

DOP/01/026

Mr. Sid Coles (born 1893)
61 Stacey Avenue
Wolverton

Reads from prog. August 3rd 1885

Supt. Formed a Parks Committee – with officers of Railway Company and reps. of town – they governed the park.

A young town, full of vitality – lot of sports, bands. Park used most of the week. Has Park Minutes Book of 1920's Boxing Tournament, Horticultural Show, Hospital Fete, Schools sports, bands Fire Brigade, competitions, cycling, races, athletics, football.

Before War had Chasewater Charlie – each year had spectacular high wire act etc. Charlie was engaged for Whitsun Sports meetings. Trick cyclist, comedian etc.

120 At 17 or 18 he did competitive running in Wolverton Athletic Club. Had over 100 members. Park used for training. One ladies night. Best cycle track in Midlands. People would have own trainer e.g. Tommy Beckett, Alf Meacham Jimmy Knight Olympic cyclist in 1932. Eddie Jones used to train him and Harry Green – trained at Cricket Ground. Railway Company gave a lot of help in kind to maintain the Park. Golden years of Park, before 1st War and up till 2nd. In best days would have 4-500 in audience for Whit. sports. Stands would be built for it, canvas covered, started at 2.30 p.m.

353 In early days when first started football team, team was built up people brought by Railway as footballers – including his father. His father was later sent to interview men who were good at football.

398 Great belief in FE – Church Institute. Railway initially built schools and churches as well as houses.

514 On Whitsun sports days, had special trains from Northampton. Had book makers every race there'd be betting on. Runners were handicapped, against English champion standard. Women not so interested as men in athletics. All went down when Railway withdrew support after Nationalisation. Had a very good works Ambulance team.

Side 2

028 Organised National Cross County event – describes it.