

## Extract from a Warwickshire Newspaper of 1837, describing the Lighthorne Coronation Celebrations for Queen Victoria

### Lighthorne

Among all the festive rejoicings that have taken place in celebrating the Coronation of our beloved Queen, that of the village of Lighthorne seems to stand pre-eminent. For several days previous to the day of the Coronation a select committee had been appointed to receive subscriptions, and make every preparation that would contribute to the comfort and enjoyment of the poor. Accordingly, they had a spacious booth erected, 90 feet by 33, in the best manner possible, by Mrs. Wilkins and Sons. The morning of the Coronation day was ushered in by ringing of bells and other demonstrations of joy. At the hour of twelve 121 children walked from the school room attended by a band of music; and when they arrived at the booth, the children took their seats at the table, attended by their friends to assist them, where they were regaled with roast beef and plum-pudding, and ale. At one o'clock the tables were all cleared, and a fresh supply of roast beef graced the board; and every poor man and his wife sat down to dinner. The widows and the aged had a liberal supply of beef and ale sent to the board. When the children returned and grace said, "the health of the Queen" was proposed, and drunk with three times three, all the company standing. "God save the Queen" was then sung by the whole assemblage, the band playing in the most delightful manner. "Lord and Lady Willoughby," with three times three; song - "The throne of our Queen is an Englishman's heart." "The Rev. C. Palmer and Lady C. Palmer;" glee - "The morn stands on tiptoe." "Hugh Williams, Esq.;" glee - "The Canadian boatman." The elderly females then enjoyed their tea, and the young ones the dance, which was continued until the sun proclaimed the approach of day. The morning of Friday was occupied by the committee auditing the bills, and making a liberal distribution amongst the poor of soup, bread, and meat. The evening was spent as the day before - tea and dancing until a late hour. Saturday evening concluded with a tea party and dancing, when all retired at an early hour, declaring it one of the happiest meetings they had ever enjoyed. Thus closed the most joyous scene that every graced a village.

### Notes on the Wilkins Family by Colin Such (2024)

The 'Mrs Wilkins and Sons' referred to as the erectors of the 'booth' were the occupants of Hill Farm in the 1841 census. It is strange that her farmer husband, William, is not mentioned. They had several sons who became carpenters, including Thomas, baptised 15 February 1807 and Edward, baptised 23 May 1813, both of whom were carpenters and both of whom married women with the name Mary Aubrey, who were different people. The Mary Aubrey who married Thomas Wilkins in Lighthorne on 15 May 1834 came from Brailes and her parents were William and Mary Aubrey; the Mary Aubrey who married Edward Wilkins on 31 August 1840 came from Lighthorne and her parents were William and Fanny Aubrey. So both Mary Aubreys became Mary Wilkins and were sisters-in-law. It would appear that there were two different men with the name William Aubrey and the two Marys were not step-sisters as well as sisters-in-law.

Thomas and Mary Wilkins had a large family which included William, born 1837, who in 1875-76 was the builder employed to build the new nave and chancel for the church. There is a wall plaque stating this in the church. His sister Sarah, born 1842, was responsible for the needlework sampler, completed in 1856, which is in the archive of the History Society (LH196).

When William constructed the church he was living at Dene Hollow in Old School Lane. The 1841 census gives no indication of cottage locations, but in the 1851 census he was 14 and living with his parents in 'carpenter's shop', his father being a carpenter employing 4 men, 1 being William. The

juxtaposition of the entries in the 1851 census return suggests that the capenter's shop (meaning workshop) was Dene Hollow, next to Bishop's Farmhouse, where John Bishop lived. The 1861 census shows that the family were still in residence there. By 1871 William's parents had both died and William was now the head of the household, aged 33, a carpenter and joiner, living with his wife, Sarah Ann, 25, their 3 month old daughter, Mary Jane and William's sister, Hannah, 27, a schoolmistress. They employed a domestic servant.

In the 1911 census Thomas Henry Wilkins, the son of William, is married to Annie and is a farmer and employer, living at Hill Farm, the farm occupied by his great-grandparents at the time of Queen Victoria's coronation in 1837.