



The Wedding of Miss Olive Royce and Capt. T.H. Holt Hughes.

Glen House, Herring Bridge

It seems that a substantial house has stood on this site for many hundreds of years. The cellar walls of the present house are built of Lincoln stone, up to about three feet from the ground. Also when the plaster was removed from the walls of the first floor during the last renovation work, arched windows surrounded by stone were discovered. There are signs that alterations have been made to the house at different times - the third storey windows were originally of the 'dormer - type', that is until 1840, when the roof was raised. Various notes were left around by craftsmen, and these too were found quite recently.

Clearly the oldest part of the house is the middle section (18th century), and also the 'wash-house' which is built onto it.

The large barn, which was also made from Lincoln stone, was originally joined to two cottages, which can clearly be seen in the first photograph, and the wall, which is all that remains of them can be seen in the aerial view. The Harbour Master is reputed to have lived in one of these cottages. At one time Pinchbeck was a busy port - river transport ceased to be practical on the arrival of the railway.

Near to Glen House was the village 'lock-up', where the stocks were housed at one time.

These large old houses really warrant a much more thorough investigation and report. If only time would allow!



An aerial view of Glen House, Herring Bridge.

SALE THIS DAY. GLEN HOUSE, PINCHBECK.

Mahogany four-post and iron and brass bedsteads with crimson, damask, and moreen hangings, 4 feather beds, counterpanes, blankets and quilts, mahogany and painted drawers, dressing tables and washstands, double and single chamber services, and bed-room appendages, handsome rosewood cottage Piano, mahogany dining, loo, card, and other tables, mahogany horsehair-seated chairs, kitchen and culinary utensils, and miscellaneous effects.

J. and G. KINGSTON will SELL the above upon the premises occupied by Mr. COATES MAPLES, known as Glen House, Pinchbeck (in consequence of his giving up housekeeping). This Day, Friday, March 17th, 1883.

Also the Garden Effects, and about One Ton of Scotch Regent POTATOES.

The place of sale adjoins Pinchbeck station.

The sale will be strictly for cash, and will commence at 2.30 to a minute.

Auction, Valuation, and Land Agency Offices: Spalding and Holbeach, 13th March, 1883.

W. S. Royce



William Stapleton Royce

Born in Albert Street, Spalding in 1858 - one of a large family. In early childhood he attended the local school for very young children called the Willesby School, and then onto Mr. William Pretty's Commercial School, which was attended mainly by the sons of the middle-classes, where he received a basic education. However, as Royce's parents had a large family to support, he had to leave school early so that he could learn a trade. In 1872 he was appointed to a Spalding joiner. However, he didn't take to the trade as it didn't offer any prospects or any outlet for his imagination. He decided, therefore, to run away. In 1874 he went off to London before his apprenticeship was completed.

Eventually he found work, but he still wasn't happy as he needed a larger scope and greater opportunities and also adventure. He remained on the alert for anything that offered a chance of these things. At last the chance came - In 1876 the Government of the Cape Colony were looking for men to build railways. It offered a free passage and a three year contract at good wages. Royce jumped at it and offered himself and was accepted. He was adventurous at heart - he felt sure that South Africa was the country that had 'golden joys' to offer. The occupation of Royce and others like him was to consist of training and supervising the native and coloured

labourers. This was a task of some responsibility for which Royce was very suitable. South Africa was on the eve of great developments in many directions, not least in that of railway construction. Royce thoroughly enjoyed this period of his life - the open air, lovely scenery, and the good friends that he made. There were dances, boating excursions on the river and picnics. His skill with the concertina was often in demand.

In 1879 he proposed marriage to Emma Broedelet - her father had gone to South Africa from Rotterdam for missionary work in 1861. The wedding took place in 1882. Royce was very satisfied with life - he was happily married, was working on his own account and was holding a position of authority. His worst days of poverty were over and he had every reason to expect a successful future. He had no cause to regret leaving Spalding, but he still held a great affection for the place.

Royce's brother joined him from England and assisted him in many of his projects. In 1888 the Royces decided to make a trip back home. Mrs. Royce would remain in Spalding where their three children were to be educated. However, she rejoined him after only a short separation. By 1893 there were five children, the last a daughter. Mrs. Royce returned to Spalding at this time taking with her three of her children, her sister and a Zulu attendant - a cottage was taken for them in Spring Street to await Royce's coming. When he arrived they decided on a larger house - one in Maltkiln Lane, Donington. They named it 'Komani House' as a reminder of their Queenstown days. Royce returned to South Africa to continue his contracts.

Royce considered that he had every good reason to be satisfied with the position that he had reached - a little more than twenty years after leaving Spalding. He had returned a successful man and bought a home for his family. All through these years whilst making this fortune, his thoughts cherished the memory of Spalding, and he had very tender feelings for the place.

In 1895 came another visit home, where his parents were living during the absences of himself and his wife. He was now able to make quite frequent trips back to Donington. He felt that his real work lay in South Africa, and so kept shuffling backwards and forwards. When the Boer War started in 1899, Royce thought that he would live at home until the trouble was all over. He was now a rich man and could have retired and spent his remaining years in comfort. However, the inactivity at home was unbearable and he was thankful to get back to his contracts in 1902, when the peace came.

Mrs. Royce had finally settled in Donington and her husband continued his visits, leaving their sons behind to work on the various contracts. Royce had become a prominent man whilst on these visits home and was invited to stand for Parliament as a Conservative at the first General Election of 1910. It was a great wrench to give up the work that he loved so much but he thought that it was his duty to accept and in 1909 he left his beloved South Africa for good.

He threw himself heart and soul into the work but he was defeated in both the elections of 1910. The country at that time did not want a Conservative administration and Spalding was no exception. Defeated at the polls he continued his activities in Spalding. He was invited to stand for a couple of other constituencies but he declined as there was plenty of work to do where he was. When Royce had finally left South Africa, he sold out all his shares in concerns there and so he had a considerable amount of money. He invested a good part of it in land becoming a prominent landowner in the district. He also bought 'The Hall' at Pinchbeck and had it enlarged and improved and made it his home.



The Hall prior to W.S. Royce owning it.

During the Great War Royce became a 'Special Constable' in Spalding and was a Justice of the Peace. He was on a good many committees - his time was fully occupied in being of service to his country. He had given up Politics for the duration of the War, but was glad of the chance to resume his political activities with the General Election of 1918. But his views were no longer what they had been and he caused a sensation by severing his connection with the Conservatives and he put himself forward as a candidate for the Labour Party. He was adopted at the first General Election after the war. He was now embarking on a new career at the age of sixty.

Royce wanted to improve the conditions in which the poorer classes lived. He was in favour of nationalisation of coal mines and railways. He had in fact favoured this whilst still a Conservative, much to the horror of his fellow associates. The problems of the agricultural workers were also of interest to him, and he strongly supported the principle of Trade Unionism for land workers. He still held the same views on matters of Imperial Policy, believing strongly in the British Commonwealth of Nations. Royce's real work was to serve on committees and to be of use to his constituents in every way possible, rather than fancy speech making. In November 1922 there was a fight for his seat in

Parliament, however he retained the distinction of being the only Labour member in the whole of Lincolnshire. The short lived Parliament of 1923 came to an end, a further fight and another victory for Royce. This was his third and final contest.

In 1924 he was offered the Governship of Tasmania and he decided to accept on the grounds that it was a great honour for Spalding. On Monday 23rd June he caught the train to London and then a bus towards the House of Commons. It was whilst on this bus that he slipped peacefully away - he left a widow and ten children behind.

Otway Hall, a moated mansion owned by the family of that name, stood on the site of the present Hall until it was replaced in 1806.



This photograph was taken after the extension and watch tower were added by W. S. Royce. The watch tower was a reminder of his days spent in South Africa when it was beneficial to be able to keep a look out for marauding Boers.



Mr & Mrs Royce & family in front of the hall in 1910.