Leicester City Locations

There are many locations in Leicester and Leicestershire which have been very significant in the history of Leicester Fosse and Leicester City.

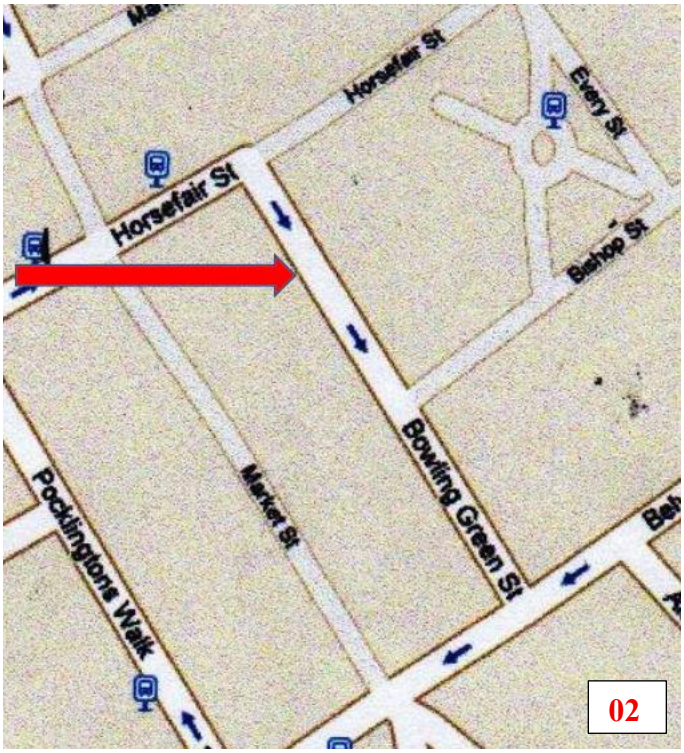
Some of the buildings have long gone, some have changed and some are still with us.

Club Historian John Hutchinson's new series revisits each of these sites and tells the story behind them.

16. Rowton Buildings, Bowling Green Street

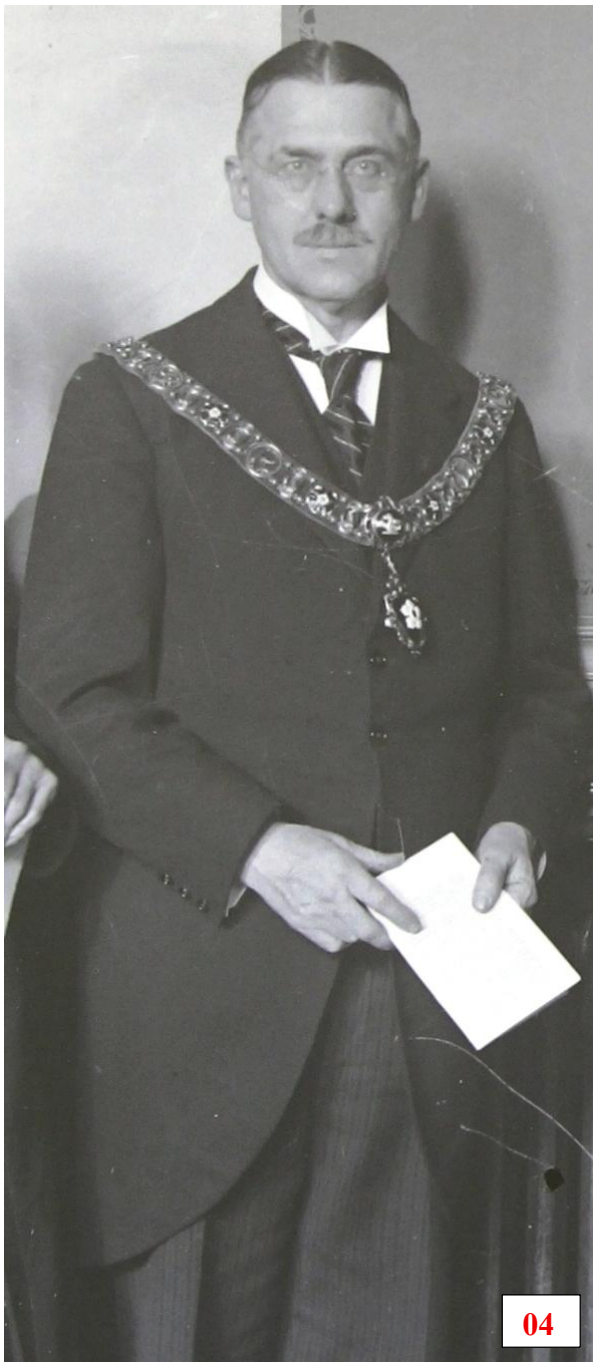
When the Football League was suspended in April 1915 for the duration of the war, Leicester Fosse finished the season bottom but one of the two division league, with only Glossop below them. Both sides had to seek re-election. Glossop failed and have never played in the Football League since.

Leicester Fosse were re-elected. However, their relentless decline continued during the next four years of playing in the very poorly attended wartime regional leagues. By 1919 the club was in an unsustainable financial state and would have been in no position to take their place in the Football League which was due to resume in August 1919.



Herbert Simpson was a prominent Leicester citizen and it was at his office at the Rowton Buildings **(Picture 01)** in Bowling Green Street behind the Town Hall **(Picture 02)** that the future of Leicester Fosse and its transformation into Leicester City Football Club occurred during the summer of 1919.

His firm was known as Herbert Simpson and Bennett. Rowton was the maiden name of his wife Sarah. The couple had married in 1894. They lived in a grand house near Victoria Park called 'Glenholme' on the corner of Regent Road and Salisbury Road. **(Picture 03)** Both the office building and the house still exist.



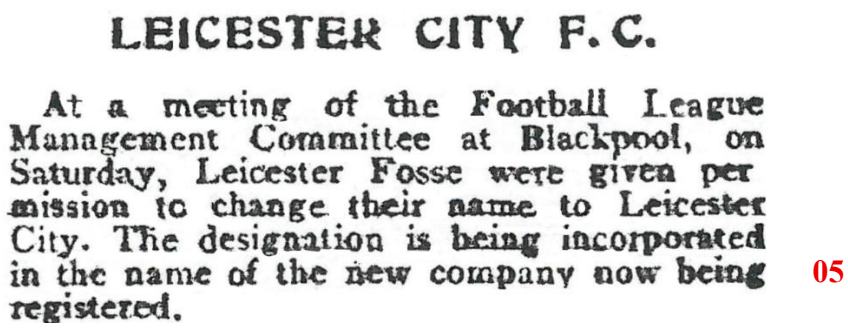
Simpson **(Picture 04**) had been practicing as a solicitor since 1895. In 1912 he became a Conservative Councillor, In later years he was a key figure in the establishment of the Leicester aerodrome at Stoughton. Before the First World War he had been a volunteer in the Territorial Army and was recommissioned as a captain in September 1914. In later years, he was to become Lord Mayor of Leicester in 1924 (when he unveiled Leicester's magnificent Lutyens-designed War Memorial on Victoria Park) and Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire in 1925.

On 16th May 1919, an Extraordinary General Meeting of Leicester Fosse shareholders was convened at the Rowton Buildings to discuss the Club's debt to the United Counties Bank of over £3,150 (approximately £183,000 in today's values). There was no chance of meeting this debt.

At this meeting, the Leicester Fosse chairman W.H Squires proposed that the old club be wound up and taken over by a new company. This was passed unanimously and a liquidator, John Fowler Beale, was appointed.

At the end of the month, it was announced at a creditors' meeting that there would still be a deficiency of over £940 (£52,000 in today's values) after the Fosse's assets had been realised. Plans for a takeover of Leicester Fosse by a new company, which had already been agreed to by the Football League, were set in motion.

On July 5th, permission was received to change the name of the reconstructed club to Leicester City Football Club. This was to reflect the town's new city status of City granted by George V following his visit to Leicester nearly three weeks earlier.



LEICESTER CITY F.C.

At a meeting of the Football League Management Committee at Blackpool, on Saturday, Leicester Fosse were given permission to change their name to Leicester City. The designation is being incorporated in the name of the new company now being registered.

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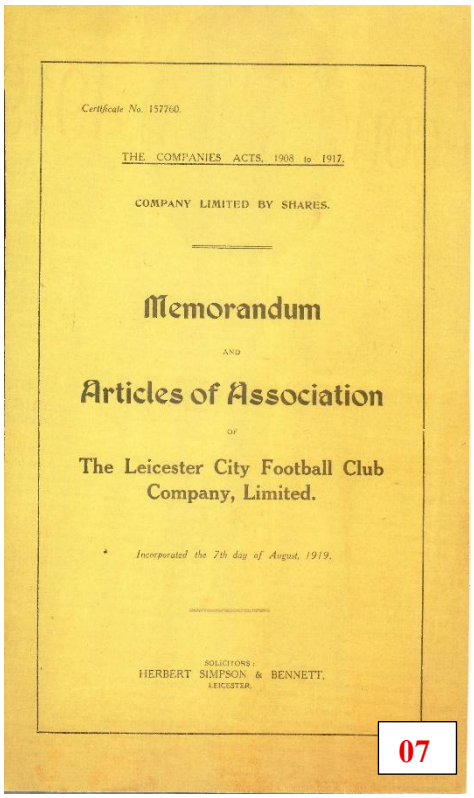
In a letter to the club in 2006, Herbert Simpson's grandson Andrew provided an additional reason for the club's new name by pointing out that Leicester Tigers Rugby Union Club was already registered as Leicester Football Club. The first reference to the club's new name appeared in the Leicester Daily Mercury on July 7th 1919 **(Picture 05).**

The directors of the new company **(Picture 06),** who included some ex-Fosse directors, arranged to purchase Fosse's assets for £4,500 from the liquidator. This was to be paid in cash from a proposed share issue intended to raise £10,000. They stated that the aims of the new company were to strengthen the team, to improve the Filbert Street ground, to renegotiate Filbert Street's lease from the Corporation "and to promote football, cricket, lacrosse, lawn tennis, hockey, bowls, bicycle and tricycle riding, running, jumping, physical training, and the development of the human frame and other athletic sports, games, pastimes and exercises".


Certificate No. 157760.

THE COMPANIES ACTS, 1908 to 1917.

COMPANY LIMITED BY SHARES.

Memorandum

AND

Articles of Association

OF

The Leicester City Football Club Company, Limited.

Incorporated the 7th day of August, 1919.

SOLICITORS:
HERBERT SIMPSON & BENNETT,
LEICESTER.

07

And so it was that on August 7th 1919 this new company was registered **(Picture 07).** at the Rowton Buildings in Bowling Green Street.