

# **LEYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

(Founded 1968)  
Registered Charity No. 1024919

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## **AIMS**

To promote an interest in history generally and that  
of the Leyland area in particular

## **MEETINGS**

Held on the first Monday of each month (September to July inclusive)  
at 7.30 pm  
in

**The Shield Room, Banqueting Suite, Civic Centre,  
West Paddock, Leyland**

## **SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Vice Presidents:	£10.00 per annum
Members:	£10.00 per annum
School Members:	£1.00 per annum
Casual Visitors:	£3.00 per meeting

**A MEMBER OF THE LANCASHIRE LOCAL HISTORY FEDERATION  
THE HISTORIC SOCIETY OF LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE  
and  
THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY**

Visit the Leyland Historical Society's Web Site at: <http://www.leylandhistoricalsociety.co.uk>



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## Editorial

Welcome to the fifty-sixth edition of the *Lairland Chronicle*.

It has been an excellent year of entertainment at the Civic Centre monthly meetings. These have been enjoyed by more and more members and visitors who appreciate programmes offering a variety of subjects by such professional and knowledgeable presenters.

Our away-days have been very enjoyable, the coach trip to Durham, the train trip to Manchester, both giving members a chance to get to know each other, especially in the queues in the coffee shops. Alston Hall too is a long-established function bringing members together socially and we thank the staff there for providing our Society's Dinner each year.

Congratulations to James Mawdsley on being awarded the Historian of the Year shield for his contribution to the history of the area. In this and future years the award takes a deviation from being awarded only to contributors to the *Chronicle* to appreciating Society members' activities in the promotion of local history and the Society itself.

Congratulations also to Mrs. Maud Houghton and Mr. David Hunt who were made Life Members of the Society.

The contents of the *Chronicle* this year range through three centuries: we learn of the life of the renowned artist Joseph Fariugton, who lived from 1747 to 1821, from his paintings and through his journal which he wrote in the latter part of the 18th and early 19th centuries; of the development of the Wilkins' brewery industry in Longton from 1801 through several generations up to 1952 and of the Leyland and Farington Mechanics' Institution formed in 1854. A walk around the fields in the west of Leyland with Sylvia Thompson gives a contrast between her 'tip', which contained the contents of the dustbins of Leyland on the banks of the River Lostock in her childhood, and the huge development opened this year to recycle the tons and tons of waste being discarded by householders in the central and west of the county, which overlooks the same river's banks. Someone else who also loved those fields, little Miss Todd, grew up to be a lady giving her life to political campaigns in the first half of the twentieth century but being remembered too for kicking off a football match in Preston at the age of eleven. Leyland itself is represented in the finds at a postcard fair in Haydock: a gas bill dated 1874 and a blacksmith's repair bill from 1887; an advertisement which pre-dates Leyland Motors Limited by one year; a fascinating postcard from a lady and one from 1934 offering an invitation to the Leyland Methodist Church Sunday School.

Our Chairman's appeal for information to help him to archive Leyland's industrial past - through the memories of those who worked in the development of the engines through to the production lines in Leyland Motors when they supplied a world-wide market with wagons; through its cotton weaving at Brook and other mills; the Bleach Works, the Leyland Paint and Varnish Company, BTR, Leyland Rubber Company, and many other industries - is an innovative idea and I am sure he will receive great support from members of the Historical Society. If his dialogue on the train trip to Manchester is anything to go by, no-one can doubt his ability to draw in the information, assemble it and then produce the goods.

Thank-you to the contributors to the *Chronicle* for making the task of editing and producing it such an easy and enjoyable one. Leyland Historical Society members, please read and enjoy the *Chronicle*.

**Mary Longton**

Any opinions expressed in the contents of this journal are those of the individual contributor and do not necessarily represent the views of the Society.

Permission has been granted by the Ordnance Survey for the map scroll used on the cover.

## Society Affairs 2009-2010

For the start of the forty-third season, our fourth in the Civic Centre, on Monday, 7th September, we kicked off with a talk close to home as Colin Balls gave the Society members a look behind the scenes at the Leyland Commercial Vehicle Museum. This show featured music and views of the Museum and the town of Leyland including the recently held Transport Festival.

In October, we saw the return of Mikron Theatre Company who this year gave us 'Tales of the Thames'. This told the story of the river through the people who lived on, earned their living by and knew the various moods of the river. The four actors again were brilliant as they told the different characters' stories involving members of the audience on the way.

For November, it was the welcome return of Dr Mark Baldwin, this time without the Enigma machine, but he could have brought an exploding rat. The talk entitled 'Behind Enemy Lines - A look inside the Special Operations Executive (SOE)', told the story of the SOE from its foundation in the early days of the war by Neville Chamberlain through its many operations in occupied Europe.

Though the many 'behind the scenes' operatives made many heroic deeds throughout the war as Mark told us, these did not become well known until many years after the end of the war. The third part of the talk moved onto the equipment these early spies used, from silk maps, radios, various weapons and disguises. My particular favourite was the exploding rat, which was purposely left in the boiler rooms of German-held buildings in the belief that any boiler man would put a dead rat on the boiler fire and up would go the building. However, it would seem that they were more of a propaganda exercise as an early discovery of one by the Germans, made their troops more liable to run if they saw a dead rat in case it had explosives in it.

December gave us our third returning speaker of the year so far and saw Lizzie Jones, ably assisted by Neil, coming over from Italy. She gave us the story of the Dark Lady of the Sonnets, telling her life story through the clothes she was wearing, her rise through court circles and, finally, her reduced circumstances.

Then it started snowing and I wondered if we would see our next speaker who was coming all the way from Bradford, Yorkshire; however, on 4th January, after the pre-Christmas snows had cleared, John Gater arrived at our meeting. His talk entitled 'Geophysics - The Underground Story' told the story of *Time Team* and the work of the geophys people on the programme. From the first programme back in 1993 when their very first scan produced a detailed plan of the site at Athelney, their contribution to the programme has been important.

Each of the planned digs, starting with a survey using one of the many varied systems they use: ground radar, electrical resistance, electro magnetic, etc, was explained in an easy to understand way. That night when he left the Civic Hall, the snow was again starting to fall and the following day the Pennine routes were closed, John just got home before he was snowed in.

As we headed towards Valentine's Day, Sid Calderbank gave us 'Love & Romance in Victorian Lancashire', a collection of Lancashire dialect poems, stories and songs, told in his usual 'Lanky' style complete with a sing-a-long of 'It's a long way to Tipperary', (from Stalybridge).

The long endurance test which is the usual Stephen Sartin lecture featured in the March meeting when he gave us his latest discourse on 'Lancashire Paintings, Etchings and Drawings'. Your chairman's attempts to bring the meeting to a close were repelled until after 10 pm.

On Sunday, 28th March, a small group of members went to Alston Hall for a superb three course meal followed by a talk on the 'History of Manchester' showing the sites and buildings of the centre of the city.

Staying on the Manchester theme, on the second Monday in April, we were all entertained by the return of Dr C. P. (Chris) Lee who led the members through the history of the Manchester music scene in 'Shake Rattle & Rain'. From the street singers that led on to the music halls, Chris went through the northern music scene as only he can with plenty of examples both on screen and sound.

On Monday, 3rd May, a full coach of fifty-one members headed for the north east to discover the northern branch of the National Railway Museum at Shildon. This was based on two sites, the first being the Hackworth Museum on the home of Timothy Hackworth and the second, the railway locomotive works site of the Stockton & Darlington Railway: the latter, along the preserved railway track is the reserve collection of the main museum at York. On show that day, along with many others, was the brand new steam locomotive, *Tornado*, together with the locally built *Deltic*. The whole day could have been taken up with this interesting museum, which included the social history of the area within its remit, especially the visual display showing the rise of the local population as the railway works increased in size until its eventual decline.

We then made the short half hour journey to the city of Durham where our guide met the coach and gave the members a coach tour around the city showing all the sites from our elevated position. Leaving the coach we walked through the car-free streets looking at the historic buildings and bridges over the River Wear as we headed ever upward to the castle and cathedral on the top of the headland in the bend of the river. With the guide's help, we discovered more about the area around the cathedral as she led us through many 'Private - No Access' signs leading eventually to the Cloister of the abbey church where she left us to discover the interior of the Cathedral ourselves. After a full day, we headed back south and home.

For the June meeting, Peter Watson did his companion talk to last year's on surnames as he talked on 'The Origin of Place Names', which can be as misleading as the surnames were last year.

On 12th June, sixteen years after the first rail trip, I revived the event with twenty-one of the members joining me on the journey from Leyland to Manchester Piccadilly via Northern Rail and my updated trip notes. A detailed report of the trip is included in this edition of the *Chronicle* so I won't repeat it all here. Just watch the newsletter for future rail trips, the first one is at the end of September, 2010, to Lancaster.

At the annual general meeting on 5th July, after the formal business, we were treated to a guide to the interesting subject of family history by two members of the Chorley & South Ribble Family History Society, Pauline Chapman assisted by her husband Ron. They took the members through the various documents, websites and other ways of researching our ancestors.

The Society's committee, together with a few of the members put on a display in the Commercial Vehicle Museum for the Transport Festival on 10th and 11th July. Over the two days, we showed the visitors to the museum that there was a 'people' side to the history of Leyland Motors. Then, on 7th August, the Society had a small display at the Chorley Family History Day held at Astley Hall where we, again, promoted the next year's programme.

The website continues to grow to a point where the number of visitors to the site since its inception in December, 1999 is over **45,200**, (3,500 hits in the last year). Enquires have continued to flood in with over twenty-five requiring the committee's attention in the last twelve months.

At the end of the season we had 222 members, the successful new postal renewal system again being used in the month of August.

I would just like to thank all the committee members for their assistance in the last seventeen years and I hope they will continue to carry on in the future, especially Elizabeth with the planning applications and Mary editing the *Chronicle*. If anyone else would like to join the committee, it involves only ten meetings a year and we are most friendly: please see any of the current members of the committee.

**Peter Houghton**

## From a Red Letter Day to days with Red Letters

*Joan Langford*

Most of us are probably lucky enough to have had a red letter day somewhere in our lives, possibly something like a wedding, meeting someone special or even making a major decision. This story is about a young girl from Farington who eventually had many days with 'red letters' during her life.

For the nine years old Judith Todd (whose home was at Farington Lodge where she lived with parents James and Beatrice Todd and younger sisters Ursula and Damaris) her very special first red letter day was in 1918, when she was asked to kick-off a football match. Why was that so special? At the beginning of the 20th century, football was still very much a game played by men, but this 1918 match was to be played at Preston football club's Deepdale Ground between two ladies' teams: Dick, Kerr Ladies and Bolton Ladies.

### **Dick, Kerr's Ladies**

During WWI, a young man named Alfred Frankland was drafted into Dick, Kerr & Co's Preston factory to manage paperwork concerning the distribution of their war goods. Alfred was 'a natural gentleman, always scrupulously dressed. He inspired respect and was a keen amateur sportsman, as well as being a natural organiser'.

Apparently when Alfred looked out of his office window he saw the munitions girls at Dick, Kerr's kicking a football around in the yard during their breaks. Their leader was Grace Sibbert, a woman whose husband was a prisoner of war.

The girls had already played a couple of friendly games against the factory men but Alfred started taking a real interest in them when he learned the women were planning to play a football match on Christmas Day, 1917, in aid of the local hospital for wounded soldiers at Moor Park, Preston.

In 1916, the men's League games had been largely suspended when footballers were called into war service and so, by 1917, women's factory football was filling a need both for the participants and the spectators. With this in mind, Alfred offered the women his organisational skills and helped initially by booking Preston's football club's Deepdale ground for the game on Christmas Day.

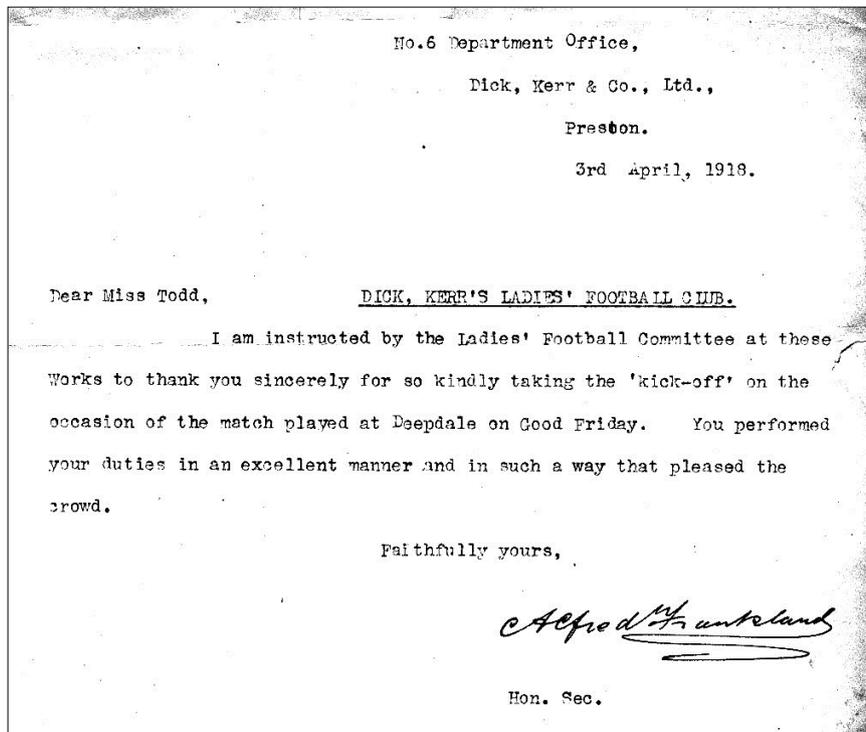
10,000 people poured through the turnstiles on that bitterly cold, frosty December day to see the girls in their black-and-white striped costumes with 'natty close-fitting hats to match'. They were a novel sight in very difficult times. Some spectators had come to support a good cause, some to gawp at women in shorts, some to laugh, at first, but all came to see football at Deepdale again.

Dick, Kerr's ladies won the game 4-0 and almost £200 clear profit was made. So successful was the match that Frankland took on the management of the team and booked Deepdale for two more matches, one in February and another on Good Friday in March 1918. The Good Friday match was against Bolton Ladies and was again attended by a huge crowd.

A special 'touch' Frankland introduced at the 1917 Christmas Day match turned out to be a master stroke, and one which he adopted in future matches whenever possible – inviting a celebrity to 'kick-off'. This honour was usually given to a City worthy, a Mayor or a famous football player, but on Good Friday, 1918, it was nine years old Judith who was invited to kick-off.

Just why the nine years old tomboy was chosen has puzzled her nieces for many years. Could it have been in recognition of the work her mother had been doing as one of the leading Suffragists in Preston: in February, 1918, just a couple of weeks before the Good Friday game, women over the age of thirty had, at last, been given the vote? We will probably never know now, unless some reader has that bit of forgotten knowledge/information.

Sadly Judith's own written record of that special red letter day has not survived but the letter she received from Alfred Frankland a few days after her football game, thanking her, was kept among her treasured possessions for the rest of her life:



It seems that from an early age Judith was an avid reader, and an intelligent, strong-willed young lady. One of her sisters told me that 'the 23 acres of grounds surrounding Farington Lodge were a wonderful playground for us. Judith had a very inventive mind and was usually the brains behind, and the leader of, our imaginative exploits. Sometimes her ideas were a little too imaginative though, especially when she and Ursula tied me to one of the big trees – and left me there!'

Judith's formal education began at the Park School in Winckley Square, Preston (where her mother had previously taught Latin and Greek). By the time she was eight years old the confident youngster was allowed to travel to school from Leyland to Preston on the train, much to the envy of her sisters who were chauffeur-driven to the same school.

At the age of twelve she was sent to a boarding school in Suffolk where she proved a very able student, and later gained a scholarship place in English Literature at Somerville College Oxford.

Another of Judith's red letter days came while she was at University. In 1929 she entered a competition organised by the *Manchester Guardian*, 'to compose a story out of quotations, proverbs and the like' – not easy if one is the least exacting in one's definition of a story. Judith's winning entry was published in the newspaper on 6 November, 1929, as follows:

### **Two Strings to her Bow**

Elsie sat, a rose between two thorns, on the back porch of her little grey home in the West. George, 100% Nordic American, and Archibald, the scion of an effete aristocracy, both sought the crowning glory of a good woman's love. All's fair in love and war, so Archibald determined, by fair means or foul, to put a spoke in his rival's wheel.

"You're a dark horse!" He sneered. George paled beneath his tan. "Do you imply I had a coal black mammy? Take that!"

With a sickening thud Archibald measured his length. “There’s many a true word spoken in jest”, he murmured, and kicked the bucket.

Quick as lightening, George mounted his trusty steed and rode out into the night. But the evil that men do lives after them; the long arm of the law is not to be gainsaid, and the man in blue clapped the derbies on George after he had crossed the Fishpond and sought sanctuary in Cottonopolis.

George walked with a firm step into court. “Guilty or not guilty that’s the question?” said his Worship. But, at the eleventh hour, a truth stranger than fiction came to light. It transpired that Archibald’s heart, after he had sown his wild oats, was not in the right place, and he had gone to meet his Maker ere the blow fell. George left the court without a stain on his character.

Everything comes to him who waits, and by a mother’s tender care the happy couple were united. As they left the sacred edifice after the nuptial knot had been tied, the man in the street had proof positive that love will find out a way.

### All Red Days

While at university Judith became interested in radical socialism, which led to her changing her course from English to Politics, Philosophy and Economics, and becoming an active member, initially of the Labour Party and later, openly, as a member of the British Communist Party.

Judith’s father, James was a wealthy chartered accountant. His main office was in Preston, but he also had offices in London, Manchester, Blackpool, Chester and Moscow. After she graduated from university Judith worked as a chartered accountant in the Preston office but it seems that the headstrong young woman and her father did not altogether see eye-to-eye on a number of matters, and fairly soon she moved to London, where she found similar employment.

Judith’s mother, Beatrice, was a suffragist and a very strong supporter of the suffragette movement locally. She did not go as far as chaining herself to railings but on one occasion, when Winston Churchill was addressing a meeting at the Free Trade Hall in Manchester, she ‘tackled him about votes for women’ to which his response was to the effect that he ‘didn’t believe in it’.

In days when ‘women of wealth’ could be ‘women of influence’, Beatrice Todd, in addition to being a suffragist, was also an ardent social campaigner; from her study at Farington Lodge, she established, among other things, the first mother and baby welfare clinic in Leyland.

In addition to her newly discovered interest in radical socialism Judith was obviously also influenced by her mother’s campaigning, especially for better conditions for women, which is evident in another of her published articles – this time in the *New Statesman* in September, 1932, where she is very critical of the ‘60 Mayors who have joined the anti-Dora party’<sup>1</sup>.

Dora [Montefiore, née Fuller] was born in Surrey in 1851 and married a rich young Australian but when she was widowed in 1889 she was left with two children under the age of ten to raise on her own. When she began to look around the world she lived in, at the place of women in it, and the way it was run in general, she quickly became a radical socialist. She spent the rest of her life campaigning for equality for women and for the socialist emancipation of the working class from capitalist wage slavery.

In the 1930s, Judith made several visits to Russia and other eastern bloc countries. One of the ways in which she was able to use her knowledge of Russian, a language she had learned at university, was in translating documents. At one of her drinks parties held in her tiny flat some years later, she and her friends were heard giggling over opening a bottle of vodka she had purchased in Moscow on one of those 1930s’ visits.

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<sup>1</sup> The ‘anti-Dora party’ Judith referred to was an unofficial ‘group of voices’, mainly of town Mayors and other civic personnel, who were against the emancipation of women in Great Britain.

Judith and her sisters were all taught to drive at the age of seventeen by their father's chauffeur, and her first car was 'a little open tourer two-seater with a buggy seat at the back' – at a time when it was still not common for women to either be able to drive or to have a car of their own. This driving knowledge and ability proved very useful during the war years (1939-45) when Judith's 'war work' was as a driver with the London Auxiliary Ambulance Service.

However, Judith's communist activities did not go unnoticed by the 'powers that be', which meant that, on the outbreak of WWII, she was placed on a subversives black list. On 15th September, 1945, the *Manchester Guardian* printed a list of those people with the headline: '*The Gestapo's Black List. Names for Priority Arrest Had Britain been Invaded*' and which included such people as Lady Astor, Katherine, Duchess of Atholl; Lady Violet Bonham Carter, Arthur Neville Chamberlain, Sigmund Freud, Sybil Thorndyke and *Judith Todd*.

After she moved to London, Judith lived in a small, austere flat in Russell Square, near to her new office in Russell Court, where she led a rather Bohemian life-style; she was even seen standing on a street corner selling copies of the *Daily Worker* newspaper – the official 'voice' of the Communist Party of Great Britain, founded in 1930.

In London, she became Secretary of the Holborn Labour Party and was soon elected as a local Labour Councillor. (In the early years of the British Communist Party, to gain a political voice, members were encouraged to stand as Labour Party members). In a November, 1945, in a Holborn election Labour Party campaign leaflet, Judith stated that she was also 'a member of the T&GW Union and Secretary of the Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR'.

After the war, Judith had employment as the accountant with World Books – a publishing company which specialised in Socialist, Communist and left wing books – and she continued to be politically active and a social campaigner for women's rights for the rest of her life.

Judith never married, but always had a large circle of friends and in addition to being very intelligent she had a great sense of humour. She was a very popular member of the 'set', and was very much a favourite aunt of her nieces. Her love of literature continued and she wrote many poems and articles, a detective thriller, a radio play and a crime novel called *Enigma Variations* (which was short-listed in 1984 for the Pluto Press Crime Prize). Many of her manuscripts and published works are still in the possession of her nieces.

Among the treasured papers the bluestocking Judith left when she died on 1st October 1997 was Alfred Frankland's letter thanking her for kicking-off the football match on her first red letter day. No-one then could possibly have guessed that 'Red Days' would become such a big part of all of Judith's adult life.



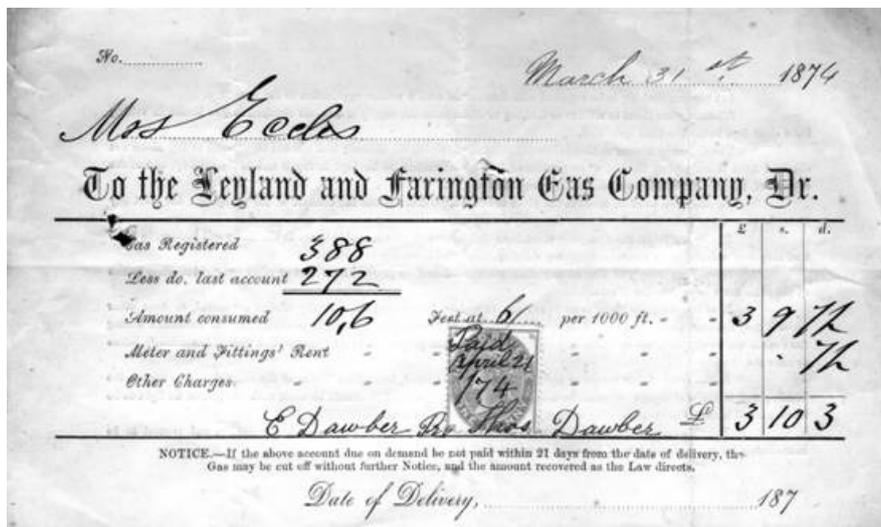
## Fascinating finds at Haydock Park

*Edward Almond*

Mention Haydock Park and most people immediately relate to horse racing. To me it is the venue for Card and Book Fairs which I have been attending for over fifteen years. My main interest is in athletic material but I also look out for anything relating to Leyland.

At these fairs there is an amazing amount of paper ephemera - trade and cigarette cards, postcards, stamps, letters, advertisements, pictures, photographs, maps, magazines, pamphlets, guide books, deeds, bills, newspapers, comics, not forgetting *books*, ranging from antiquarian to modern paperbacks. Among all of this there is a wealth of social history. One must, however, have time and patience and ask questions. You may get unexpected responses: I once asked a dealer, at a card fair, if he had any material on athletics. He reached down below his table and produced a tin in which there were cards of *naked* men! Not quite what I was looking for. The term *athletics* has lots of interpretations.

I have selected some paper items, purchased at Haydock Park, which I find fascinating and should be of interest to local and social historians. They are in chronological order and cover a period of sixty years.



The first is an invoice from The Leyland and Farington Gas Company, dated 31 March 1874 to a Mrs. Eccles for gas consumption. The calculation of the amount consumed is incorrect and should read 11,6. At the rate of 6/- (six shillings) per cubic foot (1000 ft), it works out more accurately at £3. 9s. 7¼d.

Mrs. Eccles paid the bill on 21st April 1874, which was just in the time limit before 'the gas may be cut off without further notice'.

The reverse side of the invoice offers some useful advice that 'In the event of any escape or smell of gas being perceived, immediate notice of the same should be sent to the Works and if the said escape or smell be inside a building, every precaution should be used, such as to suffer no light to be taken in, and instantly open wide, the highest window or opening in the place.'

How anyone living near the Gas Works could distinguish between a gas leak in their property and the pervading smell outside is a mystery. I can remember the ever-present smell of gas in Hough Lane and Chapel Brow in the 1940s and '50s.

The last sentence: 'The Company do not permit their servants to accept any beer, money or other gratuities, and request to be immediately informed of any acts of incivility or misconduct', is aimed at keeping employees in their place.

ALL persons desiring to be supplied with Gas should send a written application to the Secretary.  
 All consumers about to remove or desiring to discontinue the supply of Gas, are required to give Notice in writing three clear days before the time appointed.  
 The Company reserve to themselves the right of supplying all Meters; and will not supply Gas to any Meter not obtained from them. Such Meters, when purchased by the consumers, to be kept in repair and be removed by, and at the expense of, the purchaser, when and as the Company shall require.  
 No alteration must be made in the pipes or other apparatus without the consent of the Company; nor must any Meter be removed or detached except by the Company's servants.  
 The Servants of the Company must have free access at all reasonable hours to the Meter and fittings, in order that they may examine or do whatever they may think requisite and necessary to the same.  
 Should the supply of Gas at any time become deficient, or stopped from frost or other cause, immediate Notice of the same must be sent to the Works.  
 If at any time the Meter cease to register, or register incorrectly, the quantity of Gas consumed, or from other cause it may be found necessary to supply Gas without Meter, the Company to have power to charge for Gas consumed during the time it was so supplied, not or incorrectly registered, in the same proportion to the consumption thereof immediately before or after the time.  
 In the event of any escape or smell of Gas being perceived, immediate Notice of the same should be sent to the Works; and if the said escape or smell be inside a building, every precaution should be used, such as to suffer no light to be taken in, and instantly to open wide the highest window or opening in the place.  
 The Company do not permit their servants to accept any beer, money, or other gratuities, and request to be immediately informed of any acts of incivility or misconduct.

April 21/74

The second item is another invoice, dated 30 June, 1887, from Richard Sumner, Blacksmith, Fitter, etc., of Water Street, to the Executors of Golden Hill House. There was a Mrs. Eccles who lived at Golden Hill House and as the gas bill and the blacksmith's bill were purchased from the same source I think we can assume that Mrs. Eccles is connected to them both.

WATER STREET,  
 Leyland, June 30 1887

*To The Executors of Golden Hill House*

**To RICHARD SUMNER, Jr.**  
 → BLACKSMITH, FITTER, &c.

1887

*July 20 To Boiler fire iron repairing  
 Paid Aug 20/87  
 R Sumner*

3

Richard Sumner was the father of James Sumner who was one of the founding fathers of Leyland Motors. Water Street is now known as Towngate, but the original workplace is still in existence though used for different purposes; however, the stephouses where Richard lived and where James was born have long since been demolished. The executors paid the bill for repairing boiler fire irons on 20th August and the invoice was signed by Richard Sumner himself.

My third item is an advertisement for the Lancashire Steam Motors Co., Ltd., taken from the 1906 magazine *Motor Traction*. This is significant because it was in the following year that the Company changed its name to the more familiar *Leyland Motors Ltd*. The Lancashire Steam Motor Company had been formed in 1896 by a partnership consisting of James Sumner and the Spurrier family. It was well established and good marketing practice required it to have a London office. This was in the city centre on

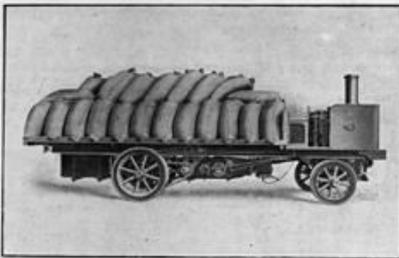
**The Lancashire Steam Motor Co., Ltd.**

OVER 100 REPEAT ORDERS.



35 h.p. Omnibus. 34 passengers.

NINE GOLD & SILVER MEDALS.



5-7 Ton Steam Wagons for Municipal, General, and Colonial Service.

**GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS.**

**Write for Particulars.**

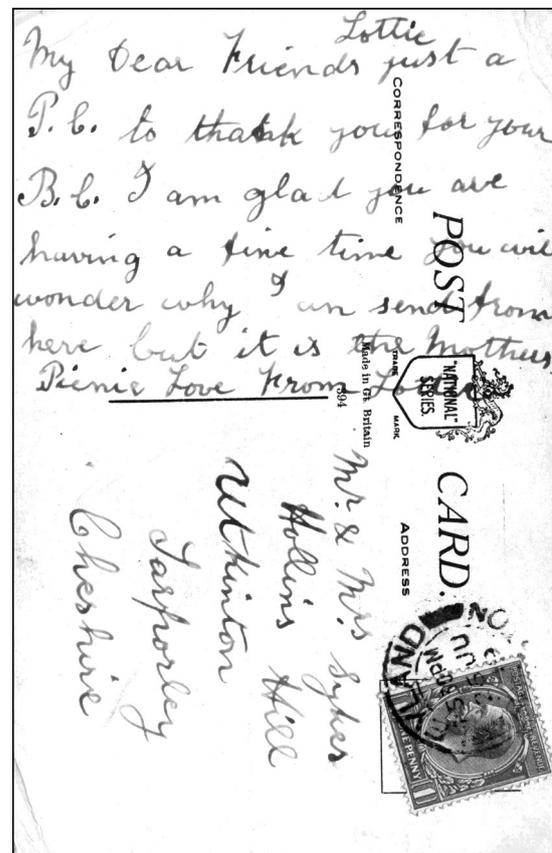
We are just finishing off a repeat order for **TEN MUNICIPAL TIP WAGONS**, and can now undertake early delivery.

**Head Office and Works: LEYLAND, NEAR PRESTON.**  
**London Office: Cecil Chambers East, 86, Strand, W.C.**

Telegrams: "Motor, Leyland." "Motatura, London."      Telephones: No. 7 Leyland; 6963 Central, London.

the Strand: notice the telephone numbers of the Head Office, 'No. 7 Leyland', and the London Office '6963, Central, London'.

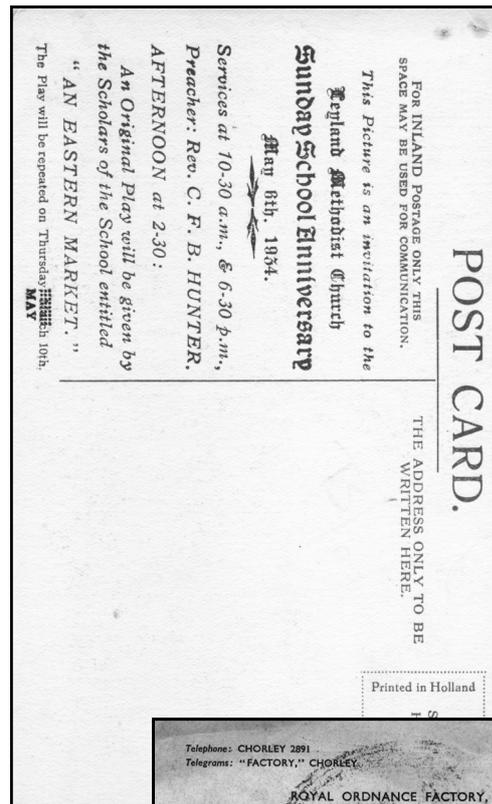
Leyland postcards usually feature a street scene or the May Festival so it is refreshing to find one with a different theme. One such card displays a well-dressed lady, wearing fur, and has the greeting, 'Best Wishes from Leyland'. It is dated 26 Ju' 19' and is addressed to a Mr. and Mrs. Sykes of Utkinton in Cheshire. Utkinton is a place I have never heard of but a look in an atlas reveals it is situated near the



junction of the A49 and the A51, not far from Tarporley and Oulton Park. The sender of this postcard is 'Lottie' and she is thanking her friends for her recent birthday card.

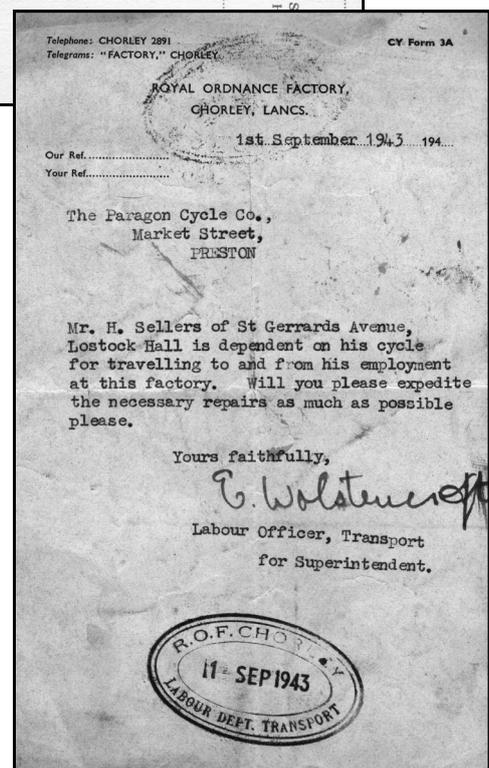
Does Lottie live in Leyland? She states, 'you will wonder why I am send[ing] from here but it is the Mothers Picnic'. Was the 'Mothers Picnic' an annual event run by one of the Churches? Perhaps some reader can enlighten us.

I wonder if the lady depicted is a forerunner of the Leyland 'Lady' posters issued by Leyland Motors for advertising purposes.



The fifth item is also a postcard and it relates to church events. It is an invitation to the Leyland Methodist Church Sunday School Anniversary on 6th May, 1934. It is uncertain which anniversary this was as the records of Methodism are sketchy of its early days in Leyland. A school-church had been erected on Golden Hill Lane in 1814 but there had been a Sunday School in operation, on Towngate, before that time. It is believed to have been the first Sunday School in Leyland and may well date back to the end of the 18th century when Methodism was introduced to Leyland. It is possible that some Leyland resident may have appeared in the play, 'An Eastern Market', or even remembers watching the performance, if so, please let me, or a committee member, know.

My final item is a letter from the Royal Ordnance Factory, Chorley. Most of us have probably referred to it as Euxton ROF, yet part of the site was in Leyland, including Old Worden Hall.



One can only wonder what repairs were necessary on Mr Sellers 'cycle that it required an official request from the Labour Officer. Had Mr. Sellers had an accident? Had it been vandalised? Being war time, spare parts may have been hard to come by. There is a reminder that people regularly used bicycles for transport at this period since cars were a luxury item. In addition, there was also petrol rationing in operation.

The people mentioned in this article would never have suspected that their names would be remembered in a magazine in the twenty-first century, after 76 years at the latest and 136 years at the earliest.

Golden Hill House has gone, the Gas Works has gone, Leyland Motors has gone and the ROF has gone, but Richard Sumner's original workplace is still with us as is the Methodist Church and Sunday School on Turpin Green Lane.

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## The Leyland and Farington Mechanics' Institution

*Derek Wilkins*

**LEYLAND AND FARINGTON MECHANICS'  
INSTITUTION FOR THE DIFFUSION OF  
KNOWLEDGE.**

**PATRONS:**  
**THE RIGHT HON. LORD STANLEY, M.P.**  
**J. WILSON PATTEN, ESQ., M.P.**  
**JAMES HEYWOOD, ESQ., M.P.**

**LADY PATRONESSES:**  
**MRS. FARINGTON AND THE MISSES  
FARINGTON.**

**President—JOHN ECOLES, Esq.**  
**Vice-President—PETER BURDEN, Esq.**  
**Treasurer—E. BARNES, Esq.**

**A SOIREE** will be held at the UNION HALL, LEYLAND, on MONDAY, THE 1ST DAY OF JANUARY, 1855, for the purpose of Opening the above Institution, when the meeting will be addressed by influential gentlemen. The President in the Chair.

Tea on the table at seven o'clock. A Band will be in attendance. J. C. MORRELL, Hon. Secretary.  
Leyland, Dec. 21st, 1854.

The *Preston Chronicle* of Saturday 30 December 1854 carried the above notice, and the following week's edition gave details of the proceedings.

It reported that the nucleus of such an establishment already existed in the village in the form of £100 worth of books; these belonged to the trustees of a library and reading room which had been given up for want of funds. Being convinced of the need for such a literary institution for all the inhabitants of Leyland and Farington, a committee had been formed and had determined to establish a Mechanics' Institution.

£70 had been collected and over 350 people had enrolled as members. It went on to describe, in typical Victorian newspaper style, the inaugural proceedings:

...were opened by a tea party, at which upwards of five hundred individuals partook of a plain but excellent repast. The hall was profusely decorated with evergreens, Union Jacks, mottos and devices. Upon the walls of the room were formed in laurel leaves, the names of the lady patronesses ... the patrons ... and the president. Behind the president's chair was suspended in a frame, an illuminated card of exquisite penmanship, the work of Mr. R. W. Hughes of this town; it bears the title of the institution, the names of the patrons and patronesses and the date of its establishment. On the platform were a pair of globes presented to the institution by the Misses Farington; and on a raised seat at one end of the room were stationed the Leyland brass band. After the tables had been cleared and removed, the gentlemen who were to address the assembly (the room being now uncomfortably crowded) assembled on the platform and delivered the addresses.

The President, local magistrate John Eccles of Wellfield House, said that he had always believed that the intellect of the young should be improved and that the start they received at the infant school and Sunday school should be continued and 'nothing he knew of could more enlarge the minds of the young than the information derived from Mechanics' Institutions'.

Mr. Peter Burden of The Grove on Church Road was the vice-President and asked, 'Why should it not be the fortune of Leyland to bring forth some village Newton?'

The Rev. J. Bliss, minister at the Independent Chapel and a leading member of the local temperance movement, warned of the dangers of 'the thirty million pernicious publications which were circulated amongst the people of this country ... some infidel ... some grossly immoral', and of the fact that £200,000 was yearly spent in Preston beer-houses. He urged that it was time for 'the Christian public to come forward and do what they could to arrest such evils'. He added that 'time was when the common people might live on in ignorance, being only fit to do the work to which their masters called them. But it was not so now; they were living in the days of progress when all must stand well with their employers, and not only be able to perform their work mechanically, but to know the principles on which that work was performed'.

Mr. Cope of Preston stated that it was 'very difficult for a man whose mind was enlightened by the pursuit of knowledge to sink into the degradation to which Mr. Bliss had just alluded in such pathetic terms...', and went on, 'if they wished to educate the people, and to remove the reproach from our nation which it so well deserved, it must be through the medium of Mechanics' Institutions'. If they were not to become mere circulating libraries he stressed that they must be used as upper training schools. He went on to argue that class teaching was far more efficient than lectures.

In his closing address John Eccles stressed that, 'despite the name "mechanics", the library would also be useful to farmers'.

After votes of thanks and the singing of the Doxology, the room was cleared for dancing which went on for a few hours.

Mechanics' Institutes had their origins as adult education centres in Scotland in the 1810s. They spread to England where one of the first was opened in London in 1824 by Yorkshire born educationalist George Birkbeck, now Birkbeck College, University of London. They rapidly spread to the provinces and by the mid-century most of the Lancashire towns had one. In Preston, one was established on Cannon Street in 1828. Also known as 'The Institution for the Diffusion of Knowledge', in 1850 it moved into what became known as the Avenham Institute opposite Avenham Walks. The Burnley Institution was one of the most impressive; opened in 1855 it still lives on as the town's main arts and entertainment centre.

In some quarters the motives behind the movement were regarded with suspicion; some Tories looking upon them as simply a means of producing 'a reading rabble' whilst others at the opposite end of the



Burnley Mechanics' Institution around 1920

political spectrum saw them as a means of exercising control over the working classes. From the addresses given at the inaugural meeting there can be little doubt that the Leyland and Farington initiative was, to some extent, philanthropic. However the timing, immediately following the widespread labour disputes of 1853–1854, which culminated in the Preston lock-out, suggests that there may have been at least an element of control involved. Following these disputes the authorities were understandably nervous and this may explain why three of the patrons were MPs and the president was a local magistrate. In fairness to the Faringtons, they had already amply demonstrated what the Victorians called ‘disinterested benevolence’ by various philanthropic acts; later the same year St. James’s church would be consecrated and the following year the neighbouring school would be rebuilt, both with funds provided by the Faringtons.

Although the Mechanics’ movement continued nationally for many years, eventually evolving in 1903 into the Workers’ Educational Association, the Leyland and Farington experiment seems to have been a relatively short-lived affair.<sup>1</sup> Following the inaugural meeting there were regular meetings and lectures on a variety of subjects, most of which were reportedly well attended; however, there is no evidence that there was ever any kind of structured classes along the lines Mr Cope had urged. The lectures covered arts, history and religion with mechanics and science being notably absent. Typical subjects were: ‘Nineveh and the Bible’, ‘Sir Walter Raleigh’, ‘Life and writings of Douglas Jarrold’, ‘Galileo, the great Tuscan philosopher’, and ‘Tollström and Lapland’. In March, 1859, the Rev. Davies of Wigan, late missionary to Ceylon, gave a lecture somewhat enigmatically titled, ‘Woman’!! It was reported that there was a numerous attendance!! The last reported event was a lecture on 7th Jan, 1860, entitled: ‘Alfred the Great and his times’.

The Union Hall had been built in 1842 on land provided by the Faringtons and for many years their agent John Morrell was actively involved in its running. From the outset it was used for lectures and meetings of various local bodies such as the Temperance Society, the Church Missionary Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society and The Leyland Hundred Agricultural Society. Its use as the Mechanics’ Institution represents a sort of ‘interregnum’ with things continuing after 1860 much as before. It is not

<sup>1</sup> All the information about the Leyland and Farington Institution in this article is derived from reports in the *Preston Chronicle*, the last being for 1860. This does not, of course, mean that there were no further meetings or lectures, simply that they were not reported in that paper. However I have so far been unable to find any other references anywhere to what seems to be a little known episode in Leyland’s history.

clear exactly why the Mechanics' movement ended but it may have been connected with the development of the Union Hall as a school, later to become known to generations of Leylanders as the Top School.

To commemorate the inauguration, an anonymous poet, with the pen-name of 'JJ.', wrote the following; it is worth recording the first three verses (out of six) since they give us an insight into the mood of the times:

Th' eventful year has just begun his course,  
To roll a tide of changes o'er the earth –  
To raise new wonders from great Nature's source –  
To shine in glory, wisdom, joy, and mirth –  
To prove Humanity and Freedom's force.  
The first day of his course records the birth  
Of th' Institute which Leyland has designed  
T' improve the fount of social bliss – the mind.

Hark! This soft voice of social Happiness,  
Within the Union Hall of th' Institution!  
An atmosphere of smiles and female grace  
Beams on the festive throng – and th' evolution  
Of glittering cups, replete – not with excess,  
But 'Pekoe' and 'Young Hyson's' best infusion –  
There glows enjoyment, never – never known  
To th' awful despot on his gorgeous throne.

The simple banquet o'er, the cups retire,  
Without confusion, to their proper places;  
The special orators-bright stars-aspire  
To charm th' assembly with sublime addresses:  
Some labour hard to rouse their latent fire  
Of eloquence - let Fame recount their flashes;  
One loudly brayed to kindle dark dissension;  
His teasing of *Great Nick* deserves a pension.

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## Joseph Farington: 3rd December 1747 to 30th December 1821

*Joan Langford*

Joseph Farington was born in Leigh, Lancashire, in 1747, the second of seven surviving sons of the Reverend Dr. William Farington (Vicar of Leigh Church) and was a grandson of William Farington Esq. of Shaw Hall, Leyland, heir to the Worden Estates.

Joseph was both a painter and a diarist. In the 'Dictionary of British 18th Century Landscape Painters' he is described as 'a landscape painter and topographical draughtsman' and Evelyn Newby wrote in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*: 'Farington's real forte lay in the careful, accurate topographical drawings which he prepared for the folios of engravings of British Views which found a ready market among tourists confined to Britain by unrest abroad.' As a painter he is best known for his illustrations in two books: *The Lakes of Lancashire, Westmorland and Cumberland*, which includes 43 engravings from drawings by Joseph, and *An History of the River Thames*, published in 1794 in two volumes, containing 76 aquatints of Joseph's drawings.

However, Joseph is known now chiefly for his Diary, which was discovered in 1921. Although he did not begin to keep a regular diary until July 1793, when he was aged 46, the Diary is now recognised as a prime source of information about the working of the Royal Academy (of Art), and the activities of the London art world in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Through his extensive involvement in the affairs of the R.A, and his wide circle of friends and family connections, he was extraordinarily well informed on the affairs of the day. The Diary not only comprises a detailed record of his actions and observations as an influential figure in the London art world but is also an absorbing record of the social, political and literary developments of the period. It makes fascinating and compelling reading.

### Joseph Farington – Painter

Rev. Dr. William Farington was Vicar at Leigh for 34 years and his name is on the largest of the eight bells in the tower of that church. William and his wife Hester had seven surviving sons: Joseph; four sons, William, Henry, Richard and Edward, who were employed in naval service of the East India Company; George, who also became a painter; and the youngest son, Robert, who followed his father to Brasenose College Oxford and then became Vicar of a church in East London.

It would seem that, as a schoolboy, Joseph showed early signs of artistic talent and received encouragement from his parents. As a result, in 1763, when he was 16 years old, Joseph went to London to study under the fine landscape painter, Richard Wilson. Joseph greatly admired his master and his progress under Wilson was rapid. In 1764, 1765 and 1766 he was awarded 'premiums' by the Society of Arts for landscape drawing, and in 1765 Joseph was elected a member of the new 'Incorporated Society of Artists', of which Wilson was Director.

### Royal Academician

The Royal Academy (of Arts) was founded through a personal act of King George III, with a mission to 'promote the arts of design through education and exhibition'. The motive in founding the Academy was twofold: to raise the professional status of the artist by establishing a sound system of training and expert judgement in the arts, and to ensure that contemporary works of art attained an appropriate standard of excellence. Sir William Chambers (Surveyor General at Windsor) used his connections with the King to gain royal patronage and financial support for the Academy and the painter, Sir Joshua Reynolds, was made its first President.

The 'Instrument of Foundation of the Royal Academy' was signed by the King on 10th December, 1768, and named 34 founder members, but allowed for a total membership of 40. Early in 1769 Joseph

enrolled as one of the first students in the R.A. School; in 1783 he was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy; and in 1785 was elected a full member of the Academy - an R.A.

Joseph was influenced by the strong topographical tradition in England in which the prime duty of the artist was to record what was there and only secondly to make it look beautiful, and Wilson stressed to all of his young students the need to base landscape painting on actuality. The two men made sketching expeditions together for a number of years, and Joseph developed a habit of making holiday tours in September and October then working up the rough sketches into finished paintings in the winter months.

Initially, Joseph worked in oil paints but only a few of those pictures are known today and are thought of as being 'rather boring'. According to W. Ruddick, Lecturer in English Literature at Manchester University, who organised an exhibition of Joseph's work in 1977, 'it seems as if Joseph may have been, to some extent, colour blind'.

Despite this, in 1773, Joseph went to Houghton Hall in Norfolk (the home of the Earl of Orford) where he spent the next three years employed, along with his younger brother and pupil George, in making copies of the old-masters' paintings and other pictures there before they were sold, in 1779, to the Empress Catherine of Russia for £40,555.

Joseph's younger brother, George, was also a talented young artist and in 1768, at the age of 16, he too went to London to study. George received his first instruction as an artist from his brother Joseph, but as his inclination eventually led him to the study of historical painting and portraits, he required further assistance and moved to study under Benjamin West, the President of the R.A.

Joseph's sketch books of the 1760s show he was interested in such subjects as old barns and farm equipment, ruined castles, old houses and trees. However, for some fifteen years following his apprenticeship under Wilson he continued to work within the conventions of his master - favouring compositions including sinuous trees and foliage.

In 1776, Joseph and his brother George went to the Lake District and took a house at Keswick, where they spent the next four years drawing the now famous picturesque views which were published in 1789 in the book, *Views of the English Lakes*. Another painting made in the Lake District at that time entitled *Sir George Beaumont and Joseph Farington sketching a waterfall*, pen-and-ink-and-wash by Thomas Hearne) shows the two men at work, still dressed in the style of Georgian city gentlemen wearing powdered wigs, tricorne hats, white knee length breeches and white hose and sheltering under umbrellas. (It is not clear from the engraving whether the umbrellas were for rain or sun).

In December, 1780, the brothers returned to London and Joseph took up residence at 35 Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square, his home for the rest of his life, and immersed himself in Academy politics. He never held any of the official positions in the Academy but his charismatic presence, his quick and exact mind, and the superiority of his social position to those of the other members, ensured that his unofficial position was one of great strength. He would have made an excellent President but his standing as a painter was not sufficiently great to qualify him for the position. Even so, notwithstanding his limited success as a painter, he was accepted by professional artists as one of themselves - as demonstrated in the group portrait of the 1795 R.A. General Assembly, where the tall handsome figure of Joseph Farington is placed in the foreground.

Joseph exhibited more than 100 of his paintings at the R.A. between 1765 and 1813.

### Joseph - Diarist

After his death in 1821, Joseph's Diary was passed down through several generations of his family, unseen by any members of the public, and were discovered by accident in a mahogany case in the lumber attic of a house in Surrey a hundred years later when auctioneers were called to the property to value the contents.

A journalist, when seeing the Diary, recognised its importance and value and as a result, in 1922, extracts from the Diary were printed by his paper, the *Morning Post*, daily for six weeks, and so great was the public interest in them that they were subsequently published in book form, and are still in demand.

However, Joseph did not initially write the Diary with a view to its longevity. In a note left with his 'official' papers he wrote:

The Diary was written for my amusement, and much of it to assist my recollection in matters in which I was engaged, or to enable me to reconsider opinions given, and thereby to strengthen my own judgement. Much also I was induced to put in writing as being curious anecdote and useful to the biographer. It will be seen by the great proportion of trifling detail contained in them that they were written for myself only, and it was long my intention to destroy them before my decease; but on further consideration ... I have decided to leave them to my brother Richard Atherton Farington.

It is obvious from Diary entries that social activity formed a large part of the lives of affluent gentlemen of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Joseph often records having breakfast with other Academicians, has regular meetings at several of the London Gentleman's Clubs, and is invited to dine at 'interesting' venues. The very first entry in the Diary reads:

Saturday July 13th 1793: Went early this morning in company with Mr. George Dance, R.A, and Mr. Samuel Lysons to Lord Orford's at Strawberry Hill, where we breakfasted with his Lordship. Lord Orford is now in his seventy-sixth year, infirm in his body, but lively and attentive in mind.

One of the most delightful social events described by Joseph is a River Outing of the Royal Academy Club in pleasant weather on 7th July, 1819 when eleven members, including Turner, Mulready, Westmacott and Chantrey:

... boarded an Ordnance Shallop<sup>1</sup> at Westminster Bridge and went down river to look at the 'new iron bridge' (Waterloo Bridge), and then proceeded up river with 10 rowers. We stopped at Barnes for a snack on board of a loaf and cheese before continuing up river to the Eel Pie House at Twickenham where we landed a little after 3 o'clock and about 4 we sat down to excellent fare brought from the Freemasons Tavern. We dined in the open air at one table and removed to another to drink wine and eat fruit. Everything went off most agreeably. Before 7 o'clock we again embarked and rowed down river – the tide in our favour. Turner and Westmacott were very loquacious on their way back.

The Diary shows that Joseph was very interested in events both at home and abroad, especially the *French Revolution* and the political turbulence at home, but his comments are always impartial. He observes and reports but there are few clues to his views:

25th November 1793: At 4 o'clock I dined as Dr. Fisher's guest at the (Royal) Chaplain's table. The person who prepares the table for the Chaplain informed him that Sir Francis Drake, Master of the Household, had given notice that neither champagne nor Burgundy would be allowed at any tables, except His Majesty's, because of the difficulty and uncertainty of obtaining it from France in the present distracted state of the country.

9th December 1793: The town this evening alarmed by the firing of the (St. James) Park and Tower guns. Everybody, expecting that it was in consequence of Lord Howe having taken the French ships he was chasing, was disappointed on finding the guns were fired on account of our troops in the West Indies having gained possession of part of the Island of St. Domingo.

26th September 1797: Admiral Nelson's victory over the French fleet at Aboukir was this day confirmed by an officer arriving with despatches. Illuminations took place in the evening.

Joseph's discretion and liberality, long experience, candour and even temper meant that many who wanted help in the important and even trivial affairs of life sought him out for advice:

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<sup>1</sup> Shallop - a large, heavy, flat bottom boat

3rd March 1794: Lady Inchiquin (Sir Joshua Reynolds's heiress) sent to me today to desire I would come to her to have my opinion on her resolution to dispose of part of Sir Joshua's collection of drawings and paintings.

27th May 1799: Turner called. He expressed himself anxious to be a member of the Academy. [Turner was elected to the R.A. on 4th November 1799.]

21st July 1799: Turner came to tea. He told me he has no systematic process for making his drawings. By washing and occasionally rubbing out, he at last expresses in some degree the idea in his mind.

26th February 1798: Constable called and brought his sketches of landscapes in the neighbourhood of Dedham.

13th July 1801: Constable called on me and I on him to see a picture, a view of a house near Dedham. It is painted on a coloured ground which he has preserved through the blue of his sky as well as the clouds. He desired me to give him my opinion about price and having mentioned 3 guineas I told him he could not ask less than 10 guineas.

6th April 1802: Constable I called on. I told him his picture has a great deal of merit but it rather too cold. I talked to him about his proceeding in art and recommended to him to study nature in particular, and art less.

13th July 1802: The Military College at High Wycombe is in want of a drawing master and asked my assistance in procuring one. The salary is £200 a year, besides allowance for lodging, also fire and candle.

The Diary includes numerous references to the King (George III) and the Royal family. It would seem that the Princesses liked having portraits painted of them, but were not always 'easy to deal with':

24th July 1796: Lord Jersey has been with the King to complain of the Princess of Wales having endeavoured to take away Lady Jersey's character. The King made no reply, but bowed him out of the room.

6th November 1797: The King does not like Lord Salisbury.

20th May 1797: The Duchess of Gordon is in a rage at not being invited to the Queen's Gala at Windsor.

6th May 1794: Alderman Boydell (Publisher) has been with the King this morning for half an hour while the family were at breakfast and presented the first volume of the *River Thames* (with drawings by Joseph). The King placed it on his knee and turned over every leaf. He expressed his approbation of the work.

Of course, all good diaries contain *gossip* and Joseph's is no exception:

6th November 1793: Angelica Kauffman (R.A. – one of the founder members) made about £14,000 while she resided in England. Zucchi (also a foreign artist) made about £8,000 while he resided in England. Angelica is about 48 years of age, Zucchi near 70 years old. They are courting.

6th August 1802: When Lord Nelson went last from England he wrote to Lady Nelson that he should allow her £1,800 a year, but did not wish to see her again. They are now quite separated in consequence of his attachment to Lady Hamilton.

7th December 1795: [of politicians] Brown is a middle sized man, stout in figure and wears spectacles. In his appearance a substantial, respectable looking man, about 40 years of age. He was dressed in Blue. Friend is a gentleman-like looking man, of good stature and bulk, apparently about 34 years of age, dark hair without powder. Thelwell is a little man and a very

mean looking man, of a sickly sallow complexion and black, lank hair. He was covered with a large, thick, loose, great coat.

2nd July 1794: [of Sir Richard Westmacott] His career as a painter is highly successful. His commissioned figure of *Achilles* at Hyde Park Corner is surely the worst public statue in England.

Other items of general interest which caught my eye while reading the Diary include:

6th September 1794 [while at the Dedham home of Sir George Beaumont] Rose this morning at 7. Breakfasted a little past 8. Employed myself in washing my river views while Sir George was painting. Dined at 4, drank tea between 6 and 7. Went to bed at ½ past 10. These were the usual hours the family kept which is very comfortable.

9th July 1795: Bread was ordered on Tuesday by the City Magistrate to be raised to one shilling the quarten loaf, in consequence of the scarcity of wheat. And on that day a motion was made in the Court of Aldermen and Common Council to discontinue the wearing of Hair Powder, which was carried by a majority of 12.

18th November 1798: Engravers ask high prices. It would cost £1,600 to have 70 plates engraved.

## Duel

Sunday 27th May 1798: Mr. Pitt [the Prime Minister] met Tierney on Putney Common. Seconds, Mr. Ryder to Mr. Pitt; George Walpole to Tierney – fired at 12 paces a case of pistols – a second case fired – Mr. Pitt in the air. Seconds interfered.

Pitt had accused Tierney of deliberately obstructing public business in the House of Commons an aspersion which was *ruled unparliamentary*. He refused to withdraw, and the two statesmen met as described. The Speaker was among the spectators. Pitt was condemned for going out with Tierney.

On another occasion Joseph himself acted as a second in a duel.

Thank goodness Joseph changed his mind and did not destroy his diary, but had the foresight to leave it to his brother. It provides a wonderful, down to earth, insight into the lives of many of the affluent upper class people of London in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. He brings ‘well known people in history’ to life again with his first hand accounts in a brilliant social document.

Joseph’s original diary, note books and sketch books are now in the Royal Library at Windsor Castle.

## Joseph – the man

Joseph was a handsome, dignified, well-built man, as shown in the several portraits made of him, one of which, by Thomas Lawrence, R.A, President 1820-30, is now hung in the Judges Lodgings at Lancaster. ‘6th May, 1794: This morning I sat for Lawrence when he drew in my portrait with black chalk on the canvas which employed him nearly two hours. He did not use colour today. This is his mode of beginning.’

Joseph established himself as a person of great tact and authority on all matters concerned with the visual arts. He knew when to speak and when to be silent; when to advise and when to draw back; when to encourage and when to keep his place.

In March, 1776, Joseph married Susan Mary Hammond, daughter of the Reverend Horace Hammond. Sadly the couple had no children, but Joseph was a good uncle and was always interested in the lives of his brothers’ children. Strangely Joseph makes no mention of his wife in his Diary until 24th February 1800 – the day she died:

This day the greatest calamity that could fall upon me I suffered in the death of the best, the most affectionate, and the most amiable of women, my wife. Unexpected indeed was the blow. Long had I reason to consider her delicate frame with apprehension. Yesterday evening she was

declared to be better, but in the night a change took place and at 3 o'clock this day I witnessed the departure of what I held most dear on earth. Without a sigh, with the appearance of only gently sleep, did my beloved expire.

Joseph was absolutely devastated when Susan died and his career as an artist came to an abrupt end as he found he could not longer draw or paint. He continued to be involved in R.A. affairs until the time of his own death.

11th April 1800: [the first entry after his wife's death] Mr. Crozier called on me this morning and strengthened my mind with conversation and advice suited to my situation.

28th March 1801: Daniel R.A. came to tea. I sent for him, being very low in spirits and scarcely able to remain alone.

Fortunately, his many friends in the art world, including Robert Smirke, R.A, helped Joseph through the difficult times and in August, 1801, Joseph and three friends left for a four month tour to Scotland which, as his Diary entries show, he seems to have very much enjoyed.

11th August 1801: This morning I left London at 10.45 in a Landauet and two horses for riding, attended by a coachman and groom. The day was very hot and roads extremely dusty. Travel was very slow on account of the horses. Arrived at Henley 7.45, a total of 35 miles.

From Henley the friends travelled north via Oxford, Leeds, Knaresborough, Ripon, Durham and Berwick, arriving in Edinburgh on 19th September. Joseph made comments on all of the towns where they stopped – such as places he visited (Blenheim Palace, Durham Cathedral), the scenery and hospitality.

29th August 1801: Harrogate. Breakfast, dinner, tea and supper 6/- per day. 7/6 charged for 3 beds for five nights – very reasonable.

Of the road from Harrogate to Ripon he recorded, 'Three miles cross country, road bad quartering for a carriage and several gates to open'.

That Joseph was happy and enjoying this trip seems evident in three entries in the Diary where he recorded that he had been sketching again – at Durham Cathedral, at Newcastle and, on 10th October, on the banks of the River Tay in Scotland, 'While I was employed making sketches many little boys assembled around me, but by degrees went off to play, one boy only remaining. He stood by me very attentively and held down the paper to prevent it from being raised by the wind'.

The party was in Glasgow from the 19th to the 27th October and then left on their journey south again, arriving in Manchester, at the home of Joseph's brother, on the 6th November, where Joseph stayed until the New Year.

Joseph's link with Horace Walpole, through his wife (who was a cousin of Horace), was an important influence on his life, and the comfortable relationship between the two men is reflected in the record Joseph kept of their conversations, and his frequent visits to Strawberry Hill.

### **Strawberry Hill.**

In 1747 Horace Walpole acquired the lease of a little house in Twickenham, on the banks of the River Thames. He then announced 'I am going to build a little Gothic castle on Strawberry Hill'. He thus transformed the uninteresting villa into a building which still remains today as a popular visitor attraction.

Horace Walpole, an art historian, man of letters, antiquarian and cousin of Lord Nelson, followed his Prime Minister father, Robert Walpole, into parliament in 1741, where he continued to serve until 1768. Horace could afford to build his Gothic Castle because his father had been Prime Minister for more than 20 years, under Kings George I and George II. These were corrupt times and Robert Walpole left office a very rich man – riches inherited by Horace.

On 3rd September, 1821, Joseph left London and, after spending some time with his nephew, Capt. William Farington, on the Isle of Wight, he proceeded to Lancashire ‘as it was six years since I was in my native county’. Shortly after he arrived at the home of his brother, Rev. Dr. Robert Farington, Joseph fell ill and no sooner had he recovered than he bruised his right leg and a sore formed which was very slow to heal. He did not, therefore, feel inclined ‘after my long absence to leave so many of my dearest relatives and will remain until the better weather’.

The final entry in Joseph’s Diary was:

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> December 1821: “Rose 10 after 8 – a dull moist morning. Thermometer at noon 44½. Wind west. Didsbury church [south Manchester near where he had been staying with his brother, Rev. Robert Farington, at Parr’s Wood]. I went to morning and afternoon, my brother remaining at home on account of his cold, and Eliza being unwell.’

Following this, on the same page his niece wrote

Mark the uncertainty of this life!!! My venerable respected and affectionately regarded Uncle so wrote his day’s notes previous to setting out for the Evening Service at Didsbury Church, from which it was the Will of Heaven he should not return in life.

The service concluded, he was descending from the Gallery where his Brother’s pew was but his hands encumbered with hat, umbrella and prayer book, his feet equally so with galoshes, he was unable to recover from a slip of his feet and went down the flight of stairs with great rapidity and force such as to project him beyond the stairs so that his head came with heavy fall on the pavement of the Church floor. The vital spark was gone. He neither looked, spoke, moved nor breathed again.

Such was the Will of God – and doubtless all in mercy. Of a nervous temperament, illness affected my good Uncle greatly and would have embittered the decline of a life which had long been preparing, as was evinced by his conduct and writing, for that Future State – so as to be by ‘Redeeming Mercy’ ready to depart.

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Elizabeth Shorrock

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## 'We once owned a Brewery' - W & R Wilkins of Longton

*Derek Wilkins*

I was introduced to genealogy in 1976 by George Bolton, our late President. He had traced his own family history and, when I expressed an interest in doing mine, he offered to show me the ropes on his next visit to the Lancashire Record Office. He recommended that by way of preparation I should find out as much as possible about my family, and en-route to Preston for my first visit, I told him of my findings, with special emphasis on the fact that 'we once owned a brewery in Longton'. This did not elicit the response I had expected. 'By Gad', he replied with feeling, 'you've a lot to answer for - their bitter was terrible and their mild undrinkable!'

Since I had never tasted their beer, except maybe in a 'shandy' at Christmas, I was unable to argue, although I did point out that my grandad had consumed vast quantities of the stuff in the Earnshaw Bridge Inn, and, since he had lived to be eighty-six, it hadn't done him much harm!

As things subsequently turned out my claim to fame was not quite accurate. The brewery had actually belonged to a separate, although related, branch of the family; consequently I never attempted to research the history of this branch in the same detail as that of my own. Nevertheless, during the ensuing thirty-odd years I have stumbled across numerous records relating to this 'brewery branch' and the following account is based on them, together with a limited amount of background research. I suspect there is enough other material in the archives to enable a much more detailed account to be produced at some future date.

### **Beginnings under Thomas Wilkins: 1801-1841**

Christian Walton was a farmer's daughter who lived with her widowed mother on Chapel Lane in Longton and in 1772 she married William Wilkins, a farmer's son from Hutton. The couple had three children before William's untimely death in 1778 which left Christian to bring up her two sons and a daughter alone. That she succeeded in the task is evident from the fact that her eldest son Richard became a successful farmer, while his brother Thomas was even more successful, becoming a prominent member of Longton society and founding the brewery 'dynasty' later to become W & R Wilkins. Their mother's memory has been preserved in the name 'Kitty's Farm' where she brought up her children.

In 1801, Thomas married Ellen Southworth, also from Longton, and the couple immediately moved into the Golden Ball at the top of Marsh Lane. Prior to this date the records indicate that there had been only three inns in Longton: the Red Lion, the Ram's Head and the Black Bull with the Golden Ball seemingly being established as an inn by Thomas. This was very much a boom time for publicans and brewers as well as their suppliers such as maltsters - between 1789 and 1799 the number of licensed premises in the Leyland Hundred had increased from eighty six to one hundred and seven.<sup>1</sup> One factor in this was the thriving handloom weaving industry and the weavers' habit of spending much of their earnings on drink.

The Golden Ball was to be the gateway to considerable wealth and status for Thomas and his family. Beer was the universal drink of the vast majority of people and, at a time when there was no reliable water supply, was regularly given to children. Furthermore, with its appetite for large quantities of barley and hops, the industry was essential to the prosperity of farmers and landed proprietors alike. Consequently, innkeepers and their suppliers were everyone's friends and were readily accepted into the higher echelons of society.

The Golden Ball was in a prime location, being at the junction of Marsh Lane and the turnpike road. The latter was the main coaching route between Liverpool and Preston, while Marsh Lane formed the Longton end of a crossing of the river Douglas from Hesketh Bank.

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<sup>1</sup> LRO. QSB/3

At this time it was usual for innkeepers to brew their own beer in a brew house on the premises and Thomas would have been no exception. While there is no evidence that his brewing was yet on any sort of commercial basis, this would undoubtedly have been the start of his family's association with the industry.

In 1804 he began to acquire property with the purchase of land and cottages close to the Golden Ball. Also, about this time, he began to malt his own barley and built a kiln for the purpose on the north side of Marsh Lane, almost opposite the Golden Ball.

Innkeepers invariably had a second occupation, usually farming, and in 1815 Thomas took out a lease from the Trafford family of Croston for a farm of just over thirty-one acres. The farm house was located to the south of Marsh Lane and slightly west of his malt kiln. Here would be the location of the family's brewery in later years.



First edition 6" O.S. map of 1844 showing the Golden Ball, Malt Kiln and , to the south of Marsh Lane, the farm buildings which would later become the site of the brewery.

By 1817, his malting business, operated in partnership with his brother-in-law, John Southworth, was thriving. Landed families usually brewed their own beer for consumption by family and workforce alike and in the ten years to 1827 Wilkins and Southworth were by far the largest suppliers of malt, together with a small quantity of hops, to the Farington family's estate at Worden Hall, for which they were paid over £800.<sup>2</sup>

The modern practice of governments using alcohol to raise taxes is nothing new. As early as the beginning of the eighteenth century Walpole was able to raise almost a quarter of tax revenues from alcohol and a century later Pitt increased duty on beer and malt to help pay for the Napoleonic Wars. The end of these wars in 1815 heralded the start of a severe depression involving a collapse in farm prices. The beer industry was particularly badly hit as the increase in duty on malt had put beer outside the reach of most people. Being both an innkeeper and a farmer, Thomas suffered more than most. In 1822 he was in arrears with the rent for his farm as well as with charges in connection with land he owned on the recently enclosed part of Longton Marsh.

<sup>2</sup> LRO. DDF 43

The situation was further aggravated by a reduction in duty on spirits in 1825, resulting in a sharp increase in their sales, especially of gin, at the expense of beer. This ultimately led to the passing of the Beer Act of 1830 which was aimed at reducing consumption of spirits by promoting beer drinking, and at the same time giving assistance to the hard-pressed agricultural industry. One effect of this legislation was a further large increase in the number of retail outlets, especially beer houses. Thomas seems to have taken advantage of this by moving into commercial brewing in 1831. (He had moved out of the Golden Ball in 1828.) A competitor brewery, Pye's, was also established at the same time a little further down Marsh Lane.

By 1838 he owned five properties including a house close to the marsh which he had had built with the intention of it becoming an inn. Originally known as 'The Mermaid', in later years it became the popular watering hole known today as 'The Dolphin'.

The scale of his business was such that by now he was importing large quantities of barley from Ireland. (Barley was not grown locally at this time, there being no mention of it in the Tithe Schedule of 1838). At the beginning of November, 1838, the *Hetty Clifton* arrived in Preston from Drogheda with '140 barrels of barley for T. Wilkins'. This amounted to seventeen tons and would have cost about £175 on the Dublin market plus shipping costs. In November, 1840, the *Mary and Ann Boyd*, also from Drogheda, arrived with another one hundred and forty barrels, followed in March the following year by the *Henry Smith Long*, again from Drogheda, which docked with two hundred barrels.<sup>3</sup>

While Wilkins' beer may not have been appreciated by George Bolton, it certainly had been by the Longton Oddfellows. On 29 June 1840 they celebrated their anniversary with a dinner at the Golden Ball followed by a procession to the marsh and: 'on their return they halted at Mr. Thomas Wilkins's, where they were plentifully regaled with some of Mr. Wilkins's nut-brown beverage'.<sup>4</sup>

Thomas died on 30 December 1841 and the following notice appeared in the *Preston Chronicle*:

Yesterday, in the 67th year of his age, Mr. Thomas Wilkins of Longton, Malster. He was a man highly and deservedly respected, and his death is deeply regretted by a numerous family and a large circle of friends and acquaintances.

Thomas had been an integral part of Longton life throughout his adulthood and, apart from his malting, brewing and farming interests, had been closely involved with the Ribble Navigation Company as their Longton agent in the reclamation of the marsh resulting from the straightening of the river channel. He was also involved with poor relief and the running of the Longton workhouse.

### Development under William and Richard Wilkins 1841 - 1884

After Thomas' death, his wife, Ellen, continued to live on Marsh Lane until her own death in 1850. Although she maintained an active interest in farming, winning many prizes in local shows, the malting and brewing business was now taken over by two of her sons, William (b.1807), and Richard (b.1816).

<sup>3</sup> *Preston Chronicle*. 'Preston Port News'

<sup>4</sup> *Preston Chronicle*, 4 July 1840



Label from a bottle of 'Old Tom'. This was strong ale brewed at Christmas and commemorated the founder of the brewery

William was the senior partner and, although of a more retiring and unobtrusive nature than his more outgoing brother, he was clearly the driving force behind the expansion of the brewery in the years after his father's death.

In 1851, still living in his father's house on Marsh Lane, which later became known as Plumpton House, he was described as a 'Maltster, Brewer and Farmer of 40 acres employing six men'. In 1853 he married Ann Hunt of Hoole, the daughter of the widowed Margaret Hunt, landlady of the Black Horse. The fortunes of the Hunts very much paralleled those of William and his family. From her father being landlord of the Black Horse, where he brewed his own beer, there developed a thriving malting and brewing business which later expanded to include a wine and spirit merchants' concern on Fishergate in Preston.

Perhaps more than his brother, William was a keen participant in the country pursuits of shooting and fishing. In 1866, he owned the majority of shares of the salmon fisheries on the Douglas and Ribble adjoining Longton and a memorandum of that year notes that he and his father had fished the rivers for over fifty years.<sup>5</sup>

Richard, by contrast, was much more outgoing being involved in many aspects of local life. He was, perhaps somewhat surprisingly, given their stance on drink, a leading figure in the Wesleyan Methodist movement. From 1837 he was superintendent of their Sunday school on Marsh Lane and provided land and funds for a new chapel built there in 1872. In 1878 he was appointed a governor of Hutton Grammar School where he found himself in the company of such local worthies as Lawrence Rawstone of Hutton Hall and Miss Farington of Worden.

In 1846 he married Deborah Naylor daughter of Thomas Naylor, a tailor of Preston. She died only eight years later shortly after giving birth to a son, Thomas Richard. Three years later he remarried, his bride being Mary Calvert daughter of William Calvert, the cotton magnate of Walton-le-dale. In 1871 Richard and his family moved into 'The Grove' on Liverpool Road.



The Grove on Liverpool Road was the home of the family between 1871 and 1927

This was a substantial, elegant, house and over the next fifty years its six acre grounds would be the venue for church and Sunday school walking days as well as the local 'Club day' processions. Here the participants would benefit from the hospitality of Richard and his family, with plentiful supplies of beer for the grown ups.

<sup>5</sup> LRO. DDTR Box 138

By 1853, the scale of the malting business had outgrown the capacity of the malt kiln on Marsh Lane and they acquired a larger kiln in Preston. It was on Mill Bank, Church Street, and it had previously been occupied by another Longton maltster, William Garstang. Although the reasons for moving to Preston are uncertain it was probably due to the rapid expansion of the town at this time and the consequent increase in public houses. They subsequently acquired at least two outlets in Preston and by 1869 had established a second malthouse on Lune Street.

The market for their beer had also spread to Southport, where Mrs. Waterhouse of the Houghton Arms Hotel: 'Respectfully informs visitors that they will find the house replete with every comfort, wines and spirits of the choicest qualities and Wilkins' unrivalled Longton Ale'.<sup>6</sup>

The volume of barley imports from Ireland eventually justified the purchase of a schooner, *The Gazelle*, of some eighty-one tons. On a return trip to Drogheda in February, 1861, the ship, loaded with coal, was lost in a gale with all four hands, the captain, his wife and two sons. It was jointly owned by W & R Wilkins, the captain and Mr John Clayton of Preston. It was unfortunately uninsured.<sup>7</sup>

Although the beer industry was never anywhere near as labour intensive as the cotton industry, the two Marsh Lane breweries were among the main employers in Longton during the period 1851 to 1901, peaking at a total of around twenty employees. The 1871 census shows that the Pye's brewery then employed eight men while that of the Wilkins' was appreciably larger with twelve employees. The combined total consisted of one manager, two maltsters, two coopers, nine labourers/servants and six carters. Almost all the employees lived close to the breweries with eleven living on Marsh Lane itself.

William died in 1875 leaving the running of the firm in the hands of Richard, whose son Thomas Richard now became brewery manager. By 1881, Richard, now 64, was taking something of a back seat, although he was still very active, and Thomas Richard became the driving force in what was to be the final stages of the brewery's expansion.

The year 1882 saw the arrival of the railway, with the opening of Longton Bridge Station on the newly constructed West Lancashire Railway from Southport to Preston. This greatly improved communication with both towns, and provided additional impetus for expansion - at the height of the brewery's output it was normal for eight or nine cartloads of beer to be taken to the station most mornings, with coal often being the return load.

The following year, at a cost £6,500, a large malthouse was erected on Marsh Lane, adjacent to the brewery buildings. It replaced the one on Mill Bank in Preston although the Lune Street premises were retained until at least 1901.

### A libel action

Various testimonials and obituaries appear to show that the family, especially Richard, was well liked and respected in the area. However, a somewhat bizarre, not to say comical, incident in 1883 shows that these feelings were not universal. Following a succession of poor harvests, hops were in short supply and very expensive. This led to claims that brewers were using hop substitutes. The situation was considered so serious that a Beer Adulteration Act was passed in 1887. In response to these allegations, W & R Wilkins published a letter in the *Preston Chronicle* of 14th April, 1883 stating that:

... for over fifty years, since which time our business has been established, we have never used any ingredient as a substitute or partial substitute for either hops or malt, nor do we intend, however long we may continue in this capacity, to diverge from the course in which hitherto we have most strictly adhered. And further, we shall have the greatest pleasure at anytime in giving every facility to any competent person who may wish to test our ales by chemical analysis.'

Since much of their business now lay in Southport, the same letter had also appeared in the *Southport Visitor* eleven days earlier. On 14th April, a reply was published in the *Southport News* under the

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<sup>6</sup> *Preston Chronicle*. 25 June 1853

<sup>7</sup> *Preston Chronicle*. 16 Feb 1861

pseudonym, 'Fairplay'. It subsequently turned out that it had been written by Richard Thompson, a cooper in the employ of Pye's brewery. While not disputing the facts in the Wilkins' letter, he 'wished someone interested in the trade would take up the challenge thrown out and test the said pure malt, hops and water principle'; he then went on to make the astonishing claim: 'In seven years I may say that they have at least to account for one dozen men, most of them fine, healthy looking young fellows a few days before their death, to say nothing of the widows and children thus left. Now compare this with that of their neighbours (Messrs. James Pye and Sons) and test the same thing, when I challenge Mr. Wilkins to name one death that has taken place under this firm, which has been established over fifty years; and, as the death rate is all I have to go by at present, I will leave the pure malt hops and water principal for Mr. Wilkins to explain further if he can.'

The clear implication was that their beer had poisoned at least a dozen people (maybe George Bolton was right after all!) Not surprisingly, Richard Wilkins sued for libel and, after the initial hearing at Leyland Petty Sessions, Thompson was committed for trial at the Lancaster Assizes in July.<sup>8</sup> The judge was of the opinion that no criminal act had been committed and that the brewery, by publishing their letters, had laid themselves open to the criticism which he described as: 'a rough piece of joking – a clumsy kind of chaff'. The jury returned an unanimous 'not guilty' verdict with costs awarded to the defendant.

Richard Wilkins died in October the following year (not from drinking his own beer!) and his funeral was the scene of much sadness in the village.

### **Further development under Thomas Richard Wilkins. 1884–1927**

The running of the business now passed to Richard's son. Born in 1854, Thomas Richard had been educated at Hutton Grammar School, Hawkeshead Grammar School and Cheltenham College. He took his father's place as a governor of Hutton Grammar School and for over forty years was chairman of the Longton branch of the Fylde Conservative Association. He also followed in his father's footsteps by becoming choirmaster at the Methodist chapel but left when a visiting preacher criticised the chapel for accepting his 'beer money'. In 1881 he had married Fanny Taylor of Blundellsands and the couple returned from honeymoon to Longton amidst great celebrations.

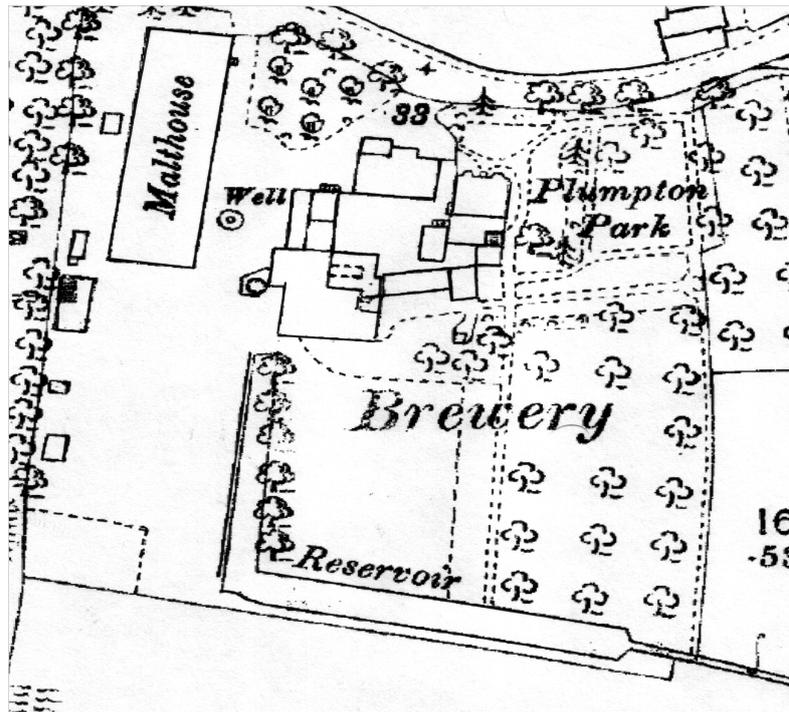
By now the profits from the brewery, as well as from the farming interests, were such that the firm had begun to buy land on a large scale, not only in Longton but also in Little Hoole. By 1884 three large farms in Little Hoole: Odd House Farm, Marsh House Farm and Lesser Marsh House Farm (or Manor House Farm as it was also known), totalling in all almost two hundred acres, were owned by the family as well as the Lordship of the Manor of Little Hoole and a quarter of the Manor of Longton. The Longton rate assessment of 1891 shows the family owning over two hundred acres of land there together with thirty houses and cottages, making them the second largest landowners in the village.<sup>9</sup>

The 25" O.S. map of 1892, shows the layout of the brewery and malt house complex. The house immediately to the left of Plumpton Park was that occupied by William Wilkins and was on the site of the earlier farmhouse of his father. The building to its left, known as 'the old barn', had been part of this farm. The remaining buildings date from around the 1850s and show a fair degree of complexity in the operation. The presence of the large L-shaped reservoir bears witness to the importance of an adequate water supply for the brewing process. The building with a chimney on the left of the brewery, housed the boiler which provided steam to the brewery engine which was used to power the various mechanical processes such as grinding the malt and hoisting the malt and hops to the top of the brewery from where they would be gravity fed to the various stages in the brewing process. In 1891 Thomas Rawcliffe lived in one of the 'Malt Kiln' cottages on the north of Marsh Lane and was a 'Brewery engine driver'.

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<sup>8</sup> *Preston Chronicle* 21 July 1883

<sup>9</sup> LRO. PUT 4/66



25" O.S. map of 1892 showing the layout of the brewery

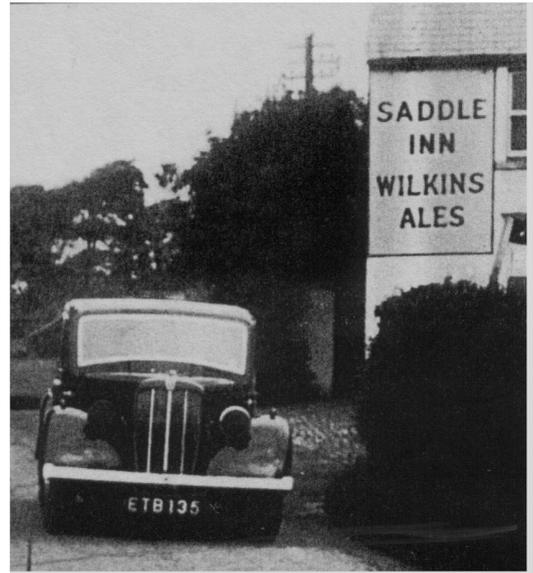
A later map of 1911 shows the same basic layout but with the addition of four smaller outbuildings and there is good reason to believe that this was the final development of the site. Plumpton House still stands today although the other buildings were demolished in the 1970s to make way for the appropriately named Maltings estate.



The 1883 Malt House, shortly before its demolition in 1976

The expansion of the business continued after the turn of the century and in 1904 the small Chorley brewery of Thomas Sharples was acquired along with the Black Bull Inn in Penwortham.

The business reached its peak in the 1920s with some twenty outlets, mainly in Longton and the immediate area but also in Preston and Southport. The Golden Ball was regarded as the brewery 'tap' and others included the Walmer Bridge Hotel, The Longton Arms, the Dolphin, the Rose and Crown in Hoole, The Earnshaw Bridge in Leyland, The Black Bull in Penwortham, The Shelley Arms in Preston and the Saddle Inn in Lea, (shown right).



The 1920s saw a boom in seaside holidays with many people travelling by coach from the cities and towns to the Lancashire resorts and the A59 would have had a constant stream of coaches during the summer. A planning application submitted in 1927 by architect Christopher Wilkins, son of Thomas Richard, was for an extension to the Rose and Crown at Hoole, together with ladies and gents' toilets in the car park. This was to cater for this passing trade and may have been almost the last development involving Thomas Richard. (The planning application was submitted in July, 1927, only three months after his death, and was approved on 2 Aug).<sup>10</sup>

Thomas Richard died after a long illness on 16 April, 1927, and his funeral was attended by over one hundred and twenty mourners, including many tenants and employees.

### The final years - 1927-1952

After Thomas Richard's death, the family sold most of their land in Longton and Hoole, including 'The Grove' but continued to run the brewery business with his son, Thomas, as manager at Plumpton House.<sup>11</sup> However, this was a period of consolidation in the industry when smaller, independent breweries were being swallowed up by the larger concerns. In 1904 there had been no less than thirteen breweries listed in the trade directory for Preston, including Longton. By 1952, virtually only W & R Wilkins was left, the Victoria Street brewery of H. C. Breakell had been taken over by C & S of Blackpool while Matthew Brown had consolidated their operations in Blackburn leaving only an office in Preston. The large companies such as Guinness, Tetley and Whitbread had taken over others, running them on as bottling plants. One other brewery of note was the Preston Labour Club brewery on Brierley Street which supplied the working men's clubs.

In 1952 W. & R. Wilkins went the way of the rest when it was acquired by the Salford brewery of Groves and Whitnall. (Said to be the model for Coronation Street's Newton and Ridley) Groves and Whitnall themselves would later disappear into the mighty *Greenall Whitley* empire.

LOOK OUT FOR THE RED ROSE SIGN —

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THE POPULAR HALFWAY STOP—  
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Quick Service with Quality and Civility

**IT'S GOOD BEER!—IT'S GROVES & WHITNALL**

This 1950's advert for the Rose and Crown at Hoole appeared just after the Groves and Whitnall takeover of W & R Wilkins and was obviously aimed at the coach travellers on the A59. The landlord at the time was the noted hangman Albert Pierrepoint

<sup>10</sup> LRO. RDP 19/3

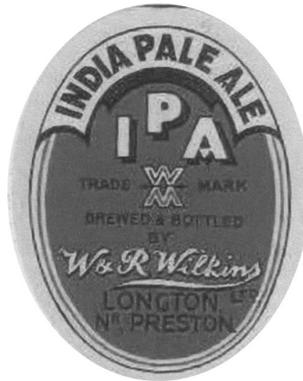
<sup>11</sup> LRO. DDX 103 acc. 2831. Box 59

The 55th AGM of Groves and Whitnall was held in Manchester on 22nd April, 1954, and the following report appeared in the *Times* the following day:

**Improved Trading**

The trade of the houses acquired from Messrs. W. & R. Wilkins Ltd, Longton, Lancs. has shown a satisfactory increase. This was especially so during the second half of the year when our beers became better known in this territory.

Now I did start my drinking career shortly after the above date and remember the Groves and Whitnall beers very well. They were *dreadful*. So if the trade in the houses acquired by them from W & R Wilkins improved as a result of the takeover it suggests the Wilkins' beers must have been even worse and seems to bear out George Bolton's claim.



Although the brewery disappeared almost sixty years ago there is still a market for its memorabilia, with beer mats and labels such as these regularly appearing on eBay. Bidding is invariably fast and furious and so far I have only managed to acquire a tray.

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## More wanderings and musings into Memory Lane

*Sylvia Thompson*

The recent clips on television, especially on the Sport Relief programmes of the Pakistan floods, of children desperately scavenging for food or for anything they can find which might bring them a few coppers, have been horrendous. In this day and age that anyone should have to resort to scavenging to this extent defies all reasoning.

The pictures did, however, bring to mind days when I was around ten or eleven years old, of the landfill site between Hall Lane and the River Lostock. The fields and streams and the River Lostock had always been our vast playground so the *tip* also became a part of our many adventures and despite warnings from our parents to keep away, as is normal in most children, curiosity always got the better of us. Of course, unlike the children in those stricken areas, we always went home to a warm house with plenty to eat.

We would jump the small brook which separated the farm land from the tip and go rummaging around among the ashes which sometimes were still hot and smelling of sulphur. There were iron filings, presumably waste from Leyland Motors; broken glass, old tin cans, barbed wire, paper, bricks and a plethora of other rubbish. Of course, we were just playing, exploring and what treasures we expected to find or why it was so fascinating to us I will never understand. What would today's health and safety officials



No longer a tip

think of it I wonder? But apart from the odd graze or scratch I don't remember any of us getting seriously hurt.

I recently went back to explore the area, out of curiosity, and found it vastly changed, the tip has disappeared under grass, there are wild flowers and people walk their dogs there. Nature has reclaimed what was an eyesore and the River Lostock ripples and flows along below as if nothing has changed.

I followed the river a little way along the same course it has always followed and noticed some quite large fish, there must have been a dozen or more and on making enquiries found out they could be Chubb, no doubt there will be other varieties as well; it is just nice to know that the river is clean enough to support them. Also in the river banks there were signs of other wild life and a kingfisher was spotted, a quick, brilliant blue flash and it was gone. Shortly I came to the boundaries where an industrial estate has eaten up the meadows and cattle grazing fields where we used to play. There the river banks have become overgrown with trees, Himalayan balsam and other wild plants – all have taken over where the cows used to come down to drink. Now there are housing estates right up to the river banks; some residents of have been enterprising enough to incorporate the banks into their gardens putting in wooden decking and bringing out tables and chairs in order to sit and watch the river and wildlife.



A cleaner river now

Pilkington's cotton mill which bordered the Lostock on Croston Road has been partly knocked down along with a row of small mill cottages, but alongside the river the building is still standing where you could see the cloth-lookers turning the big bales of cotton, checking for faults in the material. This is now the rear of AFL Motorparts. My dad worked there as a lad and again after he came home from serving in France in the WW1 and sometimes would take me down to lean over the bridge

and watch. Then he would take me to a small door in the factory wall which in summer was often left open to let some air into the mill, from there we could see the women on the looms and hear the horrendous noise from them - I knew then that I would never want to work in there but it was actually where my parents met and fell in love.

The River Lostock is about fifteen miles long - it rises in the Withnell Hills, flowing down to Whittle-le-Woods running parallel to the Leeds Liverpool canal under the A49 then down to Clayton Bottoms, on through Cuerden Valley and Lostock Hall to Leyland and Ulnes Walton eventually meeting up with the Yarrow near Croston which carries on to the Douglas and onto the sea. At high tides it can be tidal as far as Croston.

The River Lostock has been a source of power for various industries and mills, including Farington Corn mill near Farington Hall farm. This was another of our 'haunted' play areas; we would find it quite spooky, especially on windy days when you could hear the pump bumping away. There are still some traces of the old mill race near to Mill Lane but no sound of the pump.

Across the lane and under a bridge the race came rushing down a stone ramp where we used to often set up for our picnics which consisted of jam butties and a shared bottle of pop, or water if we couldn't find enough old bottles to return to the shop for coppers. We called it the 'rushing water'.

Also, not too far away, was the famed Neddy's Spring. Again, this area which was part of the old test track for Leyland Vehicles, has been taken over by nature and is full of wild flowers,



Scene of picnics long ago



Remnants of a Farington orchard

butterflies, rabbits and birds. It isn't the same.

Farington Hall farm and the orchard where we scrumped for apples is gone, although I did find a couple of gnarled old trees with, yes, a few small green apples. I had to pick one for old times sake, but it has a charm of it's own.

There were signs that the young generation of today find it a good place to have picnics - but too much elaboration in that area would spoil the memories.

I enjoyed my little exploration, this area was a massive part of my childhood and is full of magic memories. No doubt in time it will all disappear under building projects, such as the recent controversial waste disposal plant, but, in the meantime, I intend to go back and just enjoy it and maybe take advantage of the profusion of blackberries as soon as they ripen, reminding me that Dad used to take us blackberry picking through the fields to Neddy's Spring. Mother would never come with us as she had a fear of cows, 'nosey creatures' she called them; often they would follow us around the hedgerows but Mother thought they were monsters out to get her. Her blackberry pies were delicious though.



*The Annual Historial Society  
Dinner  
will be held at Alston Hall  
on  
Sunday, 10 April 2011  
followed by a talk to be given by  
Malcolm Tranter  
on  
Historic Western Cyprus*

## Railway trip notes - Leyland to Manchester Piccadilly

Peter Houghton

These notes were written for our trip to Manchester on 12th June, 2010.

For all newcomers on these trips just a few words of explanation. As we will probably not be able to all sit together on the train, these notes will tell you what you can see from the train as we journey towards Manchester.

To make it easy, the (L), (R) or (B) will denote if the item mentioned can be seen to the left, right or both sides of the train as we head towards Manchester.

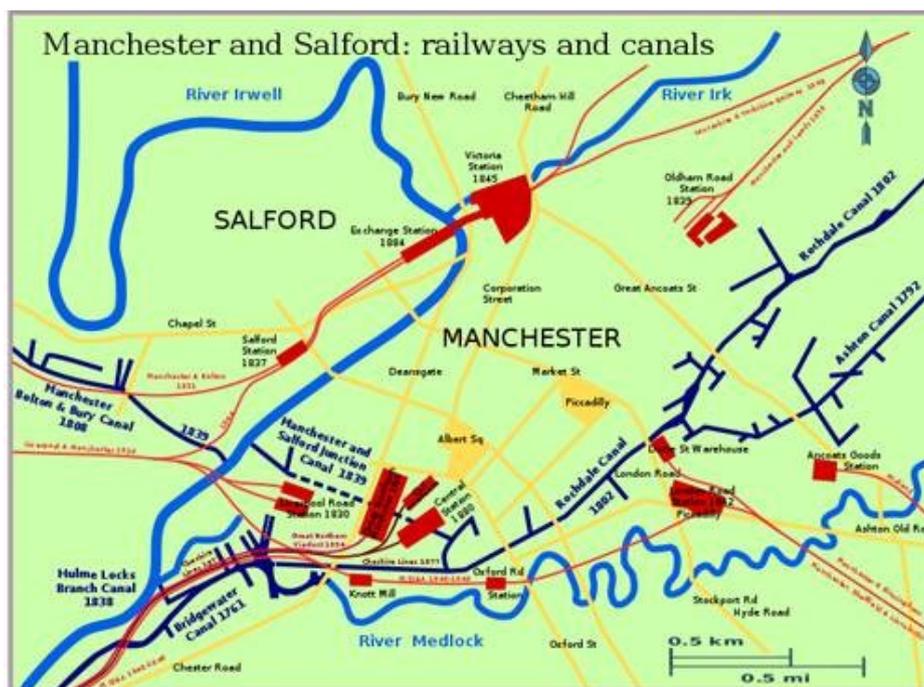
*The original notes for the trip were written prior to the 1994 trip so I have left them intact and the updates are in italics.*

### 9.29 am Leyland Station

Following our departure from the station, we travel south along the West Coast Main Line, the line between London Euston and Glasgow. This part of the route, built and opened by the North Union Railway on 31st October, 1838, from Wigan to Preston, Platform 1, is probably the oldest used platform on the whole West Coast Main Line. Going under Bent Bridge we reach the signals signifying the approach to Euxton Junction. We pass under the M6 Motorway on the site of Rose Whittle's Bridge and the points then move the train across to the left hand track as we reach Euxton Junction.

This is where the Bolton and Preston Railway joined the North Union Railway in June 1843 (following a deviation from the original planned direct route into Preston using the Walton Summit tramway). The old LMS sign (L) shows we are now travelling 'To Chorley and Manchester', here also was the site of the Euxton Junction station which survived until April, 1917.

*So much has happened since 1994 as the old Euxton Junction with only one line onto the Manchester route was doubled with a new line and a rebuilt Packsaddle Bridge. This enables trains to pass through the junction now at 60 mph. The first casualty of these changes was the old LMS sign followed by the remains of the two trailing sidings that almost reached the junction from the factory site. A recent addition has been floodlights to be used when overnight workings are required.*



Through the new trees (L) you may be able to make out the remains of the lights of the large marshalling yards which used to be situated here to serve the Royal Ordnance Factory. At the next bridge we pass the deserted and overgrown platforms of the former Royal Ordnance Station which still looks very much as it must have done when thousands of munitions workers de-trained there during the Second World War. Hidden behind the platform (L) is Buckshaw Hall, still kept locked within the confines of the ROF.

*This now seems so long ago as first the trees were thinned when the junction work was done, the part of the ROF before the bridge on the left is the last remaining part of the factory which is currently in the course of demolition. When the main part of the site was demolished, both the old ROF station and the original bridge that took Central Drive from Euxton Lane to Dawson Lane disappeared, (although the bases of the platforms can still be made out). Buckshaw Hall, however can now be seen in its newly restored but empty state.*

*As the whole site was being demolished the amount of concrete uncovered from the various silos and underground buildings was huge with mountains of hard-core being created, this was then moved to fill in the vast voids under the hills. The flat landscape we see now being covered by the houses of Buckshaw and the large distribution warehouses must be what the fields looked like before the ROF arrived in the late 1930s.*

The route now takes us to the cutting which caused the problems when the railway was built between 1840 and 1843, the tunnel was originally intended to be 300yds long under the Chorley to Preston road, at a depth of 80 feet. The hill consisted alternately of sand and clay: the miners working on the tunnel considered it was the worst soil they had ever met. After two attempts of constructing the tunnel by normal means, it was decided in, April, 1842, to make the present open cutting with the remaining central portion being the 124yd tunnel beneath the road. The vast cutting took thirteen months to complete with the removal of 650,000 cubic yards of earth and with the cost of six lives.

Just prior to entering the tunnel, there are the 'Flying Arches' which J. Alexander Adie, the resident engineer, constructed to support the sides of the cutting beside the track with the use of retaining walls. There are sixteen of these arches, springing from the walls at a height of 11ft 4 in and rising to a height of 15ft in the centre. Each has a span of 25ft 3in and in the centre consists of a single course of stones only 12in thick with stone flags laid on top to prevent weathering.

*A couple of years ago, the Euxton Junction to Chorley route was closed for ten weeks while the cutting, which included the arches, was extensively rebuilt, the stone arches being 'temporarily' replaced by steel. How long is 'temporarily', who knows?*

After leaving the tunnel, the first bridge type structure we reach is in fact the River Chor aqueduct which takes the river from the hills above Chorley to Astley Park via various culverts. It only came to people's attention in August 1987 when the flash thunderstorm caused the river to overflow at this point closing the railway until the fire brigade could pump the water away.

As we enter Chorley, the rough ground (L) (*now being covered by small business units*) which gradually levels out is the remains of the route of the Lancashire Union Railway who owned the line jointly with the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway from Chorley to Cherry Tree on the Preston to Blackburn Railway. This line was built in 1868 to link the Wigan coalfields to East Lancashire, closing to through traffic in 1966, the famous Nine Arches viaduct being demolished to make way for the M61 Motorway. The caravan sales area and large car park (L) covers the former Friday Street coal yards, while (R) the All Seasons Leisure Centre was built on the site of Lancashire Floor Oil Cloth Works.

### 9.36 am Chorley Station

As we enter Chorley Station we can see the new shopping centre and the bus station (R), the new road in the foreground being built on the site of the timber yard. The railway opened to Chorley in December 1841, the station being rebuilt in 1862, the present station opened in 1983. Leaving the station, we cross the level crossing controlled by the unmanned signal box, the crossing not having been used for many years.

*This end of the station was rebuilt in the last ten years, the remains of the level crossing and gates being removed and the unmanned signal box now resides in the yard at the Ribble Steam Railway prior to its future reuse on that railway.*

The new road (R) has been built on the site of the former goods yard, though the Chorley Community Centre in the old church on Railway Street has a more recent historical event, being the site of the first gig by the famous group 'Ultravox' with the original lead singer John Foxx who was brought up on Pall Mall.

After passing the old sidings (R) now covered by the Morrison's car park, we cross the viaduct over the Cowling Brook, which consists of eight arches of 30ft span, together with a skew stone arch of 25ft span over the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. This canal was actually built as the Lancaster Canal (Southern Section) from Walton Summit to Westhoughton, though it only managed to reach Aspull before the twenty-three locks were built down into Wigan.

As the canal heads off (R), we pass under the A6 road to reach Rawlinson Lane which was the temporary end of the railway in February 1841. Immediately after the bridge, (R) the remains of the Ellerbeck Colliery line trails in, now being built upon, while the second part of the Lancashire Union Railway leaves (R) through a now filled-in bridge hole to Adlington White Bear station then on to the West Coast Main Line at Boar's Head Junction, Standish, the line opening in November 1869 and closing finally in May 1971.

As we head into Adlington Station we pass (R) the back of one of Adlington's old churches now converted into an Indian restaurant. The original station buildings have all disappeared, while in the distance to the right can be seen the large buildings of Fairclough Construction.

Leaving Adlington and crossing Huyton viaduct, a line of trees heads off (L), this is the route of the Waterhouse branch which forked as it approached the A6, one branch headed off round the bottom of the Blackrod hill towards a series of old colliery sites in one direction, while the other line followed the route which was later taken by the Blackrod bypass to a colliery between Blackrod station and the village. Just off the bypass, the building which housed the colliery locomotives before being converted to a farm barn was only demolished recently.

To the right, beyond the M61 Anderton service area, can be seen the heights of Rivington Pike and Winter Hill complete with radio and TV aerials. On the opposite side (R) the village on the top of the hill is Blackrod, as we head past the old L & Y signal box, which is now the boundary between the Preston Signal Box and Manchester Piccadilly Signal Box, across the site of Blackrod Junction into Blackrod Station. This is also the point at which we have completed the rise out of the catchment area of the River Ribble and entered the catchment area of the Rivers Irwell and Mersey.

The remains of the line heading off (L) used to be the branch to Horwich opened in 1870. When the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Locomotive Works at Horwich was built between 1885 and 1887, the branch closed to passengers in September 1965. After leaving Blackrod station, a branch constructed to avoid the station, (known as the Horwich Fork line), signs of which have almost now disappeared but it can just be seen trailing in after the distribution units (L).

Just prior to the M61 bridge, there are the remains of a cutting (R) which led to the Wigan to Bolton line at Hindley. This line opened in 1868 and formed the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway route from Wigan to Preston and Blackburn avoiding the LNWR-owned West Coast Main Line, the direct route not

always being the preferred route, especially over other company's tracks. It also made a connection with the South Lancashire route which we will meet again as we approach Salford Crescent.

After the M61 Motorway bridge on the left can be seen the long Horwich Locomotive Works building in the distance, while in the foreground the area known as Red Moss was planned to be the junction between the Lancaster Canal (Southern Section) and the Manchester, Bolton & Bury Canal.

Unfortunately, following the M,B&BC decision to change the size of the locks to accommodate the Leeds & Liverpool Canal boats, (who had by this time taken over the Lancaster Canal (Southern Section)), the Leeds & Liverpool decided to join the Bridgewater Canal at Leigh instead.

*As it says in the history of the Horwich Railway Works, the directors of the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway got the land at Horwich cheaply because of the poor weather that the area endured, I can confirm that as since these notes were written I worked for four years on this site. At first a man made hill or mound was created as a tipping site to make the ground more stable, a methane burner is sited on the other side of the hill.*

*Then Bolton Wanderers moved from Burden Park to the Reebok Stadium, which is actually nearer to the centre of Wigan than Bolton. The developers moved in and constructed both the Middlebrook Retail Park with the shops and the Business Park where I was situated. Finally, they constructed the new Horwich Parkway railway station to complete the development together with the large office blocks on the other side of the railway station bridge.*

After passing the British Aerospace factory (L), the flat land on the (R) used to be a series of railway sidings only connecting to the Bolton-Wigan line, we then reach the new Lostock Station which was opened on the site of the previous Lostock Junction station which used to be open on both lines.

*The walled area in the original car park (L) used to be the site of the small goods shed, while the goods yard has been much extended to make a commuter friendly car park.*

The line on the right was opened as the Liverpool and Bury Railway in 1848, the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway taking the line over in order that they now had a Liverpool to Manchester route of their own (Liverpool Exchange-Kirkby-Wigan-Westhoughton-Bolton-Manchester Victoria), not direct but covering the main centres of population.

We now follow the River Croal on its way into the centre of Bolton passing the sites of the mills which used to use the river for power. As the buildings close in, we enter the 77yd Moor Lane Tunnel with a date-stone denoting '1840' followed by the many over bridges as the train bends to the right to enter Bolton station, passing the former junction (L) with the Bolton to Blackburn line, now a car park. The present Blackburn lines run into platforms 1 and 3, the last building prior to the bridge (L) being a former hydraulic and electric power station opened earlier this century (*now demolished and replaced by a shopping unit*).

### **9.55 am Bolton Trinity Street Station**

On 29th May, 1838, the Manchester and Bolton Railway opened from the New Bailey Street station in Salford to the Trinity Street station. The two island platforms are connected by a new footbridge and station building before the road bridge. These replace the old buildings which used to be attached to the bridge, the only remnant being the foundations between the lines. The church (R) is the Holy Trinity church while (L) where the new industrial units are situated there used to be the large goods warehouse built in 1904.

Following our departure from Bolton we immediately pass (L) the remains of the continuation of the Liverpool to Bury line as it left Burden Junction, passing the former home of Bolton Wanderers, to Bury.

The large Bee Hive mill (R) has been famous more recently for the demolition of its chimney by Fred Dinah.

We pass through Moses Gate Station closely followed by Farnworth Station and the adjacent tunnel of 295 yards. The tunnel has twin bores, the Manchester direction bore being the original 1838 tunnel, while on the right, the bore opened on the 5th December, 1880, allowed the singling of the original bore. The requirement of this new tunnel was apparently to provide sufficient clearance for Midland Railway Pullman carriages which it was intended to run between Scotland and Manchester via the Settle and Carlisle line. This has a present day sequel as the electrification of the Manchester to Blackpool line is still pending, one of the delays on the engineering side being the lack of height in the Farnworth tunnels.

When we emerge from the tunnel, we are travelling high above the Irwell valley as the train enters Kearsley Station. This station has changed its name many times, known as 'Ringley' in 1838, followed by 'Stoneclough', 'Stoneclough & Kearsley' and finally 'Kearsley' in 1903. Leaving the station, we pass over the enormous stone bridge designed by Jesse Hartley in the style of a canal aqueduct, probably to please his Manchester, Bolton & Bury Canal Co. employers.

The line coming in from the right was the outlet for coal from the Bridgewater Collieries (opened in 1878) which led to the sidings (R) now being built up. There was also an overhead electric railway which led from the sidings down underneath the line to the power station (L), which has now been demolished. *All these sites now are covered by housing estates on both sides of the railway.*

We now reach a site (L) of immense industrial archaeological interest, namely, the site of the Wet Earth Colliery which employed James Brindley, prior to his canal building years, on flood prevention of the workings. Brindley devised an interesting answer which involved using the water of the River Irwell to provide power to drive a paddle wheel to lift water from the colliery. This colliery and the Botany Bay pit were connected by a canal to the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal at Clifton Aqueduct. It was named after the mining engineer, Matthew Fletcher, being known in its lifetime as 'Fletcher's Canal'.

Unfortunately the M62 crossing has eliminated any sign of the Fletcher's Canal though (L) the East Lancashire Railway's Clifton Viaduct can be seen overshadowing the Clifton Aqueduct behind the adjacent factory. The station at Clifton was formerly known as 'Clifton Junction' where the famous 'battle' took place on Monday, 12th March, 1849, when locomotives of the East Lancashire Railway and the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway blocked the lines because of disputes about the running powers which the ELR were entitled to from here to Manchester; these disputes were finally solved when the ELR were taken over by the LYR in August 1859.

Under Clifton station ran the line from Molyneux Junction to Patricroft, this line being owned by the London North Western Railway. It was built in 1850 but closed as a through route on Tuesday, 28th April, 1953, at 5.35 am, when a pair of semi-detached houses in Swinton suddenly collapsed into a crater. This was the first example of a railway tunnel collapse in British railway history and Clifton Hall tunnel was never reopened.

After leaving Clifton, the building on the left adjacent to the railway was built as a power station for the third rail electric Manchester to Bury line via Prestwich whose line is approximately three miles away. The line of the Manchester, Bolton & Bury Canal (L) now joins the railway to accompany it until they diverge in Salford; the large stone walls of the canal banks show how well the canal was constructed. The present plans for restoration note that where the canal has just been filled in, once the filler material has been removed, the structure of the canal is almost in perfect condition.

The remains can now be seen (L) of the Agecroft Power Station and the (R) Agecroft Coal Mine, one of the last working pits in the Lancashire coal field. *This area has now been totally redeveloped with the private Agecroft Prison (L) and the new Agecroft housing estate and business park (R).*

Leaving the Colliery and Power Station, we can see the remains of Brindle Heath Junction (R), closed in 1987, which enabled trains to cross over to the Wigan-Atherton-Salford line in order to enter Pendleton Broad Street station, (not to be confused with the former station on our present line at Pendleton, which closed in 1966). With the scrap yard (L) hiding the canal, and with the Brindle Heath refuse transfer station of the Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority (R), from which trainloads of treated refuse are taken to Appley Bridge, we reach the final signal (L) which allows the train entry to the Salford Crescent complex of lines. Passing the bridge, we can see the emerging Wigan line (R) built to speed up the Liverpool to Manchester traffic in 1888, avoiding the long journey via Bolton, and through a very industrial and busy mining area.

### 10.08 am Salford Crescent Station

The station at Salford Crescent was created to serve the four lines which meet at this point, the first and second being the original line of the Manchester and Bolton Railway from Bolton (which we have just covered) and its continuation into Salford, thence to Manchester Victoria station, passing the site of Manchester Exchange station. The third line was the previously mentioned Wigan to Salford direct route.

The fourth, however, was, until the opening of the Manchester Airport branch, the newest line in the country being opened in 1988, which, despite being short, was the fundamental link between the merging of the north and south Manchester passenger railway systems; while there had been freight connections these were too far out for the benefit of the passengers. The Windsor Link, as it came to be known, after the Windsor Bridge Signal Box, enables trains to go to either the northern station of Victoria or the southern stations, note, not terminus of Deansgate, Oxford Road, Piccadilly, Stockport and all points south.

Therefore, upon leaving the station with the Salford University on one side and the University of Salford (formally Salford Tech) on the other (*now both part of the same University*) we head down the Windsor Link route dropping down, leaving the Victoria line with the Hope Street stone terminal in sight (L) as we approach the line of the oldest passenger railway in the world, namely, the Liverpool & Manchester Railway, which we join near the site of Ordsall Lane station (closed in 1957).

Almost immediately, the lines diverge again at Ordsall Lane Junction, where the line (L) heads up the gradient to Salford and Manchester Victoria, the new terminus of the L&MR after the extension of the line in 1844, to join up with the Manchester & Leeds Railway and the Manchester and Bolton Railway; the first becoming, with the Grand Junction Railway, the main constituents of the London & North Western Railway, while the other two were the main constituents of the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway.

As we come to the bridge over the River Irwell, a line leaves (L) as the original line goes into the terminus platforms of Liverpool Road station of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway now preserved as part of the Manchester Museum of Science and Industry. Below on the river (L) the previously busy quay area of the Mersey & Irwell Navigation can be seen, with the raised ground on the left bank hiding the River Lock of the Manchester, Bolton & Bury Canal which has now dropped by six locks to come down to river level. *The first three locks have now been re-opened with a tunnel under the new road giving access to the first lock.*

The large warehouse on the right bank has now been converted to a hotel, though it did serve as a set for the soap opera *Albion Market* for a time, the *Granada* studios being next door. The most interesting feature outside the hotel is a lock off the river. This is an original feature being the River Lock of the Manchester & Salford Junction Canal (an ill-fated canal which left the river then climbed four locks and passed through tunnels until it met the Rochdale Canal before it joined the Bridgewater Canal at Castlefield), the problem being that the Mersey & Irwell Navigation wanted a connection with the Rochdale but the Bridgewater did not want any of their Manchester to Liverpool traffic going to their rival.

Hence, the promotion of the M&SJC by the Mersey & Irwell Navigation, unfortunately, as with most things, once they were committed the Bridgewater built Hulme Locks thereby keeping control. The

Navigation, therefore, built the now unnecessary canal whose locks had to have the water back-pumped in order that the Rochdale Canal did not lose any of its precious water supplies. The line of the canal now lies in tunnels under the G-Mex Centre, formally Manchester Central station and *Granada* Studios, the River Lock being dug out from where it had been buried after the canal closed.

As we approach Deansgate station, we are joined (R) by the Manchester South Junction & Altrincham Railway while above the former Cheshire Lines Committee lines on the iron viaduct formerly took traffic into Manchester Central station, which closed on 5th May, 1969, and the Great Northern Warehouse. This viaduct now takes the Metrolink trams from Altrincham into the centre of Manchester, while below the basins of the Bridgewater Canal and the Rochdale Canal make up the Castlefield complex.

### 10.12 am Castlefield - Deansgate Station

The station previously known as Knott Mill and Deansgate was opened in 1849. The line was originally from Altrincham to London Road though since the Metrolink opened and used the Altrincham track bed, the line now terminates just after Cornbrook Junction where the Cheshire Lines Committee goes off via Irlam and Widnes to Liverpool. The station now has a pedestrian foot bridge across Whitworth Street West to the Metrolink and the G-Mex Centre.

Leaving the station the train heads along the viaduct with glimpses of the Rochdale Canal through gaps in the multi-storey buildings, together with the un-navigable River Medlock which used to provide the water for the Bridgewater Canal.

### 10.14 am Oxford Road Station

Below the station, Oxford Road has the Palace Theatre (L), while (R) the *BBC North* headquarters and the Manchester University buildings can be seen.

### 10.18 am Piccadilly Station

As the train pulls into Platform 13 of Piccadilly station, the main terminus building (L) formerly known as London Road Station comes into view.

Standing on the island platform we can look over to the right to see the remains of the Mayfield station used by the LNWR for their south Manchester suburban services until 1960, the station's last use being as relief lines during the rebuilding of the London Road station into the modern-day Piccadilly.

As we look towards the main station building, I explain that the station was shared by three companies: the Great Central (previously the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway), the London & North Western Railway (previously the Manchester & Birmingham Railway) and the Midland Railway. When the Midland Railway were evicted and opened the station at Central, the remaining two companies ran the station separately, the LNWR to the left, the GCR to the right with two sets of platform numbers (numbered 1 to 6, and lettered A-F), officials, staff etc. Even when the railways were grouped in 1923, both the LMS and the LNER used separate facilities at the station.

We take the footbridge to the main station platforms and into the new three storey booking hall with the escalator connection down to the Metrolink station in the cellars below the main station, trams going to Altrincham, Bury or Eccles.

## THE CITY CENTRE WALK

### Piccadilly Station to Castlefield

We walk out onto the station approach which leads down to Piccadilly at its junction with Great Ducie Street pausing as I ask the members where they think the Rochdale Canal could be from this point. The correct answer is, 'straight down', as it passes underneath the twenty-storey block of 111 Piccadilly and then goes under Piccadilly.

Our group then walks up Great Ducie Street past the old warehouse which is now an apartment building and turn left into Dale Street. Here the now lowered walls no longer hide the Rochdale Canal as I for the first and not the last time, tell of my early adventures in the 1970s looking over high walls and using a bit of creative trespassing to find the then hidden route of the canal. Further up Dale Street, we see the archway leading into the site of the Rochdale Canal basins now used as a car park though with one of the original warehouses still in situ. The restored office building is still being used by the privately owned Rochdale Canal Company.

Where there was originally a doorway, there is now an open entrance into the quiet world of the canal, the balance beam of the lock gate provides a handy seat for your chairman as he explains the history of the Rochdale Canal from its original opening and its eventual decline, linked to the Ashton Canal and the Cheshire Ring. We then walk down the side of Lock 84 under Dale Street and into the Undercroft. The pillars of 111 Piccadilly are all spaced around the now well lit towpath which leads to Lock 83 Piccadilly directly under the building. Passing the lock we all headed down in the cavern-like atmosphere under Piccadilly itself.



Members at Lock 84 on Rochdale Canal



Going down Piccadilly

first thing to notice about the locks is the lack of any bypass weirs, land value being at a premium in this area, any surplus water going over the top of the gates. This leads to problems further down and many lock sides do get water-logged.



Walking along Canal Street

Leaving the tunnel behind, we reach the fortified Courts on the opposite bank, the site of many security related cases in the past. The towpath then leaves the canal as it crosses Minshull Street and changes sides as it enters Canal Street, which used to have rows of parking meters, though now has more tables and chairs, making a definite problem if anyone wanted to use the towpath, which this is, for horses towing a narrow boat. The street used to have the Manchester Playboy Club as one of its residents, now part of history itself.



Chairman in full flow at the beginning of Canal Street



The Central Boiler House which used to heat the office buildings in the centre of Manchester

We pass the lengthman's house on Chorlton Street, which is still in use being built over the canal next to the lock as part of a bridge parapet, the home of the North West Film Archive being round the corner. As we reach the end of Canal Street we arrive at Princess Street Lock where the towpath again changes sides on a turnover bridge and goes under Princess Street.

The towpath now again takes a private route through the city passing the Central Boiler House, which used to provide heat for many of the city centre office buildings which had the hot water piped from this building by pipes along the canal.

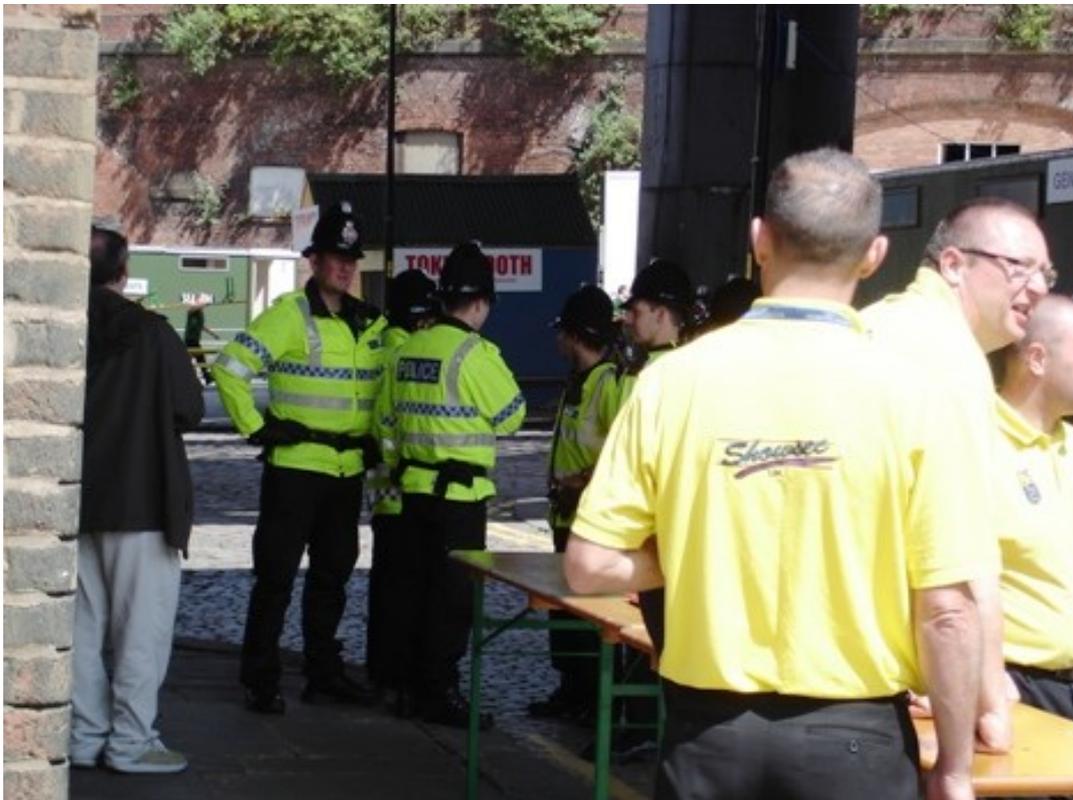
As we walk past the locks we meet a boat going through the Rochdale Nine from Piccadilly to Castlefield as they gradually lower to the Bridgewater Canal level. After Tib Lock, we reach the junction with the Manchester & Salford Junction Canal (R), which leads off to the basin beside the new Bridgewater Hall through a reconstruction of the bridge on Great Bridgewater Street. Its former

route under the G-Mex Centre (formerly Manchester Central station), Great Northern Warehouse, Deansgate and *Granada* Studios can only be followed above ground though there were plans to make a feature of a cruise through it in the old *Granada* Studio Tour complex.

We now pass a series of local media sites, the apartments (L) built on the site of the Hacienda nightclub run by Tony Wilson and the site of a *Coronation Street* death by Deansgate Lock No 91. Our group now heads down the lock side into Knott Mill Tunnel, which has been shortened in length over the years by the building of the local rail network. Leaving the tunnel we see the ornate railway bridge skewed over the canal over which we had passed that morning. On the opposite bank of the canal, a short branch disappears into a lower tunnel, this being a branch off the 8 foot lower Bridgewater Canal which had a tunnel and pulley system to a warehouse on Deansgate.

Our group stand on Castle Street Bridge next to Lock 92, the main line of the Bridgewater Canal can be seen heading for the terminal basins off to the left, with all the warehouses now restored and used for apartments or offices. While standing on the bridge, your guide refers to the nearness of the *Granada* Studios which use the canal for many background scenes for *Coronation Street*, on occasions using two different sets of actors for totally different scenes by just turning the camera 90 degrees.

Then we encounter our only problem of the day as the planned route headed under the two railway viaducts past the recreation of the Roman Fort with a side glance to where the real Roman remains lay thence through the Staffordshire basins of Castlefield and onto Liverpool Road; however, this is June 12th and England are playing USA at football this evening – at least *seven* hours away, but an officious steward, backed by a large police presence, bars the route and we have to turn back into Castle Street and back to Deansgate.



Chairman trying to get through to the Roman remains but stopped by the police due to a football match

At least this gives the members a chance to look down onto the terminal basins of the Bridgewater Canal and the recreated Grocers' Street Warehouse through which the tunnel that used to come through the route of the Rochdale started. I also mention the syphon which took the waters of the River Medlock under the canal through a tunnel towards the River Irwell. We then pass the church building at the end of Castle Street which is now a recording studio turning onto Deansgate.



End of the Bridgewater Canal with the Grocers' Street Warehouse

Going over the Rochdale Street, Deansgate Tunnel, I point out that on my first visit to this area - nearly 40 years ago - there were high walls and no access to the canal at this point. Now it is a picturesque picnic area called Pioneers Quay. After going under the Central Station viaduct, now used by Metrolink, I point out the remains of the third viaduct that used to cross Deansgate to the Great Northern Warehouse as we turn to go down Liverpool Road to the Museum of Science and Industry, which is on the site of the world's first purpose-built railway station, I point out the remains of the third viaduct that used to cross Deansgate to the Great Northern Warehouse. Here the group is allowed to wander off for lunch and to visit to the various halls of the museum which is presently going through a complete refit of the Main Exhibition Building.

Suitably refreshed, we reconvene outside the Museum and head down Liverpool Road, looking at the old railway buildings on the right, (1st and 2nd class entrances even then), and the canal basins of the Bridgewater Canal, including the canal-looking bridge down Medlock Street, where the River Medlock re-emerged from its tunnel.

Turning right on to Water Street, we again go under three viaducts: the first is the 1830 line into Liverpool Road Station, still used today for the Museum train trips. The second is a later viaduct which

takes a second line into the warehouse area on the east side of the museum, this is also used by the museum train service; however, the third viaduct, while no longer having tracks, is probably the most famous railway viaduct in Britain. When *Granada* made the first set for *Coronation Street*, it was built on the cheap as it was only going to be for 13 episodes. At that time there was still a street that went through the studios, Grape Street, (the entrance to the now closed *Granada* Studios Tour marks the route now). The set was built parallel to Water Street, at the Rovers Return end was a large gate on Grape Street while at the other end was the real viaduct. The original set was replaced late in the 1970s as they wanted to do more filming outside and as the houses were only two thirds the normal size, it was beginning to be noticed. The current set with fake viaduct was built at right angles to the original and backs onto the Museum of Science and Industry's main building.

We then cross Water Street and walk through the closed *Granada* Studio Tours car park to the side of the River Irwell, taking careful notice of the Giant Hogweed growing there, 'thanks John'. On the other side of the river, there is the Margaret Fletcher Tunnel under the new Manchester Inner Relief Road (actually in Salford it being over the river) named after a visitor to our meetings many times with her husband John Fletcher. As Chairman of the Manchester, Bolton & Bury Canal Society Margaret led the society as they have tried to safeguard the line of the canal. As part of a new development, the first three locks up to the railway crossing have now been restored. We will hear more about this at the November meeting when our guest speaker, Paul Hindle, will talk about the Manchester, Bolton & Bury Canal.



How to spot a giant hogweed



Lock No. 1 on the Manchester & Salford Junction Canal just off the River Irwell

Walking along the riverside through the car park we reach the first lock of the Manchester and Salford Junction Canal restored as a feature outside the Victoria & Albert Hotel, as mentioned in the rail trip notes above. As we walk along Water Street, we notice another sign of the times as the *Granada* studios sign at the main entrance off Quay Street has been removed and replaced by one that reads *ITV* studios, though the removal of the letters on the ivy covered wall has left the original name in relief.

We then walk along the Left Bank past the large new banking buildings until we reach the People's History Museum where the members have time to look around this interesting

museum detailing the struggle of the electorate to get a vote and receive their due monies for work done. Following the visit we continue over the New Bailey Street Bridge into Salford, passing the site of the New Bailey Prison (L) which was demolished following the building of Strangeways Prison, the site becoming a railway goods yard.

We then enter Salford Central station for the return trip to Leyland joining our outward journey route at Windsor Link junction just before Salford Crescent Station.



The old Market Hall, Shrewsbury

*The Sixth Annual  
Historical Society Trip  
visits  
RAF Cosford  
and Shrewsbury  
on  
2 May 2011*

## Can you help with the 'Industrial Heritage of Leyland & Farington' project?

The Chairman of the Leyland Historical Society is in the process of publishing a book of factory sites in Leyland, entitled 'The Industrial Heritage of Leyland and Farington'.

Following on from this, it is hoped that an application for Heritage Fund lottery money can be successfully made in order to produce an oral history: CDs and a booklet of people's memories of working in local industries. The CDs would then be available for students and historians and copies would also be deposited in the North-West Sound Archive to be available for public use in the years to come.

This is something which, once completed, would interest all members of the Historical Society and could feature on the programme of monthly events for 2011–2012.

We all love to share our memories of when we started work, of what we did, and what happened to the work-places we were in during the time we were there. Some of us spent our whole working lives in one mill, or in an industrial environment, perhaps in time teaching younger apprentices; some of us moved taking our experience and knowledge on to start our own or help others develop their businesses.

These memories could soon be lost for ever as the generation which helped to put the name 'Leyland' on the industrial map begins to leave us.

Once it is felt there is enough source material to make the project viable, volunteers will be required to sensitively speak to retired workers and children of an older generation who have spoken to them of their working lives and record those memories to a CD.

A few volunteers will be trained initially and it is visualised that this is something that students at our local schools, who are interested in local history and how this project will benefit their own descendents, would like to take part in. The structuring of the whole project, mechanically and literarily, will be a lesson in itself.

This is going to be quite a long-term endeavour, involving patient and discerning research and voluntary hours. If you would like to share your memories and take part in this worthwhile project, or help with its assembly, please read the information on the October Society Newsletter and then fill in the form (copy shown below) and return it to Peter, or hand it to a committee member. (Do please use the format given below if you wish to make an independent contribution).

### The Industrial Heritage of Leyland & Farington

**Name** .....

**Address**.....

**Telephone Number** .....

**Employer** ..... **Department** .....

**Job Description** .....

**Period of Employment (Years e.g. 1940 - 1955)** .....

**Please return form to: 14 Clifton Avenue, Leyland PR25 3ES**

**Email: peter@houghton59.fsnet.co.uk or hand in at the next meeting**

**Leyland Historical Society**

**Programme 2010-2011**

Meetings to be held in

**The Shield Room, Banqueting Suite, Civic Centre,  
West Paddock, Leyland**

at 7.30 pm

**2010**

Monday, 6 September  
**From Port Sunlight to Rivington**  
**The Life of Lord Leverhulme**  
Malcolm Tranter

Monday, 4 October  
**Pedal Power**  
Mikron Theatre Company

Monday, 1 November  
**Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal**  
Paul Hindle

Monday, 6 December  
**Lancashire Carriers**  
Dr Alan Crosby

**2011**

Monday, 10 January  
(2nd Monday)  
**Diving to the Titanic**  
Steve Rigby

Monday, 7 February  
**An Evening with Edwin Waugh**  
Brian (Sid) Calderbank

**2011 (cont'd)**

Monday, 7 March  
**Alfred Waterhouse**  
**Architect of Manchester**  
Colin Dickinson

Monday, 4 April  
**Battle of the Atlantic**  
Mark Baldwin

Sunday, 10 April\*  
**Alston Hall - Meal and Talk:**  
**Historic Western Cyprus**  
Malcolm Tranter

Monday, 2 May\*  
**6th Annual Historical Society Trip**  
**RAF Cosford**  
**and Shrewsbury**

Monday, 6 June  
**A History of British Comedy Films**  
Dr C P Lee

Monday, 4 July  
**AGM and**  
**Ringing through the Changes**  
Stanley Walmsley

\* Not included in membership