his old beer retail business in Wharf Street was being developed by Percy who brewed on his premises which became known as the 'Volunteer Inn' by 1935, and the 'Rifle Volunteer' pub by 1941. He was still there in 1947, but by 1954, the 'Rifle Volunteer' seems to have ceased trading and the Turners, along with their pubs, have passed out of Leicester pub history.