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# Leyland Chronicle

The journal of  
**THE LEYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY**



**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 p.m. Meeting date may be amended by Statutory  
holidays.

**AT**

**PROSPECT HOUSE, SANDY LANE, LEYLAND.**

**SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Vice Presidents	£7.00 per annum
Members	£6.00 per annum
School Members	£0.50 per annum
Casual Visitors	£1.00 per meeting

A MEMBER OF THE LANCASHIRE LOCAL HISTORY FEDERATION

THE HISTORIC SOCIETY OF LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE  
and  
THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY.

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## EDITORIAL

This is always the most difficult part of the Editor's job. No problem putting other people's words into some sort of readable order. All the contributors make that part of the task quite easy. But what can the Editor add to such a remarkable wealth of knowledge and interesting information?

Once again the articles are on such a variety of topics that the Chronicle must surely hold something of interest to everyone. It always amazes me to read so many interesting articles on such a wide range of subjects, so many interesting memories, so much research, such detailed accounts of times and places most of us have only vaguely heard of in passing.

I know, from conversations with other members, that there is a wealth of knowledge, a host of memories within many of them which, if printed in the Chronicle would edify, entertain, educate and amuse the other readers. I only wish they could be persuaded to write short articles to fill the pages and give some of the regular contributors a bit of competition.

May I appeal to every one to think about making a contribution to next year's issue of the Chronicle. There may be things that you know about Leyland, or your family, or some old character long forgotten by every one else, which, although seeming trivial to you, would be of interest and perhaps bring a smile, (or maybe a tear), to the faces of the readers.

I am very grateful to the regulars for their articles which never cease to surprise me. I am particularly thankful to the committee and especially Bill Waring for all the help and support I have been given, once again over the past year.

Thank you to everyone who has written for this edition. Without your efforts I would not have a magazine to edit, and I do enjoy the task of putting it all together. Just one plea — please may I have contributions a little earlier next year. — on or before the September meeting if possible, the sooner the better. I realise that some articles, by their very nature, cannot be written any earlier, but others, I am sure, could be. I do seem to have spent the last few weeks glued to the computer!

**MARY FOWLER.**



NOTE: 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.

## SOCIETY AFFAIRS

Once again the Programme of Lectures for the 199/97 season has included many varied subjects. First we had David Rowlands and his 'History of Leyland Motors,' He gave the correct date for Leyland Motors starting to build steam wagons as early as 1883, though of course these were against the law at that time and therefore, as such, could not exist.

Next, John Fletcher gave us an amusing and informative guide to the history of the Manchester, Bolton & Bury Canal; and in December we had a seasonal trip to the Pantomime with Fred Barton

Other successful evenings in the new year included Colin Dickinson with 'The Rise and Fall of the Port of Preston', followed by Frank Harrison and 'History in our Local Parish Churches'. Ken Hodgkinson continued to interest us with his slides on 'Whittle le Woods & Clayton le Woods -Then and Now', while a surprise lecture for May, 'Stately Homes in the South' with Cliff Astin, replaced his planned talk. Of course, the June lecture on the West Lancashire Railway, with John Cotterall, was a particular favourite of your chairman.

Our most successful evening of the year was again the Mikron Theatre's visit for the October meeting when they gave a professional performance of 'A Woman's Place', the story of the suffrage movement, with the central role taken by Jo in her final tour with the company. The visitors that evening made sure that for a reduced price the event broke even. We have again booked Mikron Theatre for this October when they will perform 'Just the Job', the story of canal holidays.

The Rail Trips have continued with visits to Bury, Southport, Warrington, Rochdale, Morecambe, Kendal, Altrincham, and Colne

The second Canal Trip on 28<sup>th</sup> June was from Heath Charnock in the gently falling rain, to the bottom lock at Johnson's Hillock. As the other boat continued to attempt to make new branches in the bank, we all returned to the 'Railway' at Botany for lunch. The trip was thoroughly enjoyed by those present despite the weather.!

The local historian of the year was, once again, Mrs. Elizabeth Shorrock with her article 'Local Spas and Healing Springs' in Chronicle No 42, edited by our computer literate Mrs Fowler.

We made our annual outing to Alston Hall where, after a good meal, we were entertained by a talk on, 'The Flanks & Fringes of the Lake District'. We have continued our watching brief on the planning applications front, thanks to Elizabeth, and the T.A.G. group, who have made sure that the Society keeps in touch with the conservation area.

The exhibition this year was based on, 'Through The Lanes Of Leyland - Part 2' with displays on the second walk through Leyland. The route taken was Wigan Road, Back Lane, Leyland Lane, Golden Hill Lane, Moss Lane and back to Wigan Road.

The craft tent at the Leyland Festival was again popular with many queries from the members of the public. This year's competition featured six cartoons from different newspapers, the winner being Greg Smith from the second hand book shop.

The new season commenced with Mr Tim Hair from the Lancaster University on, 'The Walton le Dale Roman Dig', complete with pottery from the site. October saw the return of Mikron Theatre with 'Just the Job', the story of a family's first canal holiday, a very well-rounded presentation as is to be expected from these experienced performers. Sometimes poignant sometimes hilariously funny, the whole production was very well received by those present, though the Chairman would like to point out that it was not autobiographical!

**PETER HOUGHTON.**



### **WEDDING KISSES.**

#### **Vicar on When and When Not to Do It.**

Writing in the Leyland Parish Church Magazine for the current month on 'Weddings and What To Do,' the Vicar of Leyland, Rev. G. H. Ensor, gives a number of hints to intending bridegrooms, which include the following:-

The banns should be brought to the Vicar by the intending bridegroom and not left to his young lady to arrange.

On the wedding day don't bring the bride or any of her family with you when you proceed to church and don't come bespattered with confetti. It shows a woeful lack of education on both points, and should not be done.

When the bride reaches the chancel steps she should find the bridegroom facing the Holy Table with his best man on his right hand, and he (the bridegroom) should not look round as she comes up behind him until she reaches his side, and then he should only look to make sure she is the right girl and not someone else.

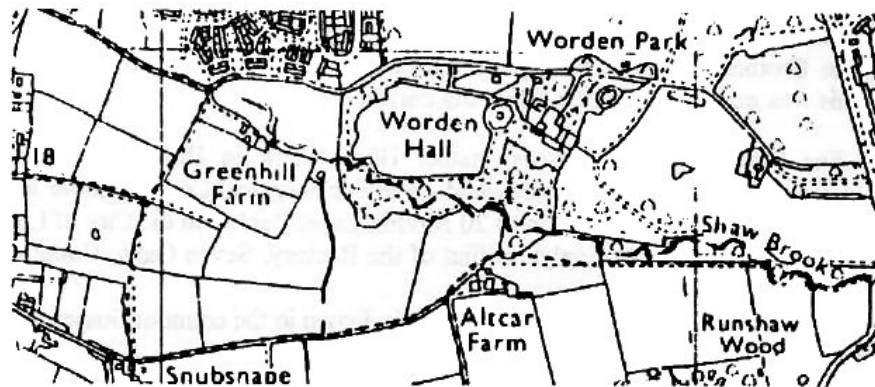
The service over, remember there should be no kissing on the chancel steps; leave that until you reach the vestry, and even then don't expect the clergyman to kiss the bride. This sort of thing isn't done except by sappy bachelor parsons!

**Thanks to Mrs Brundrett for this newspaper extract.**



## AN EGG AT WORDEN HALL.

On 21<sup>st</sup> March 1915, my mother, Elsie Beardwood, was delivered into this world by Doctor Johnson. She was born at Greenhill Farm, Leyland, where her grandfather, Tom Preston was a tenant farmer on the ffarington's land. The farm was demolished some time during the sixties.



My mother attended the 'Top' school in Fox Lane, and was given permission from the Squire to walk through the park to get there. On the way, she called at the gardener's cottage, to call for his son, Jack Harland, who also walked with her through the quiet park land.

When she was about nine years old she was very poorly with kidney trouble, as a result of having Scarlet Fever, and was confined to bed for about eight or nine weeks. In fact she was so ill, that she had to learn to walk again. During that time the pupils from her school had been invited to visit Worden Hall to see the park and to look around the home of the ffaringtons. This was a great treat because, at that time, it was only on Whit-Monday, which was 'Walking Day', that any of the public ever saw beyond the big gates of the Worden estate.

My mother told me:- "*Because I missed out on this event, and possibly because my grandfather was a farming tenant on the estate, I was privileged to have a private visit! Mrs. ffarington, the Squire's mother, sent the Housekeeper to escort me. It was a great thrill, as I tottered along beside her on my skinny little legs, feeling very nervous and shy. We arrived at last to meet the great lady, who looked to me like pictures of Queen Victoria. She wore a little lace cap and shawl and was dressed in black. I cannot remember the conversation of course, but she did most of the talking. I felt so overwhelmed and shy.*

*Later I was shown the Derby wing with the Adam fireplace and all the antiques and pictures. They did not impress me very much at that age, and I was getting very tired and ready for my tea. This was taken in the servant's quarters. I had a boiled egg and thin bread and butter, followed by cakes. That was almost a feast for me, because for eight or nine weeks I had lived on barley water and rice pudding! I felt very important when I eventually attended school again after my V.I.P. treatment."*

**SHIRLEY A. ROBSON.**

## EXTRACTS FROM THE DEEDS OF 29 BROADWAY LEYLAND

The plot of land required for building Broadway included the following:-

- Leyland Motors Limited
- Leyland Motors Housing Society

Other companies were involved in the sale of this land.

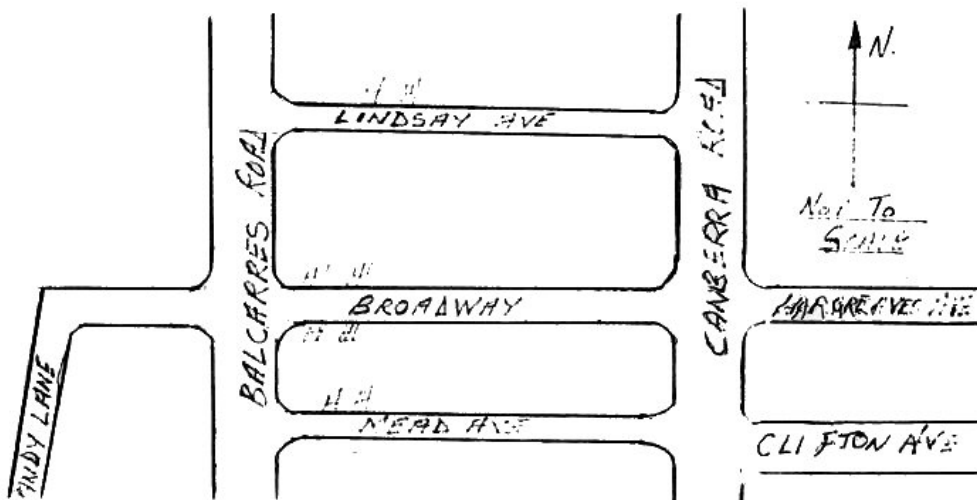
The sale of this land was to Leyland Urban District Council and the builders Hawthorne Brothers Limited, Blackpool, Lancashire. By indenture of this date 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1922. This was made between the following parties –

The Reverend David James Stather Hunt, Clerk in Holy Orders, Vicar of the Vicarage and Parish Church Leyland.- The Ecclesiastical Commissioner for England John Francis William Deacon of 20 Birchin Lane, Banker in the City of London.

The Reverend Walter Evelyn Gilliat of the Rectory, Seven Oaks, County of Kent, in Holy Orders.

William Graham Bradshaw of Down Park, Down in the count of Sussex and  
Leyland Urban District Council.

Under the Housing Acts of 1890 – 1919 the area involved was purchased at the price of £5,750. This did not include the Sandy Lane area. This purchase price was £816-4s-6d. The area involved situated on the westerly side of Canberra Road, and bounded on or towards the northerly side in part by the centre of Lindsay avenue. Other land towards the southerly side, in part by the centre of Broadway, easterly side by the centre of Canberra Road. The solicitors were Bracewell and Leaver, Blackpool, Lancashire. Area involved 6557 square yards (approx.) and the right of way.



Under this agreement the following conditions were applicable –

No poultry houses, stable, cow house, pig-sty, slaughter house should be erected; nor any building, club, dancing room, convalescent home; nor shop for the exposure for sale of ale, beer, wine or spirituous liquors to be consumed on or off the premises; nor trade manufacturing business. No noxious vapours, noise or disagreeable smells, which might tend to depreciate or lessen the value of the neighbouring estates as private property.



The mortgage, Skipton Building Society Atlas Assurance Company, King Street, Leeds. Insurance £900. Premium 13s-6d. This premium was for 1953.

It is obvious that the conditions regarding noise etc. are no longer applied. Noxious fumes from motor cars, noise from transistor radios, beer and spirits are now consumed on and off the premises. Trade also carried out.

At least be thankful that no slaughter houses, poultry houses, pig-sties etc. have been erected.

**A.W.SEGUSS.**

### **ERRATUM ET ADDENDUM**

Our eagle-eyed chairman noticed in last years 'Chronicle' that a question was asked at the end of the item on 'Terraces', that had already been answered in the text! The question should have been: "Does any member know the location of Prospect Avenue?" The name appears in the Then St. Ambrose ward of Leyland in the Electoral Register of 1918.

The last terrace in St. Andrew's ward in the same register has now been identified. Halliwell Terrace, apparently in Water Street in the register, has been found to be the row of shops numbered 123 to 131 Towngate. Thanks are due to informant Tina Cocker whose grandfather lived on this row when it was still houses.

Subsequent investigation has shown that a Sarah Halliwell obtained planning permission for the building of five houses on Water Street (that part of present day Towngate from Broad Street to the Hough Lane – School Lane junction) on Nov. 7<sup>th</sup> 1898.

Also, planning permission for change of use to shops of this property was granted to Harry Sutton (owner of Road Springs, Dunkirk Lane, Leyland) in May 1934

**W. E. WARING.**



**PROPOSED NEW CHURCH AT LEYLAND**

The necessity of an additional church in Leyland to meet the wants of the inhabitants near the railway station, has long been felt and it is hoped that now there is a fair prospect of the work being commenced. The site chosen is opposite Fir Trees Farm, Moss Lane, Leyland. Towards the cost of the erection Robert Townley Parker, Esquire, has promised the sum of £2,392 on condition that the building be commenced within a period of twelve months dating from May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1879. In addition to this handsome sum the following is also promised:- The Rev. T. R. Baldwin, Vicar of Leyland, £100; Miss Ffarington £100, Mrs Hargreaves £300; and Frederick Deacon Esquire, £50

The building Committee have issued subscription books and earnestly ask for donations.



**20<sup>th</sup> September 1890.**

**LEYLAND ST. AMBROSE CHURCH.**

This handsome little church, which is situated in Moss Lane, and which was consecrated for divine purposes on Wednesday, June 17<sup>th</sup>, 1885, is about to be practically completed. When the additions proposed to be carried out, and which include the completion of the tower, are finished, they will add much to the beauty of the sacred edifice. When the idea of building a church was first mooted, the subscribers were most liberal. Amongst others were the late Mrs Hargreaves, who came forward with a handsome donation at an early stage of the movement, and the Misses Ffarington whose purse was always ready in the support of any good work, gave a substantial subscription. Further offerings were also given by the Vicar and the late Mr Bashall. The Sunday School children of Farington are also entitled to be remembered in the matter.

## THE REGENT CINEMA, LEYLAND.

Wednesday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October 1930 was a day of no little excitement in Leyland. At 2.0pm. that afternoon the doors were opened for the first time, of Leyland's new 'Super Cinema' – The Regent. Up to then the cinemas in Leyland were those built in the days of silent films : Mr Green's Hippodrome, which stood where the Leyland and Farington Club now stands on Derby Street and it's much smaller fore runner which had been built close to the present day George Street. The Palace on East Street came next C1914, but was still built in the 'silent ' era and, although converted to sound when 'talkies' came on the scene, its heyday was in the 1920's and in no respect could it compare with the new cinema at the other end of Hough Lane.

**The Grand Opening.** The Regent was opened with a special charity Matinee jointly in aid of the Preston Royal Infirmary and the Leyland Nursing Association. The official opening was by Mr. A. A. Liardett, one time managing director of Leyland Motors, assisted by the Chairman of Leyland Urban District Council, John Pilkington, Esq. And supported by Sir William Edge, MP; Alexander Foster Esq. , JP., A. J. Lomax Esq., and other local gentlemen.

The programme started with, "God Save the King" followed by a musical interlude. The "News", then a short film – Mickey Mouse in "Carnival Kid" – followed by the main feature, "The Rogue Song", a format that was followed, with minor variations, for many years.

Although the news film — Pathé Super Sound Gazette, — had been hired from First National Pathé Ltd. Of London for £1-5s-0d, and "Karnival Kid" from Ideal Films Ltd. of London for £3-0s-0d, the main feature, "The Rogue Song", had been loaned free through the courtesy of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Ltd. for the opening matinee and for the remainder of the performances of the opening week.. Likewise, by the courtesy of the directors of the cinema, all expenses connected with the matinee were met by them and no deductions whatsoever were taken from the gross receipts.

**The Cinema.** Tradition has it that the Regent was built by a consortium of local business men, no details however, of the people involved have been found, but the prime movers in the scheme appear to have been the Leyland Construction Company Ltd. The origins of the Construction Company have not been established but, as George Birtill points out in his "Green Pastures", their first office, an ex-World War One army hut, was erected next to Charnock Old Hall on Sandy Lane, (now Balcarres Road) and Tom Hargreaves, the Managing Director, lived across the road on Baldwin Terrace: Much of the house building of post First World War Leyland was done by the firm.

Certainly, by the time of the building of the Regent by the Construction Company, the firm was well established at Wellfield on School Lane close to its junction with Hough Lane and Water Street (Towngate). Invoices in the Lancashire Records office, REF. DDX 1348/3, concerning the building of the cinema, show that the directors of the Company were:- H. Spurrier, C.B. Nixon, F. Swann, T. Hargreaves and G. Anderson — a strong Leyland Motors involvement which, perhaps, supports the assertions of some, that the Company was to be the building arm of the Leyland Motors in their ambitious project of a 'Garden City' on the land between Sandy Lane and the railway. (See "History of Leyland and District" by David Hunt pp 139 – 141).

Planning permission for the new cinema was granted by the Leyland Urban District Council to Regent Cinema Co. Ltd. In February 1930. One cannot help but feel that permission must have been a foregone conclusion with all design and construction details completed by that time as the cinema was finished and ready for opening as little as eight months later. The fact that the cinema was built next door to the headquarters of the Leyland Construction Company and on land owned by them, no doubt helped.

The Regent was designed by Mr. A. Winstanley, a well known Manchester cinema architect and everything in its construction was of the latest design. The sound apparatus was by British Thomson Houston and the projectors were 'Kalec' machines made in Leeds. All the electrics were by Messrs W.J. Furse and Co. (M/C) Ltd. Specialists in Cinema Electrification and firms around the country supplied the specialist items in the auditorium, projection room and foyer that went to make up the modern cinema. Local firms were not forgotten: the Co-op supplied the Wilton carpets, and the rubber flooring in the foyer was made and put down by the Leyland and Birmingham Rubber Company, and the whole decorations were done using Leyland Paint and Varnish Company's products. One cannot help but wonder what the cost was of this enterprise but no figures have been found.

**Impact on Leyland.** It is hard to over-estimate the impact made by the opening of such a modern cinema on Leyland and district. Memories of the hard times of the 1920s — the aftermath of the Great War and the General Strike — were beginning to fade and a mood of optimism was, at last, beginning to take hold. It must be remembered that in 1930 'Wireless', although well established, was less than ten years old and Television was still rather more than twenty years away from nation wide coverage. Picture going was the leisure activity of the time and, although the music hall was still going strong, new picture houses proliferated in towns and cities; one has only to think of the many cinemas in Preston where every district seemed to have one, but for a village — as Leyland still was — to have a picture house as modern and comfortable as the Regent, was quite unusual and a tribute to the forward-looking policy of both the Council and businessmen of Leyland.

Films were shown twice nightly at 6.30 and 8.40 with matinees on Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays at 2.30. The late finish of the second showing in the evening meant that for some districts the last bus had gone! The directors negotiated with Ribble Motors for a special bus leaving at 10.35 for Bent Bridge and Euxton; and with John Fishwick and Sons for a 'special' for Leyland Lane, Roe Moor and Eccleston. Everything possible was being done to ensure the success of the venture and to that end the upstairs tea room was open from 10.30 a.m. to 9.30 p.m. for tea, coffee, ices, minerals, cakes and savouries — no opportunity was being lost to make the Regent the place to go.

The modern facade of the cinema was described in the Chorley Guardian of October 25<sup>th</sup>, 1930 in an article headed

***'The Regent Cinema' — Palatial Premises for Leyland Picture Goers.***

*"The front elevation shows the modern tendency in design to allow straight lines to define the whole nature and construction of the building", writes an architect, "and the result is a dignified and impressive front.*

*The moulded plinth gives strength to the appearance of the building, and the moulded string course carried along the front over the entrance, effectually breaks up the otherwise flat surface.*

*The decorations over the windows suggest the amusement and entertainment to be found within, as does the cornice canopy below the parapet on each side of the entrance, with its rather severe treatment.*

*The large window in the centre points the way to the entrance, whilst suggesting the existence of a balcony within. This window has been most artistically treated, by two fluted pillars breaking up a large area of glass, and being an impressive architectural feature which gives distinction to the whole front. The eye is naturally attracted to this feature, and the architect has done well to obtain such harmony between the essential and the decorative sections."*

One can hardly imagine such a description in the Leyland Guardian of today!

On a winter's night, however, when street lighting in Leyland was still mainly by gas lamps, the large flashing 'Regent' sign located at the top of the building above the electric clock and the whole cream-coloured facade illuminated by floodlights mounted on the central canopy, it presented a truly striking appearance. Its location — the site is now occupied by the Kwik-Save Supermarket — meant that it could be seen along the whole length of Hough Lane and that would have been the view of the cinema that picture goers from Lostock Hall, Tardy Gate and Farington would have had when, if it wasn't a wet night, they got off the 'bus at the gasworks instead of Dr. Johnson's corner, thereby saving a penny!

The good years of the 1930s however, were not to last. When war was declared on September 3<sup>rd</sup> 1939, things changed abruptly. The immediate restrictions on lighting, the 'blackout' as it was called, meant that the previously brightly lit exterior was now in darkness and the foyer operated with lights dimmed; a gloom descended that was to last for six long years, but for many local people, often working for twelve hours a day on work essential to the war effort, the visit to the cinema at the weekend was the one bright spot of the week. On Saturday nights it was usually 'house full' with long queues forming for the second house and stretching down Towngate almost as far as 'Booths' if a particularly good film was showing.

Children, also, were not forgotten: The 'Chum's Club' from the 1930's, which closed down shortly after the start of World War Two, and its immediate post-war equivalent — the 'Minors' (of the ABC), provided Saturday morning entertainment for the youngsters of Leyland and District and was always well supported. Any child who had celebrated a birthday since the previous meeting, and there were always a handful, had to go up on stage whilst everyone sang 'Happy Birthday'; one youngster must have enjoyed the limelight so much, he went up every week there after! And, just to bring back memories, how many remember the song that used to be sung at the start of the proceedings?

*'We are the boys and girls well known as minors of the ABC  
And every Saturday all line up  
To see the films we like and shout aloud with glee  
We love to laugh and have a singsong such a happy crowd are we  
We're all pals together Minors of the ABC.'*

No doubt the rafters, if there had been any, would have well and truly rung!

**1949 — The Fire.** The 'Regent', by now an ABC cinema, had its usual front page advert in the Leyland Guardian of Friday March 18<sup>th</sup> 1949, for the week commencing the 21<sup>st</sup> of March.

Showing Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday was Jack La Rue, Linda Travers and Walter Crisham in 'No Orchids for Miss Blandish', also, The Bowery Boys in 'Newshounds'. The second half of the week was to be Anna Neagle and Michael Wilding in a gay romantic comedy, 'Spring in Park Lane' also starring Tom Walls. Sadly it was not to be.

Early in the morning of Thursday the 24<sup>th</sup> of March, Miss Lily Heyes of Railway street, head cleaner at the Regent, was first to arrive for the morning's work. Opening the main doors into the foyer, nothing seemed untoward – the lights operated normally – but on opening the auditorium doors she saw the place was filled with smoke. Running to the newsagents at the corner of Balfour street on Hough Lane she called the Leyland Fire brigade and, on returning to the cinema, dragged out the heavy cases containing Thursday night's show, and rescued the two cats.

By this time the stage was alight, but the Leyland brigade were soon on the scene and shortly were assisted by machines from Chorley, Penwortham and Bamber Bridge. By 6.25 the roof had collapsed but with forty men fighting the blaze, it was brought under control about an hour later. Leyland's Station Officer, Ben Pickup, described it as a blazing inferno and three firemen narrowly escaped injury when the south wall collapsed filling the back yards of the Malden Street houses with debris.

Member Robert Harrison, who lived on Towngate some 60 yards south of the Regent, recalls the intense heat of the blaze which they could feel in their bathroom, the window of which faced north onto the Regent; and President George Bolton, who, at that time, lived on Yewlands Avenue, well remembers the fear that residents there had that the fire would spread to the wood store of the Leyland Construction Company which was located behind their houses. Fortunately, the blaze was contained, but the building that had been described in the Chorley Guardian of October 25<sup>th</sup> 1930 as 'fire proof', had been virtually destroyed.

**Attempts to rebuild.** Associated British Cinemas applied for a licence to rebuild the burnt-out Regent in January 1950, an application that had the full support of the Leyland Urban District Council, but permission was refused. On February 2<sup>nd</sup>, a deputation from the L.U.D.C. consisting of the Chairman of the Council, Dr. W. Fotheringham, James Welsby, F.D.Howe and clerk T.K.Clayton visited Manchester to present a petition containing 5,923 signatures to the Regional Licensing Officer of the Ministry of Works – a Mr. Harrison, who agreed to forward the case to the Head Office in London. Notification was eventually received that, "*in view of the recent Government decision restricting the issue of building licences, the application must be refused.*" Member Dr. Fotheringham recalls a later visit to Manchester with Frank Howe when permission to rebuild was finally granted; just why ABC did not rebuild is unclear, but with building materials in the years after World War two in short supply and with rapidly rising costs at that time, perhaps it was not economically viable. Certainly, from March 1949, cinema goers in Leyland had 'Hobson's Choice' — the new Palace on East Street.

The Palace continued as Leyland's only cinema until April 28<sup>th</sup> 1962, when the last show was a double-header — Lana Turner and Gene Kelly in "The Three Musketeers" and "The Marx Brothers in the Circus". Picture-going had been on the wane for some time, and from Monday April 30<sup>th</sup>, Hutchinson's Cinemas Ltd. of Burnley, who had taken over the cinema from Mr. Victor Bell, converted the New Palace to a full-time Bingo Hall. Cinema going in Leyland is now just a memory!

**Postscript.** Two facts not given in the text are worth recording. The first manager of the Regent was a Mr. Charles Lightfoot, but no details of him have come to light; perhaps he was brought in by the directors of the Regent as a man with experience of cinema management. The last manager, Mr. Blackhurst, was well known as he was a local man. One wonders if any of the staff of the Regent are still with us as their reminiscences would be worth recording as would those of local cinema goers in the all too short life of Leyland's Super Cinema.

**References.**

Chorley Guardian and Leyland Hundred Advertiser, Saturday October 25<sup>th</sup> 1930 (the opening)  
: Microfilm at Chorley Library.

Leyland Guardian Friday March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1949 (the fire) and Friday February 17<sup>th</sup>, 1950  
(L.U.D.C. deputation to M/C) : Microfilm at Leyland Library.

Leyland Urban District Council Deposited Plans Index.

Souvenir Programme of the opening of the Regent.

**Acknowledgements.**

Members Dr. W. Fotheringham, G. L. Bolton and R. Harrison for their reminiscences.

Anne W. Green and Catherine M. Holden for the words of the 'Minors' song.

**W. E. WARING.**

### **FLEETWOOD HALL DATESTONE.**

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June this year I visited the knights of St. Columba's club on Fleetwood Street, Chapel Brow, Leyland. I had been told by the Chairman, Mr. J. D. Breen, that in an upstairs room there was an interesting item believed to be the date stone from Fleetwood Hall

On inspecting the stone,(fixed somewhat incongruously on the wall behind the snooker table) I could only agree that in all probability it was the original date stone bearing the inscription RF:MF and below the initials – 1684

Edward Fleetwood, Gentleman, had lived in Leyland as early as 1642 and Hearth Tax records from the 1660s show that he lived in the general area of what we now call Chapel Brow. He died in 1667 and his will shows that he left a wife Elizabeth and a daughter Margaret. Margaret married a Mr Richard Fleetwood of Manchester on June 16<sup>th</sup>, 1674 at Leyland: the date stone obviously refers to this couple. Since the date on the stone is 1684 it is probable that the property was rebuilt or enlarged in that year.

Fleetwood Hall had stood a little farther up Chapel Brow than the present Fleetwood Street and was still standing in 1896, it appears however, to have been demolished shortly afterwards. Thankfully, someone with a sense of history recovered the date stone but when it was incorporated in No. 1a Fleetwood Street is not known.

For further information on this family,( the Fleetwoods of Leyland) see Lailand Chronicle Vol. 37, Dec. 1991, Pp 30, 31.

**W. E. WARING.**

## THE MEMOIRS OF SIMEON VICKERS 1897 – 1921

Working on a school local history project during the winter of 1972, I was shown a collection of papers describing life and times in Bamber Bridge during the first years of the present century. These were the brief memoirs of Simeon Vickers, a member of a well known local family. Written in a flowing hand, they fill two exercise books and nine loose sheets, and were compiled some time after 1957. As such they are an important contribution to the history of the village during the golden age of its cotton industry, and shed much light on the everyday life of the district, particularly since Simeon Vickers proved so astute at pointing out changes he witnessed in his own lifetime.

He was born on the 24<sup>th</sup> of August 1892, the second son of a *'horseman, carter, cab, and wagonette driver'*, in a small terraced house in School Lane. He was named after his paternal grandfather, who had been a boatman on the Preston, Lancaster and Kendal canal before moving to Bamber Bridge in the 1870s. This date broadly coincides with the closing of the Bamber Bridge Tramway, and he may have at some time, been employed driving the wagons on it. Here he began a brick making business on the *'Clay Pits'*, and continued to work as a carter, building a stable in Ellen Street, and living in St. Mary's Road.

He had ten children, and the five boys, including Simeon's father, Harry Vickers, (b. 1871). All worked in the family business. These were the days of horse transport, and young Simeon, his brother and two sisters *"grew up amongst horses and horsey talk"*.

His maternal grandmother had a very harsh childhood, but not untypical of the times. Her mother died in 1867 when she was an infant, *"and after her funeral she was 'given' by her father, David Lee, to a James Todd and his wife Ellen, who brought her up as their own child ... James Todd was a Loomer in 'New Side' cotton mills (School Lane). She never saw or heard of her father again"*.

Her Leyland relatives apparently did not think highly of him, and in the second half of the twentieth century Simeon still had in his possession the slip of paper on which was written, *"I David Lee give the child to James Todd. June 1867"*.

Simeon began school at the age of three, attending St. Aidan's Church of England Junior School in School Lane. He later recalled the Diamond Jubilee, and the Boer War, *"I well remember the cheering crowds in Preston as reservists rejoined the colours and marched away to war, especially as many were local men, whose sons and daughters attended our school. Placards in front of the newsagents cheered or frightened us, as to the course the war was taking, and the song 'Soldiers of the Queen' was well known and sung by most of us."*

He also remembered the important General Elections of 1906 and 1910, *"It is funny to recall our childish reactions at election time. Being Tories our colours were orange and blue, and the Liberals sported red and green. We used to wait in groups at the polling stations, usually the village schools, and we greeted each cab, trap, or other horse drawn vehicle with cheers or boos according to the party we supported, and there were plenty of supporters for both sides, and what a row we made ... Free Trade, Tariff Reform and State Insurance were the main issues at this time."*

These were also the years of the well-founded German War Scare, and there was a real fear of what the *'Zeppelins'* might do to the village.



In 1904 he obtained his 'Blue Certificate', and became a half-timer, entering the cotton mill of A.S. Orr in School Lane as a warehouse assistant earning 2/6d per week – perhaps £7 to £10 in modern money, *"One week we started work at 6am to 8am. Breakfast break until 8.30am. 8.30 to 12.30. The afternoon was spent at school to 4.15pm. The other turn was school 9am to 12 noon. Afternoon 1.30 to 5.30pm in the mill. The half-time period lasted one year. On my thirteenth birthday I started full time in the mill, my wages now 5/- per week for 55 an a half hours work."* A 'good four loom weaver' might earn 25/- and a labourer 18/-. Prices however, were still cheap. *"Common coal was 10d or 11d per cwt, Best Coal 1/- or 1/1d per cwt, and it was coal that would burn and give plenty of heat. A 2ld loaf of white bread at the shop was 2d at this time, though many housewives baked their own"* Yet most men had a large family to bring up, and *"many people with large families were obliged to get in debt to feed and clothe their many children, and try to redeem themselves as the older children were able to go to work in the mills."*

Although conditions were beginning to improve in the years before the Great War, social conditions were still extremely primitive by modern standards, *"most houses had a flagged floor, linoleum and carpets especially in the living rooms and kitchen were out of the question, with everyone wearing clogs, children and grown-ups alike. Many older people still put sand on the floors"*.

Incandescent mantles were *"hailed as a great stride in lighting"*, whilst gas cookers were *"looked upon by older people as something dangerous, 'Why it would taste the food and might blow up at any time'"*. The possession of a piano was a sign of being very rich, and a sideboard with glass mirrors put the owner *"really among the top ten"*. Simeon recalled his amazement at hearing an early phonograph, and the shock when news of the Wright brothers flight reached Bamber Bridge, *"The Grey Beards shook their heads and again predicted that the world was surely coming to an end"*. The first motor cars made their appearance in Bamber Bridge, and the entire school turned out to watch a motor rally pass through. The bicycle was still a wonder, and riders took extensive lessons on how to ride them before nervously venturing out.

At the age of 16 he was promoted to a clerical job and his wages rose to £1 per week. Of this his mother gave him 1/- in pocket money, *"I was in clover."* Simeon recalled seeing a moving film of the Bury – Derby County cup final of 1903 at a side-show on Preston market square, and in 1910 a picture house opened in Clayton Street, Bamber Bridge. The following year he took his first holiday, embarking for Blackpool with 19/6d for the week. A railway strike meant that he was one of the thousands who had to walk home to Preston at the end of the week, *"Like people fleeing from an invading army"*.

In his account of the pre-war years, Simeon Vickers frequently draws attention to the struggle by working people to improve their lot and conditions, *"And so life went on with work and play with an annual holiday of one whole week each year with a few odd days at other seasons like Easter, Whitsuntide and Christmas. The full week holiday had only been instituted in the early 1900s, but no holiday with pay in those days. In fact no-one expected it then. The working week was 55 ½ hours, and this was not considered excessive, by the elderly people who had known far longer hours of work under worse conditions than we enjoyed. But there was still room for improvement in working conditions and the trade unions were making themselves heard more and more and demanding reforms and betterment for the workers. My cloth looker boss called them 'Agitators', when delegations came into our warehouse demanding to see the management on some grievance or other. In fact some 'small' strikes did take place, but were of short duration."*

The family has long enjoyed something of a sporting tradition. This can be traced to Simeon's father, Harry Vickers, a footballer, *"He having had experience with the Preston North End club in the 1890s as a player. As a result, talk of soccer and players, imbued us youngsters with a keen interest of the game from an early age. We listened enthralled to stories of the great 'Invincibles' and other famous teams."*

A goalkeeper, Simeon played for Bamber Bridge Corinthians from the age of 16, becoming a regular player by the age of 18. *"The following season I signed for Leyland FC, and on the 5<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1912 played for Blackburn Rovers Res. Against Manchester United Res. at Ewood Park, we lost 0-4 ...I played regularly for this team as an amateur until February 1913, when I transferred to Preston North End FC, and signed as a professional for this team for the season 1913-14. In May 1913, I was a member of their team which toured Holland, Germany and Switzerland."* His footballing career was brought to a premature close by the out break of the First World War a year later.

Simeon Vickers joined up with the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion Loyal North Lancashire Regiment on 14<sup>th</sup> September 1914, and the men paraded in front of Preston Town Hall. Many photographs exist of this event, and Simeon should be on them. He went for training to Swindon in Wiltshire. Of his wartime experiences he is very reticent, and this section of his memoir can be quoted in full, *"Army life followed the pattern of all Infantry men, marching, rifle drill, skirmishing etc. Until 30<sup>th</sup> April 1915, when the Battalion embarked at Folkestone at midnight, and sailed for Bologne in France, and before very long we sampled life in the trenches, and though we had grouched and grumbled whilst soldiering in England, we were soon wishing we were back in Blighty, for active services was certainly a grim business. Still we settled down and my life was like that of thousands of other lads in that muddy, lousy and hard life of the soldier in that war. And so much has been written about it that my efforts would be unnecessary in describing it. I attained commissioned rank and sampled the life of a junior officer from early 1918 until the end of 1919, and then was demobilised, after more than five years in the armed forces, and thank God I came out of it a fit man"* His mother died in the great Flu epidemic of 1918 and he had been unable to get home for her funeral.

Like many demobilised men he found work hard to find, but in 1920 got a job driving a confectionery delivery cart between Preston and Blackburn, For £2-10s-0d per week. At the age of 28 he married Susannah Ellen Kellett, who had been in his class at school, in St. Aidan's church on 4<sup>th</sup> May 1921. He subsequently resided at 32 Station Road, Bamber Bridge. An extensive diarist he rose to be the Registrar for Chorley and Bamber Bridge, and the memoirs are partly written on former registration sheets, the last of them dated 1957, perhaps indicating that they were written around 1960.

Simeon Vickers died on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1970.

I am most grateful to Mrs Scott for the loan of the Memoirs.

**D. HUNT.**



## LEYLAND - THE CANAL – SIDE VILLAGE!

### Which way to go ?

When the first Act was passed on 19<sup>th</sup> May 1770, the original line of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal was via Bingley, Skipton, Gargrave, Barnoldswick, Foulridge, Colne, Whalley, Bamber Bridge, Leyland and Ecclestone.

Yet by 1793, the company was applying to Parliament to change the route of the section between Colne and Newburgh and to proceed instead via Burnley, Blackburn, Chorley, Red Moss and Wigan. Although this application was turned down, the following year an Act empowered the company to build its canal via Burnley, Blackburn and Heapey, thereby joining the Lancaster Canal ( Southern Section ).

There are therefore two main questions for the Leyland historian in respect of the above mentioned facts. The first is, - what changed in the twenty three years for the route of this new form of transport to bypass Leyland ? The second, - if it had passed through Leyland, where and how would it have affected the town we know today ?

**Leyland's first bypass** To investigate the first question, we must return to the origins of the canal. The original line had been surveyed in 1768 by John Longbotham for a canal between Leeds and Liverpool and was resurveyed by James Brindley. This route was the one embodied in the Act of 1770 and on the basis of his estimate of £259,777 for the completion of the canal, the company was authorised to raise £260,000 capital in 2600 shares, with an additional £60000 if required. This line, however, was not agreed to be the best. During 1769 Lancashire members of the committee which had been formed to promote the canal were campaigning for a different line between Colne and Newburgh. While the main controlling committee consisted of Yorkshire men for many years, there was a separate but subordinate Liverpool Committee right up to 1850, and in earlier years there was much jealousy between them.

Robert Whitworth, who later became the company's engineer, was appointed to make a report on the alternative proposal. Because he anticipated greater problems of construction on the line favoured by the Lancashire interests and laid out by Burdett via Blackburn and Chorley, he recommended that Longbotham's original line via Whalley and Leyland should be adopted. However, it was argued that the trade on the Whalley and Leyland line would be far exceeded by that on the Blackburn line. The Lancashire gentlemen considered that "*The whole line ( Leyland ) ..... is thin of inhabitants, void of native productions, passes near no market towns, and has little or no trade*"- according to a letter to the Liverpool committee meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> August 1769.

The Blackburn line, in contrast, passed through an area in which there were many coal mines and stone quarries and where the demand for lime would be "*immense*". It was ---  
----  
"*..... the most rich, populous, manufacturing part of Lancashire, full of valuable native productions, (which) will supply Liverpool with exports five times more ... than is now employed .....*"

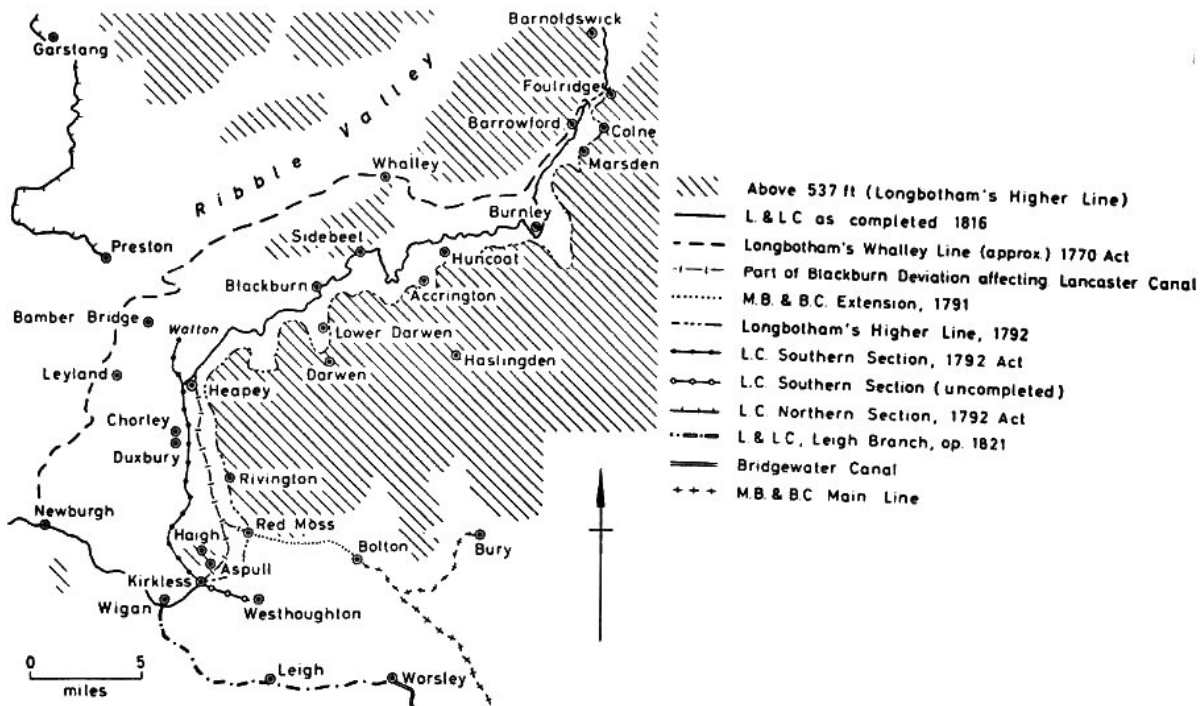
Despite this dissension, the Leyland line was accepted for inclusion in the Bill because it offered a shorter and less expensive communication between Leeds and Liverpool. It also approached more closely north Lancashire, a source of limestone.

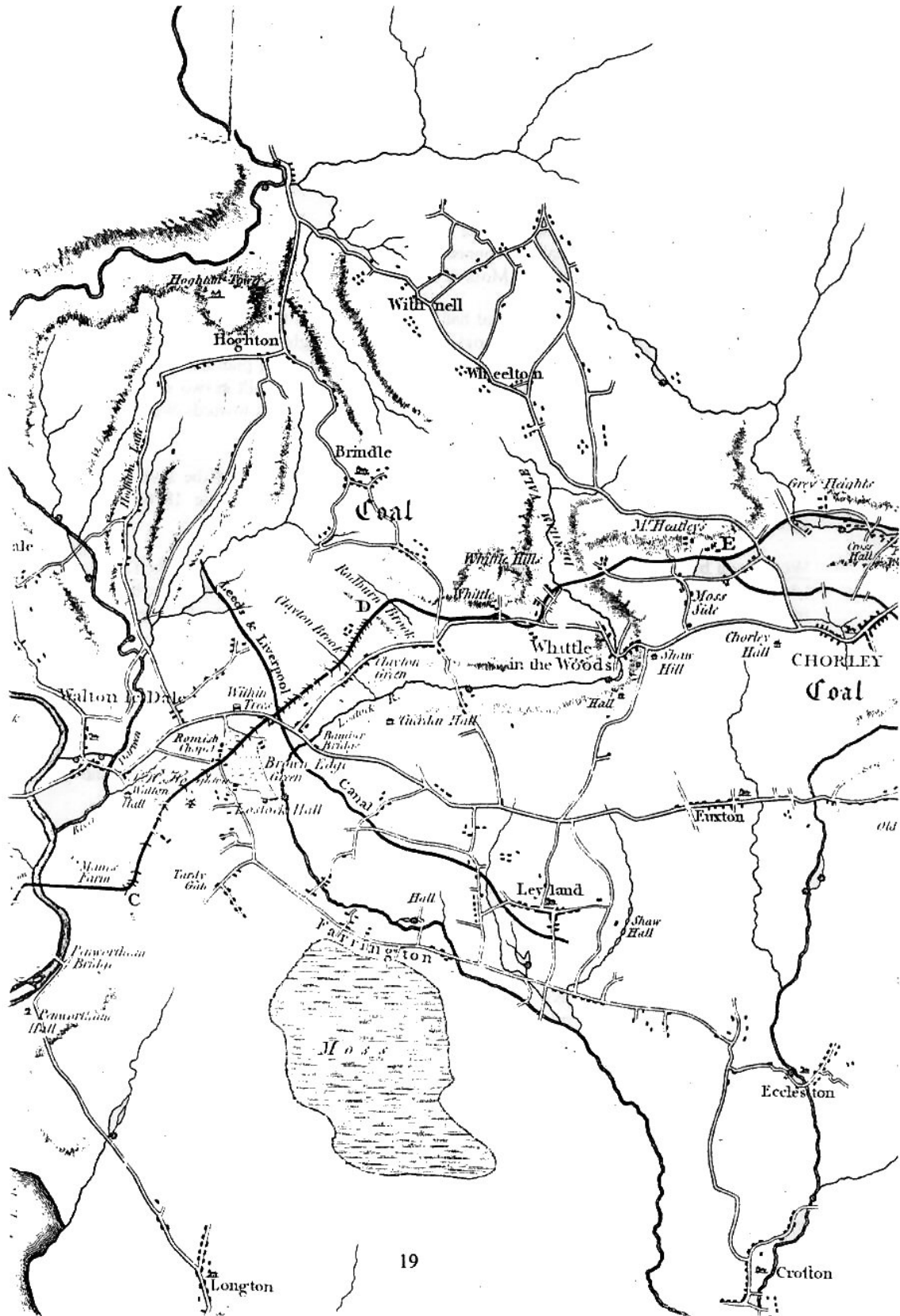
Brindley estimated that the canal from Foulridge to Liverpool via Leyland would cost £174,324 for a length of 66.25 miles, while the line via Blackburn would cost £240,881 for 83 miles.

After the first Act was obtained, construction proceeded as funds permitted but no work was carried out on the line between Barrowford and Newburgh because of anticipated low returns on this section. In July 1791 there was the first suggestion of a change in the Leyland line by deviating south of Bamber Bridge, via Duxbury, Red Moss and Westhoughton. This would connect with the head of the canal being built by the company to replace the River Douglas Navigation.

This deviation was to enable a branch to be made to the proposed junction with the Manchester, Bolton & Bury Canal at Red Moss and thereby connect with the growing Manchester traffic. However, this caused a problem as the Red Moss junction would have been 215 ft higher than the Bamber Bridge level and thus constitute a second summit level for which additional water supplies would be needed. This could be avoided if the canal proceeded at a high level from Barrowford via Burnley, Blackburn and Chorley.

The committee instructed a delegation to study both lines and thus when their report was presented to the committee on 11<sup>th</sup> February 1792 there were two options given. These were either by a 200 ft rise from the Whalley line near Leyland, or by changing the line west of Colne and maintaining a higher level to Red Moss. This option would increase the distance by 12 miles, though it was not regarded as a problem, since the company were now of the opinion that instead of the shortest practicable trans-Pennine canal for mainly long distance traffic ( a position overtaken by the Rochdale and Huddersfield canals ), it would now be seen as a waterway whose internal trade would be the most important source of revenue.





As the Leyland route was again described as - "*a country of marl ..... Moreover the countryside was thinly populated and generally destitute of trade*", it is not surprising that on 27<sup>th</sup> February 1792, the committee meeting in Bradford unanimously resolved that it would be highly beneficial to the company to follow the line via Blackburn. Thus it was that Leyland lost its canal for ever.

Unfortunately for the Manchester Bolton & Bury Canal, the Leeds & Liverpool Canal eventually decided to make a connection with the Bridgewater Canal via the Leigh branch and the canal junction on Red Moss never materialised.

Meanwhile, the Lancaster Canal had been surveyed in the years 1791 and 1792 by John Rennie, being promoted from the coal fields of Westhoughton to the limestone quarries of Kendal, with an initial exchange of trade between the two being planned. Following the passing of the Act of Parliament on 10<sup>th</sup> June 1792, the canal was built in two sections, north from the basin at Preston to Kendal, and south from Walton Summit towards Westhoughton, getting as far as Aspull. This was opened in 1799.

The final section of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal consisted of the seven Johnson Hillock locks at Heapey. These were built by the Lancaster Canal in 1816 under an agreement.

**Would you be living on the towpath ?** When I researched the local history of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, the only available plan of the original route was one of the whole canal from Leeds to Liverpool on one sheet. Consequently this was on a very small scale. Leyland and Shaw Hall were simply denoted by two dots. However, I was surprised, on a visit to the Lancaster Maritime Museum, to be confronted, on the museum wall, by a plan of the first survey of the Lancaster Canal by John Rennie in 1791 and 1792 from Kendal to Westhoughton. The map accompanying this article was taken from that display and clearly shows the proposed Leeds & Liverpool Canal from Hoghton to Leyland, the only confusion being that north is to the left. The original route of the Lancaster Canal including the section from Walton Summit to Preston which subsequently became the tram road are also shown clearly.

Following the line of the Leeds & Liverpool from where it crosses the Lancaster Canal, on the level adjacent to the A6 in Bamber Bridge just south of the Wither Trees, it would then have headed, on an aqueduct over the River Lostock, across the fields to the Stanifield Lane/Lydiat Lane junction. The canal would then follow Sandfield Lane to the west, eventually reaching Golden Hill Lane which it crossed near Northgate.

As this is the plan for the Lancaster Canal, there are no details regarding the provision of locks for the Leeds & Liverpool, though the land configuration would suggest a lock down into the valley of Bannister Brook. The canal then heads west to follow the brook's course until it again heads south behind Towngate roughly on the line of the Broadfield estate. It reaches Fox Lane which it crosses and then disappears as the line heads almost straight for Shaw Hall. It may be a coincidence that the line had not been established through the land of two of the largest landowners in the area, namely the De Hoghtons and the Faringtons.

So Leyland did not manage to become a canal village. However, if you take a look at the nearby village of Burscough Bridge, you can imagine what might have been!

**PETER HOUGHTON.**

## UNDER THE INFLUENCE.

In the previous issue of the 'Chronicle', under the above heading, we were invited to write a short article about historians who had influenced us...Never one to resist such a challenge, but begging leave to change the word 'influenced' to 'interested' and interpret the word 'historian' somewhat loosely, the present writer puts forward three candidates:

- (a) a seventeenth century Lancastrian
- (b) a nineteenth century American and —
- (c) a 20<sup>th</sup> century Cornwallian (if that is the correct description)

The factor that these three have in common is that I have, quite literally, trod in their footsteps.

**Richard Jackson**.— alias Kuerden, (1623 – C1700), Son of Gilbert and Ann Jackson, was baptised at Leyland (the very ambiguity of his name and date of birth is intriguing). He was none other than the celebrated Doctor Kuerden, graduate of both Cambridge (BA) and Oxford (MA), physician (MD 1663 he practised in Preston), antiquary, historian, surveyor, mathematician and student of the occult. He was an associate of Christopher Towneley (but he died in 1674) and a friend of Sir William Dugdale, who he assisted in the recording of the pedigrees of the Lancashire gentry at the Herald's Visitation in 1664, (not forgetting to include his own, under the family of Kuerden of Cuerden).

This essay cannot be a full account of his life and works, which still remains to be collated from its several sources and published. In the same way, Kuerden's own attempted 'History of Lancashire' never saw the light of day beyond a manuscript prospectus. Although of interest to us locally, a manuscript of his draft history of the Leyland Hundred, has survived and is a valuable source, used by Baines and Farrer in their own works, as well as by present day workers. His handwriting and style are idiosyncratic (it has been described as crabbed and almost illegible), he was the master of the art of long sentences with the omission of any punctuation whatsoever, although they are perfectly lucid.

Armed with his notes, however fragmentary they are, it is possible to step in his footsteps round seventeenth century Leyland and learn something of the layout and history of the place prior to his day. On a personal note, from the room where I presently sit, I can see a building about which I was able, from just one long unpunctuated sentence (of 107 words) in his manuscript, to confirm its contemporary history, which then formed part of the subject of a recently published monograph. I felt I was in the footsteps of Dr. Richard Kuerden.

**Dr.J.G.Marshall** in his 1977 Presidential address to the Federation of Lancashire Local History Societies, quoted, in another context, the historian E.H.Carr as saying, "*A good historian needs a few bats in his belfry*". Dr Kuerden seems to have been one such, which adds to his interest, for me at least.

**Oliver Norton Worden (1817 –1869)** Born in Woodstock, United States, lived mainly in Pennsylvania, and was a printer and political contributor to Whig and Republican journals of his day. In 1865, wearied and in poor health from his labours, he decided to retire and research his Worden ancestors, starting in the north east of the States, but later in the rest of the country. He very rapidly accumulated a massive archive of members of the Worden family, reaching back to his earliest male ancestor in America in 1636.

He was saddened by the death of his wife in April 1867, but persevered with his researches right up to his own death. In 1868 he published, for private circulation only, a small octavo book of the names and other details of ' *Over one thousand persons by the Name of Worden* ' covering some three hundred years.

Needless to say, this little book and its author were the most definitive work on the genealogy of the Worden family in America, at the time of his research. I am pleased to say that I have a copy, containing some of his own hand written notes. The book itself is printed in very small typeface, and as the dedication page states, " *every type set by my very own hand* ", there proudly speaks the printer, and a tremendous effort that certainly was.

After completing the main body of the work in 1868, in January 1869 he made a further journey covering eleven states covering 3398 miles in 106 days (by rail, in pre-automobile times), the trip costing \$200 or 6 cents a mile! I think he died soon after making this journey, his account indicates some increase in his ill-health, and a hint that his work on the family was reaching its conclusion.

He must have had some slight knowledge of his English origins, on the subject of heraldry (obviously of the Cheshire Werdens) he is dismissive. " *What it all means – don't know or care – perhaps you do!* " Although a very serious work, it is lightened by similar comments.

The interest in this matter for me, and I hope for other readers, is that the first American Worden in his ancestry is Peter Worden, who was born at Hole House Farm, Clayton-le-Woods, Lancashire and emigrated with his son, also named Peter in 1636. Their first settlement was in Yarmouth Port, Cape Cod, which was then Plymouth Colony but now in Massachusetts. I have spent some considerable time researching the English Worden family and in September 1996 I visited Cape Cod to see the places where the first Wordens settled and to compare my own observations on the area with his detailed and perfectly recognisable account of his own visit to the same spot, some one hundred and thirty years earlier.

I felt I was in the footsteps of Oliver Worden, a descendant of a Clayton-le-Woods family.

**Geoffrey (Edward Harvey) Grigson (1905 – 1985)** Poet, critic, anthologist, man of letters, naturalist and local historian, was born in Pelynt, East Cornwall, seventh son (no sisters) of Canon W.S. Grigson, Vicar of Pelynt. In 1954 we holidayed in Lanreath using that village as a centre for exploring the countryside and coast of Cornwall, which was much less crowded than at present. Some twelve months later I purchased (in Boots lending library!) a withdrawn copy of ' *Freedom of the Parish* ' by Geoffrey Grigson, only recently published in 1954.

It was not until 1962, that we visited Cornwall again, this time staying at Pelynt village, in its inn, the 'Jubilee', naturally armed with Grigson's book, a more comprehensive guide to the village could not be envisaged. In some twenty one discursive chapters, he describes the topography, prehistory, history, (religious and socio-political) and flora and fauna of the village and district, all in a readable and informative way, as befits a man of letters, who was born there and although well-travelled, his love of his native soil shines through the book.



Any attempt to expand on the above description would be futile. I will mention his chapter on the church, dedicated to St. Nonn, and its monuments. Amongst the gentry of Pelynt were the celebrated Trelawnys of whom the first baronet Sir John, who died in 1664, a staunch Royalist, whose loyalties earned him a spell in the Tower of London and about whom the Cornish sang, "*And shall Trelawny die?*" Sir John does not have a monument but nevertheless he is buried under the chancel floor and I have walked over his grave.

My final note concerns one of the more modern monuments:- it is

*"To the memory of the six sons of the Reverend William Grigson, sometime Vicar of Pelynt"*

These are the six brothers of Geoffrey Grigson, who was, before his death in 1985, the sole survivor of the family of the Vicar. Three were killed in World War I and three in World War II. The monument must give its reader pause for thought and this tremendous loss must have coloured Geoffrey's life. He mentions the fact in his book but does not dwell on it.

This is a book to be read and read again. I feel I have trodden in Geoffrey Grigson's footsteps and for a very short time at least had the pleasure of enjoying the '*Freedom of the Parish*'.

G.L.BOLTON.

**Chorley Guardian and Leyland Hundred Advertiser**

**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> October 1890.**

**LEYLAND – THE SUBSCRIPTION BOWLING CLUB**

The remainder of the prizes, which were offered for competition in connection with the Leyland Subscription Bowling Club, were contested for on Saturday last on the green attached to the 'Eagle and Child Hotel'.

The green was in splendid condition and the prizes were awarded as follows:

1 <sup>st</sup>	John Kenyon
2 <sup>nd</sup>	J. Jackson
3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup>	Divided between T. Bowling and J. Riding

On the previous Thursday the prizes won on the first round were:

1 <sup>st</sup>	J. Critchley
2 <sup>nd</sup>	R. Butcher
3 <sup>rd</sup>	J. Bowling
4 <sup>th</sup>	O. Holmes.

"In days gone by many of the public houses of Leyland had their own bowling greens. Sadly, over the years they have gradually disappeared often to be replaced by car-parks. Happily, the 'Eagle and Child' green survives — beautifully kept and well used over a hundred years after the above report"

## THE NEW INN, LEYLAND.

The New Inn stood on the southern corner of Dawson Lane's junction with the Wigan Road; its barn and out buildings stood on the northern corner. Architecturally it was similar to other early 17<sup>th</sup> century three-storeyed houses in Leyland, particularly Occleshaw House and Tudor House at the Cross. It presented a solid appearance (see "*Archive Photographs of Leyland*", D. Hunt and W. Waring page 100) and would, no doubt, have stood well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century had not its location and circumstances conspired to cause its eventual demolition.

With war clouds gathering in the 1930's, the government bought the whole of that part of Leyland east of Wigan Road and south of Dawson Lane (the greater part of the old demesne lands of Worden) and the adjacent estate of Buckshaw in Euxton plus other lands to form the vast Euxton Royal Ordnance Factory which was opened by Gracie Fields in 1938. Since the New Inn farmhouse – for that is what it was and, despite its name, not a public house – stood within the boundary of the R.O.F., a new house was built for the occupier, Mr. William Hesketh, on Dawson Lane adjacent to the existing farm buildings. The old farmhouse stood empty during the war years but, with the increase in traffic post-war and the fact that it seriously impeded visibility, the New Inn was eventually demolished.

In years gone by it was always a good point for discussion – not to say argument – as to whether the New Inn had ever been a public house. Certainly in this century it had not; nor had it been in the latter years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, deeds in the Farington of Worden muniments (Ref:DDF) in the Lancashire Record Office (L.R.O.) provide clues to its origin and the possible reason for its name.

In January 1740, George Farington and his wife Margaret mortgaged for £1,000 the capital messuage of Worden etc. to Thomas Bootle of the Inner Temple, London (DDF 1512). Describing the lands being mortgaged we find it included, "*the messuage and dwelling house called the New Inn, lately built on the demesne lands (of Worden)*". Going further back in time, the 1725 survey of Leyland (DDF 81) shows the New Inn already standing at the end of Dawson Lane, obviously '*lately built*' in 1740, was a generality. Tudor House at the Cross had been built in 1710, and Occleshaw House around 1715; given their similarities it seems safe to say that the New Inn was built around this time. But why 'New Inn'? A lease of 1729 (DDF 1827) provides a clue.

The inn, 'Rose Whittle', stood barely a Quarter of a mile south of the New Inn; owned by the Faringtons of Worden and tenanted for many years in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century by a family by the name of Whittle. It occupied a prime site on the road north from Warrington and Wigan. In 1729 George Farington had leased the property to William Whittle of Leyland, Yeoman, who was already in possession, for the lives of Ellin aged 50, wife of William Whittle; Hannah Calderbank, aged 22 and Ann Whittle, aged 20, daughters of the said William Whittle. This deed was added to in 1764 when it was leased to a James Calderbank, possibly the son-in-law of the now deceased William Whittle. Written separately at the end of this lease is the following :- "*Never renew this tenement unless ye tie ye lessee from selling Ale by which means the New Inn may answer very well for a publick house.*" This injunction, however, appears to have been ignored as 'Rose Whittle' continued as a public house and there are many references to it, culminating in the Census of 1871 when we have Ralph Greenwood as landlord. This is the last reference found to Rose Whittle as a public house.

One can understand the wish of the Faringtons to close Rose Whittle and replace it by the New Inn, which was well placed to catch the passing trade on the main road, and also traffic coming into, or passing through, Leyland from the east of the parish, or further afield. In its earlier years, New Inn does not seem to have had a regular tenant, possibly a deliberate policy by the Farington family. If they had made it into a public house it would no doubt have commanded a much higher rent and been to their advantage.

The only reference found to the New Inn as licensed premises occurs in 1876 in a Slater's Directory where we find the listing — **New Inn – Richard Moulding**. His name does not appear however, as a landlord in any other list in this period. This particular directory, however, does not list seven of the known fourteen public houses in Leyland at this time. In other respects, the only two Slater's Directories which include Leyland that have been examined, are quite unreliable. Mannex and Barretts Directories, Census returns and Quarter Sessions records have been searched for public houses in Leyland – in none of these does the name, 'New Inn', appear: it seems as though it never did fill the role for which it was apparently intended.

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#### **Acknowledgements**

Mr.G.L.Bolton for bringing DDF 1512 to my notice.

The Lancashire Record Office and Leyland Library for the use of their facilities.

## **A POSTSCRIPT      OLD WORDEN**

Recent articles in the local press (July/August 1997) have announced that, owing to large cut-backs brought about by reduced defence spending in the west, the owners of the Euxton Royal Ordnance Factory are to release some 420 acre of land for 1,500 houses and a complex of facilities which includes the re-opening of the railway station within the R.O.F. The land mentioned in the preceding article on the New Inn, - the old demesne land of Worden – is referred to as the 'flagship' part of the whole site. It will be the first stage of the re-development and have its entrance on Dawson Lane!

This is an exciting development, land that was compulsorily purchased by the Government from the Faringtons of Worden some sixty years ago, is at long last being released for peaceable use. The plan to develop 420 acres of land on the basis of 29% employment, 30% housing and 40% open space will, if the planners get it right, provide a village community worthy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

One can only hope that due consideration is given to the historical aspects of the land on which the new village is to be built, perhaps retaining the name 'Old Worden' and finding a suitable use for the old Hall, a building of great historical significance certainly in the township of Leyland and possibly, even in the old Hundred.

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**W.E.WARING.**

## ARNOLD'S DAY OF DAYS.

There had been an overnight frost and the morning air was crisp. By lunch-time what sun there was had taken off the chill but had been insufficient to soften the ground. The grass would be hard but not slippery or wet. According to the forecast there was no likelihood of rain or snow. Thus the scene was set but no-one could have predicted how events would unfold.

The date was Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December 1964. The place – Leyland Motors Social and Athletic pavilion. Ten athletes were making their final preparations for the Christmas Cross Country Handicap Run.

The smell of embrocation filled the changing room as some, mainly veterans, rubbed their calves and thighs. Others sat quietly contemplating the forthcoming four and a half mile course which would take them from the Sports Ground through Worden Park and back again.

It consisted of various terrain – road, field and tracks. There were long stretches where one could stride out. Other sections were strength-sapping with undulating ground and man-made obstacles like gates and stiles. Of these there were fourteen, which interrupted your rhythm.

There was the usual banter about conditions, training, feelings and chances. The favourite was Arnold Nelson, the club's leading runner. He had finished first in 1960 when it had been run from the Day Continuation School in Broad Square, and had repeated this in 1963, setting a course record of 25mins 13secs, taking 2mins 22secs off the previous best. Arnold was 22 and had worked as a fireman on steam locomotives when based at Lostock Hall. Later he worked at Leyland Motors in 426 Department.

In build he resembled Haile Gebrselassie of Ethiopia, the current Olympic and World Champion over 10Km and former world record holder for both 5Km and 10Km until both his records were broken on one golden night in August this year. He had a large chest and skinny legs. Although he didn't have the speed of the Ethiopian over the last lap, Arnold floated over all surfaces with comparative ease. He ran his races by setting off at a fast pace and sustaining it throughout.

Arnold was a talented natural runner but he never trained on a regular basis and consequently never realised his full potential except for this his 'Day of Days'.

A year previously he had won the Kendal 5 mile Yacht Handicap, running five laps on either side of the River Kent. He helped Leyland Motors to the first team prize and set the 3<sup>rd</sup> fastest time of the day.

Arnold had arrived at the changing room complaining that he had had a cold during the week, had done no training and had second thoughts about turning out. This news was seized upon by at least three of the runners who would be vying for second place. If Arnold was feeling 'under the weather' it might be possible to stick close to him and be pulled to a fast time which would prove useful in trying to win the handicap.

For those unfamiliar with handicap races I offer an explanation. Each runner is given a time allowance based on the differences between their best performances over a set distance.

This allowance is subtracted from the actual time and the competitor with the lowest time is the winner.

E.g.

- Runner A actual time 15min Allowance 1min Handicap time 14min
- Runner B actual time 18min Allowance 5min Handicap time 13min
- Runner B wins the handicap.

After a photo-call the starter and timekeeper, Teddy Sharp and Jack Nicholas, called them to the mark in front of the pavilion facing the cricket ground. The start was given and a furious sprint by the leading participants, was made for the entrance leading into Broad Square. Arnold led the pack.

From Broad Square a right turn into Balcarres Road and on towards Church Road. There a left turn and straight across to Beech Avenue. Arnold was still leading and had opened up a gap. Another right turn into Park Road which led to the swing gate top of the path, with its twisted tree roots, that took you over the stile at Little Brook. The footpath crossed the field and came out via another stile on Worden Lane almost opposite the car park entrance to the Park. A quick glance looking out for vehicles and you crossed the road and entered the Park.

The lead was 30-40 yards as Arnold strode into the Park. We knew then who would lead us home. The question was, 'by how much?' The real race would unfold behind the leader as three competitors fought for second place.

A fleeting glimpse of his back was the last sighting of Arnold as he winged his way over the parkland, on to Shaw Brook Road and past Wade Hall Estate. This was the fastest part of the course – it was downhill and there were no obstacles or traffic to be wary of. At the bottom of Shaw Brook Road over Shaw Brook, the road turned towards Leyland Lane. On the left was a stile that gave access to the fields leading to Altcar Lane. The ground was fairly even and hard and that day the running was less hazardous or strenuous though it was punctuated by four stiles.

Once on Altcar Lane you turned left towards Altcar Farm. Here there were more stiles as you passed the farm on your right. The footpath to Runshaw Lane was undulating and uneven but the three chasing runners, in close attendance, strove to gain an advantage. From the footpath, if you glanced to your left you might see the runners ahead of you as they raced on the other side of the brook. On this occasion there was no sight of Arnold as, at this stage, he was so far ahead.

At Runshaw Road you returned to the Park via the swing gate at Swiss Cottage. The track lead up to the drive leading up to Worden Hall. The last 80 metres was uphill. Through the swing gate at the top you then turned right towards the crossroads and out across the parkland to the car park entrance on Worden Lane. From there you followed the same course as the outward journey. There were still three runners tracking each other but gaps had begun to develop.

But what of the leader?

Back at the social club the two officials, Teddy and Jack, were enjoying a pint in the lounge bar. One glanced through the window, spluttered in his drink and pointed to the path circling the cricket ground. Arnold was returning!

Both jumped up and quickly negotiated a flight of stairs to record the finishing time. It was sensational! Arnold had completed the run in 21min 13secs. This was a phenomenal four minutes faster than the record of the previous year. It represented a 16% improvement.

After a long wait the second placed runner arrived and recorded exactly 28 minutes. A further 32 seconds later the third runner finished just 6 seconds ahead of the fourth placer.

Upon hearing the winning time everyone was dumbfounded. How could anyone have covered the course in such a fast time without any real opposition? Arnold looked his usual self and was in no way distressed. Needless to say he won the handicap by over two and a half minutes.

A year later the race victor was again Arnold but in only 26mins 43secs which was nearly two minutes ahead of the second placed runner. However this time was still the third fastest ever recorded for the course.

In the summer of 1965 at Warrington, Arnold took part in the Lancashire County Track and Field Championships in the two mile walk. He finished second. He later attempted the Manchester to Blackpool Walk but after battling with blisters and tiredness he retired after 45 miles – less than seven miles from the finish. He is, after all, only human.

This record will never be broken. The reason? Changes in the development of Leyland, especially the creation of Worden Park estate, have caused the course from Park Road to the car park to be built over. Even Little Brook has been culverted. Further alterations to the footpath near Altcar Farm have created a narrow track unsuitable for smooth running. Parts of the course have been made easier and faster especially the path from Swiss Cottage to Worden Hall. More recent is the closure of the entrance from Broad Square to the cricket ground. In its place is a hard surface floodlit court which is protected by a wooden fence and razor wire!

#### RESULT

NAME	Actual Time	Allowance	H'cap Time	Position
1 <sup>st</sup> Arnold Nelson	21:13	Scratch	21:13	1 <sup>st</sup>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Edward Almond	28:00	3:30	24:30	4 <sup>th</sup>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Brian Howarth	28:32	2:45	25:47	8 <sup>th</sup>
4 <sup>th</sup> Jim Dawber	28:38	4:50	23:48	2 <sup>nd</sup>
5 <sup>th</sup> Ron Oates	30:35	6:10	24:25	3 <sup>rd</sup>
6 <sup>th</sup> John Ashworth	31:55	6:16	25:40	6 <sup>th</sup>
7 <sup>th</sup> Tony Curry	32:25	3:50	28:35	10 <sup>th</sup>
8 <sup>th</sup> Joe Billington(v)	32:30	6:55	25:35	5 <sup>th</sup>
9 <sup>th</sup> Joe Derrick(v)	34:14	8.30	25:44	7 <sup>th</sup>
9 <sup>th</sup> Bernard Salmon	34:14	7:20	26:54	9 <sup>th</sup>

Apart from the three newcomers Ashworth, Curry and Salmon, both Oates (by 45 secs.) and Almond (42 secs) recorded personal bests.

Although it is extremely difficult to compare courses and times, I would rate this performance as the best athletic feat ever performed in Leyland.

**EDWARD ALMOND.**

## THE WORDEN OBELISK.

Incredible though it may seem, it is nearly fifty years since the Leyland obelisk was removed to Churchtown near Southport. Before memories of its very existence in our park fade into the past, or its removal becomes the stuff of local legend, now might be a good time to give a straightforward description of the monument and detail some of the mysteries surrounding its past.

A little first, however, about obelisks in general. Originally of symbolic significance in Egyptian temple precincts, they later became an essential element of Roman architecture. Their popularity as a garden feature spread from the continent with the classical revival and they became an ubiquitous part of any English or Irish garden between 1700 and 1750. Vanburg built an obelisk at Castle Howard. Others followed his example, amongst whom I must single out William Kent, for reasons which will become clear later. Obelisks always take the form of a tall tapering pillar, usually of stone, topped with a pyramid. The most common form is four sided although Batty Langley designed triangular, octagonal and circular models in the 1740s. In England they would normally carry a commemorative meaning with an appropriate description and were generally placed in prominent positions within parkland; at the junction of driveways or at the end of allées or vistas.

The Worden obelisk was conventionally four sided and built of local millstone grit in varying sized blocks on a three-tiered base or plinth. The top was of the customary pyramid shape but was unusual in that the apex was surmounted by a flaming copper sun held on a metal stanchion. On the Ordinance Survey map of 1894 the obelisk is shown on top of the hill immediately above the Cascade, where it would have been clearly visible from the Hall.



The Obelisk early this century in its  
Position above the Cascade.  
Its original site was in the vicinity  
Of the flagpole you see in front of  
The Hall

There it remained until its removal to Churchtown in 1949. For many years after its disappearance, it was quite possible to see where it used to stand. There was a definite indentation in the ground and a few old foundation bricks showed through the grass. Now all trace has gone.

No real mystery surrounds its removal to Churchtown. In early 1949 Colonel Fleetwood Hesketh of Meols Hall, recently returned from the war, was in the process of restoring and beautifying his native village. Above all, he was anxious to fulfil a promise made as early as 1935 — to find a suitable ornament to decorate the village square. He heard that Worden Hall, together with its surrounding parkland, was for sale. He therefore contacted the owner, Sir Henry Farrington, explaining his reasons and asked if he might acquire the obelisk. A purchase price was agreed and the monument was duly dismantled and the carefully numbered stones removed and stored in the grounds of Meols Hall. By February 1951, the obelisk had been rebuilt on a grassy island in the small, sett-paved square of Churchtown. Great care was obviously taken during the rebuilding, as its appearance, allowing for the wear and tear of passing years, is exactly the same as when it stood in Worden Park. Unfortunately however, the trees which were there prior to the arrival of the obelisk now obscure it except in Winter.

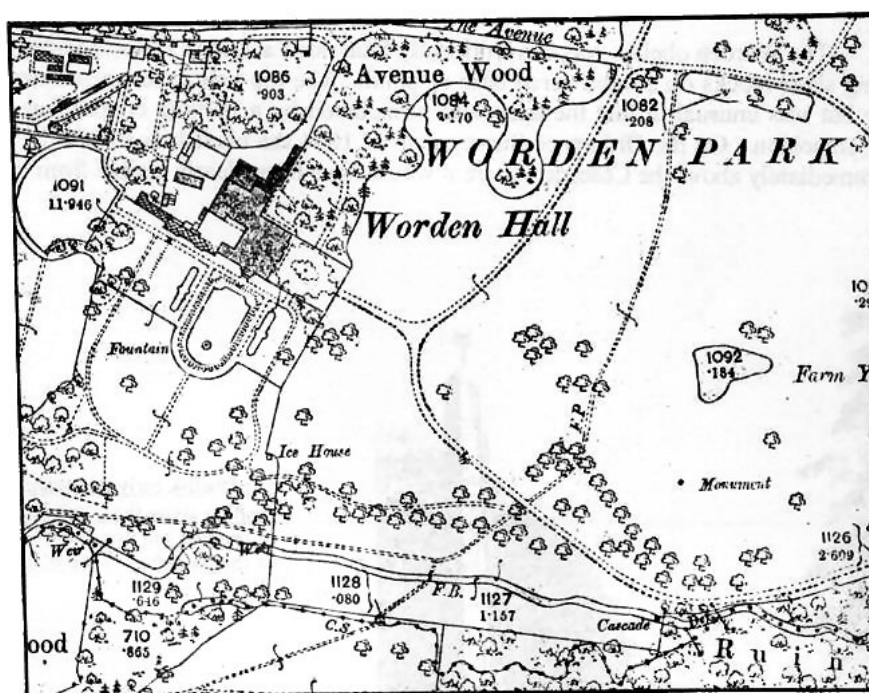


Fig 1. O.S. map of 1894.

Let us now return to the earlier days of the monument, to the time when it was still a feature of Worden Park. As I explained previously the Ordnance Survey map of 1894 shows it standing on the hill-side above the Cascade — as in Figure 1. It may, however, surprise readers to know that this was not its original position in the park.



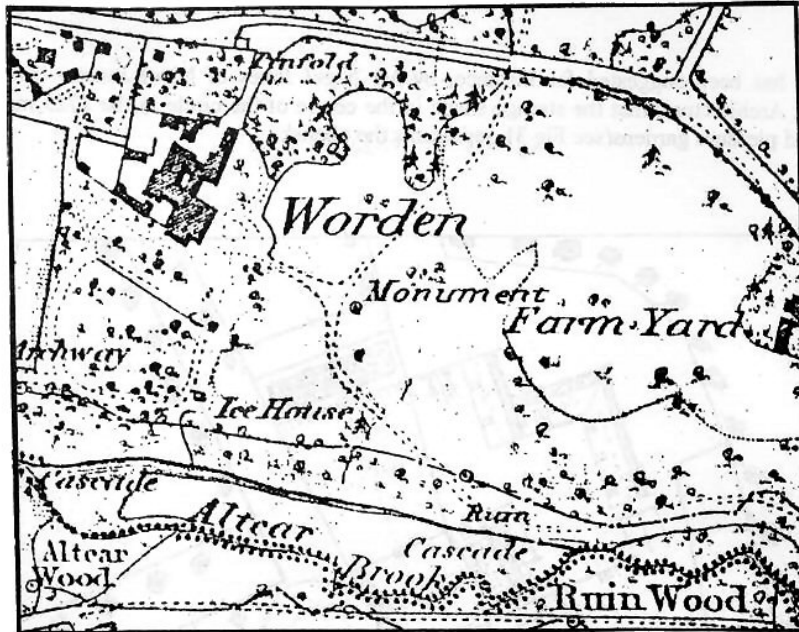


Fig. 2. O.S. map of 1844

The 1844 Ordnance Survey map of Leyland (the only O.S. map to precede the 1894 edition) shows it situated very much nearer to the Hall — please see Fig. 2. Here then is the first real mystery. Why was it moved from one site in the park to another and, indeed, when? I thought I'd found part of the answer when I visited the obelisk in Churchtown. Round the base, with the late afternoon sun shining on the stone, it was still possible (although the lettering was very faint) to read the original inscription. That presumably dates from the obelisk's transference within the park;

*"Rebuilt in commemoration of the Glorious Events of 18—"* but the last two numbers were indecipherable! So perhaps we shall never know what *"glorious events"* occasioned the re-siting of the obelisk though I feel a certain amount can be deduced from the inscription itself. *"Glorious Events"* with capital letters would for instance imply to me something nationally momentous rather than domestic. To this end, therefore, I have compiled a list of nationally important dates that lie between 1844 and 1894 and readers can feel free to make their own choice as to the most likely;

1851	The Great Exhibition
1855	End of the Crimean War
1865	End of American Civil War
1877	Queen Victoria made Empress of India
1885	Khartoum Captured
1887	Queen Victoria Jubilee Celebrations

And now, finally, we must step back still further in time to consider the origins of the obelisk; who caused it to be built and when. All the experts agree that its provenance is eighteenth century but opinions differ as to whether early or later.

It has been suggested for instance, by Mr Nigel Jones of Nicol Jones – Lomax, Landscape Architecture, that the strange shape in the centre of the circle in the 1725 map of the hall and pleasure gardens(see Fig 3), represents the obelisk.

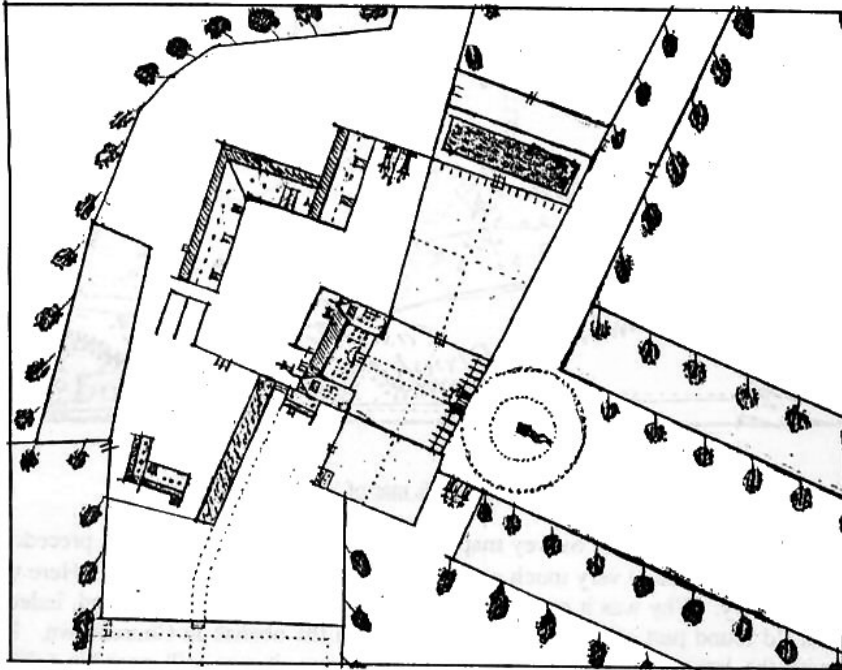
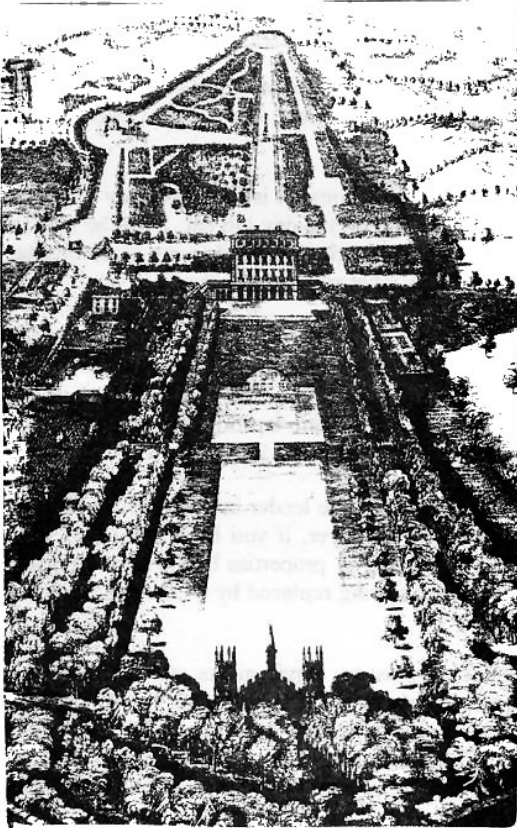


Fig. 3. 1725 Estate map of Hall and Gardens

This would mean that the monument was erected during the lifetime of George ffarington 1696 – 1742. It is certainly possible and the structure has the merit of being in exactly the right location. At the same time it has to be said that an interest in landscape design was more the province of William ffarington (George's son) who, during his squireship (1742 – 1781) did so much to beautify both his house and grounds. For this reason alone I would advocate a later date than 1727 for the obelisk.

William ffarington was well travelled and familiar with the works of landscape designers such as William Kent (1685 – 1748) and 'Capability' Brown (1716 – 1783). Kent, who first emerged as a landscape architect around 1730, produced not only a very large obelisk at Holkham in Norfolk, but another at Shotover Park near Oxford which, perhaps significantly, is surmounted by a sun with encircling rays.



Shotover Park, Oxfordshire from  
An engraving of 1750. The obelisk  
By Kent, is behind the house.

There is always the chance that more and better evidence will come to light about the Worden obelisk. In the meantime this article seems to have posed more questions than it has answered. Standing in the square at Churchtown a few days ago and struggling to decipher the date on the monument, I wished, and not for the first time, that stones might speak.

ELIZABETH SHORROCK.©

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## **THE HISTORY OF OUR HOMES**

When, in the last Chronicle, our editor in her Editorial mentioned the history contained within the deeds of our own properties, she did not know that I had already considered this an interesting topic for investigation.

However, in order to discover the history of your home, it is first necessary to obtain access to the deeds required. Then hopefully, by putting on the day job hat, I will be able to lead you through the legal jargon which makes the investigation of deeds seem so confusing. Finally, through the use of my own deeds, I will show what you can discover.

### **Where are the Deeds to Your Property?**

The first stage is to obtain the deeds to your property. It sounds easy doesn't it? If you have repaid or have no mortgage, you can ignore this section as they should be held by yourselves at home or by your bank or building society for safe custody, and available at a moments notice ( I can only speak for one bank in this respect don't forget ).

However, if you have a mortgage, you might think the lender in question would want to hold on to the deeds, and you would be correct. However, if you have purchased your home in the last twelve years, the compulsory registration of properties by the Land Registry will have resulted in the original deeds of the property being replaced by a Charge Certificate (explanations of this terminology follows shortly ).

The "pre-registration deeds" are then surplus to requirements, though they are usually kept with the Charge Certificate thereby failing to save the space that the registration of deeds was proposed to provide. So, if you approach your lenders, they will only be too happy for you to take them off their hands. If they do not hold them, these deeds should be held by the solicitor who dealt with the purchase of the property on your behalf and who will also be pleased to obtain more space.

If you cannot trace the "pre-registration deeds" and only have a Land Certificate or a copy of a Charge Certificate to look at, it is still possible to find out about the property. These certificates will be covered in the Registered Land section of the article. If you purchased your property over twenty years ago and still have a mortgage, it is still possible, if you ask your lenders nicely, that they will be able to provide a photocopy of the important documents contained within the deeds. The next question is: "What constitutes an important document?"

### **What are the deeds to your property ?**

When we talk about the deeds to a property the important thing to remember is that the deeds are for the land the property is built on and not the house itself. Therefore, in any legal document, you will find the description of the property as: "land with buildings erected thereon".

The ownership of land can be split into two types, namely Freehold or Leasehold. As it says, Freehold is free from encumbrances. Similarly, Leasehold, as it says, is leased from the freeholder for a number of years with a ground rent being charged yearly. The usual term of lease is 999 years though leases as short as 21 years are not unknown.

In order to discover the secrets within a set of deeds, we will look first at unregistered land or any "pre-registration deeds" you have acquired. Then we can go on to look at registered land and the new technology of the Land Registry.

### **Unregistered Land**

Many types of documents make up a set of Deeds, such as the waxen like documents of the last century all hand written without a mistake being made. Any mistakes resulted in the document being started again from scratch.

### **Abstracts**

The first document in a set of deeds is usually the Abstract of Title, which can also be known as an Epitome of Title. This is the summary of the previous deeds before the present set were originated. The abstract details the owners of the property, the price, and any other relevant information including a plan or map. An abstract was provided when a housing development, with numerous houses, was sold off an estate.

### **Deeds**

The main documents are what are usually referred to as deeds, namely the Conveyance in the case of Freehold land, and Assignments in the case of Leasehold land. These are the usual transfer documents when land is being transferred from one party to another.

Usually all documents are set out in the same manner. First we have the parties involved in the transaction, followed by a description of the property, next the restrictive covenants, and finally, the price. The deed always refers to a previous deed or document, that qualifies the new deeds authenticity. The description of the property can be helpful in many respects, especially if it can be related to other adjoining land.

It used to be one of the characteristics of a deed that the document should be sealed. However, in the last twenty years this has slowly changed from the familiar red sealing wax. The placing of the signatures of the parties either under or on top of the wax surface, depended on the solicitor involved. This was amended to small red circular legal seals which were attached in the same manner as a postage stamp though not as adhesive, as they were usually found on the floor if the document was moved. They also tasted terrible! Today, only business deeds are sealed, using company seals, though these too are now on the way out.

### **Restrictive Covenants**

The most interesting details are usually within the restrictive covenants. These are the restrictions that the previous owners, or freeholder in the case of Leasehold property, could apply to the new owners. These can be restrictions on the type of building to be erected including any outbuildings, whether the property could be used for manufacturing, whether livestock could be kept on the property, whether the property could be used to sell alcoholic beverages, and numerous other restrictions. These are not a thing of the past as the modern day estates of Langdale Road are not allowed to erect fences beyond their building line.

### **Mortgage / Legal Charge**

Also included in the deeds are the Legal Charges in favour of the financial institutions, then mostly known as building societies, who lent money to the previous owners of the property to purchase their homes. These are commonly known as mortgage deeds. They remain part of the set of deeds even when they are released or discharged.

If you are wondering how the lender would register the mortgage to ensure that no other lender had a claim on the property, the answer is quite simple. It is known as the Land Charges Registry based in Plymouth.

The lender who has the deeds, searches the Land Charges Registry to ensure there are no entries relating to the person for the period back to the purchase date. These search certificates are usually kept with the deeds and a certificate provided with every change in ownership. The Land Charges Registry is not to be confused with the Land Registry which has a totally different function as will be noted below.

Another form of search certificate is the Local Search obtained by the solicitor from the Local Council at the time of purchase and which contains any details that the council may know of which will affect the property in the near future, --- a new road for instance.

There are many other items to be found contained within a set of deeds. These include Death Certificates and Marriage Certificates denoting the change in status of the previous owners. Other lesser used types of Deeds include a Deed of Gift and Deed of Transfer.

So, as you can see, there is a lot of paper work in an old set of deeds, although, as I have stated earlier, these are now on the way out on a very long term basis.

### **Registered Land**

In the early 1970's it was decided to change the way that land was bought and sold, the aim being to make the transaction simpler, with less paper work, and eventually to enable every piece of land in the whole of the country to be registered with its own reference number.

This was to be achieved when any property in a council district was going through a change in ownership. The first council districts in this area were Preston and Blackpool which became compulsory registration areas in 1974, while South Ribble and Chorley only came into the scheme in 1984. Consequently, when the property changes hands, the solicitor sends the deeds to the Land Registry, together with the registration forms, any Legal Charge and the usual fee. Our local office for Lancashire is Lytham, denoted by the LA prefix on the certificate.

If you have purchased your property without recourse to a mortgage, the certificate you receive will be a Land Certificate. This consists of a number of pages describing the property in a particular order. With each page headed with the reference number or Title Number as it is known, the first item is the Property Register, which includes the County, District and the details of the property, which is usually related to the map at the back of the certificate.

The next item is the Proprietorship Register, which gives details of the owner of the property. The owners are classed as to the validity of their claim to the property, the best claim being a "Title Absolute", as it states their title is absolute. The third item is the Charges Register which, in the case of a Land Certificate, details any restrictive covenants from previous deeds that are still applicable to the property.

If the property is purchased with a mortgage, the solicitor will receive a Charge Certificate to pass onto the lender. This, despite having a different cover to the Land Certificate, contains almost the same information. The only difference is the Charges Register which includes details of the Legal Charge that is sewn into the back of the certificate.

### **Here's one I prepared earlier**

To consider the history of one property, I have studied my own deeds and will give you the edited highlights. However, having purchased the freehold of the property, we have two stories to tell. I will start with the leasehold story.

### **The Leasehold property**

Once you have acquired your deeds or copies, the first thing to do is to arrange the documents in a rough chronological order. Remember that the Abstract of Title is usually the first item. The documents should follow from owner to owner with each gap being covered by an additional Abstract of Title. In order to read a document it is important to remember that there is no punctuation used in most legal documents.

In the case of our deeds, of course, this is not true, as the first item is a copy lease covering all three properties in the terrace, then known as 20, 21 and 22 Woodland Terrace. The lease is dated 23rd June 1877 and made between John Goulding, the land owner and Richard Heslam the builder, for a term of 999 years from 1st April 1877.

The ground rent was fixed at £3 15s 8d to be paid half yearly on 1st May and 1st November. The houses however, had not yet been built, as it was stated that an additional 4d would be payable for each house erected on the plot. The builder was instructed that, in accordance with the lease, he was "before the 1<sup>st</sup> September 1877 ( to ) build upon the said plot of ground hereby demised with good and sufficient brick or stone slate and other materials three good and substantial dwelling houses of not less annual value than £ 10 each."

With the usual covenants against the sale of ale, beer, wine or spirituous liquors, there was also a clause which the "houses shall not be erected and finished as back and front houses nor shall any cellar be inhabited as a separate dwelling," thereby ensuring the neighbourhood standards were maintained. According to the plan attached, the surrounding land to the north and west was owned by John Goulding, while to the east the land was owned by Miss Ann Whittle.

The second document, an Abstract of Title of William Marland, dated 1946, giving the property address as 59 Turpin Green Lane, formerly known as 21 Woodland Terrace, continues the story. According to the Abstract, an assignment dated 31<sup>st</sup> August 1935 passed the property from the executors of Caleb Marland of Rainford House, Turpin Green, (a property whose exact position has still to be established, though it has been suggested by Mr Caleb Marland's grandson that what could have been the property then, now comprises two shops between Starkie House and the first row of stone cottages). Caleb Marland had died on 27<sup>th</sup> April 1935, the property going into the hands of William Marland, his son. The two executors, who were also his sons, were William Marland of Baldwin Croft, Church Road, described as a designer and salesman, and Thomas Rainford Marland of Ribbleton Villa, Ribbleton Avenue, Preston, also described as a salesman.

When the property exchanged owners on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1946, it was a curious transaction as it passed from William Marland into the names of Elizabeth Lawson and Ethel Southward as purchasers, and Dorothy Jane Gregson of Heald House as sub purchaser. It would seem that Miss Gregson provided the finance for the other two ladies to purchase the property. One of the ladies was the house keeper at Heald House! Our house was meant to provide accommodation for her and her mother but it would seem that the mother did not want to move to Leyland.

Reading through this assignment, it is interesting to note that besides referring back to the deed creating the lease, it also mentions an assignment dated 12th November 1898 transferring the property from Ellen Heyes to Caleb Marland, so the only period without details of a owner is between the building of the property in 1877 and 1898. I will list this train of events in chronological order at the end of the article.

By 1946, the Land Charges Act 1925 and Town & Country Planning Act 1944 resulted in the certificates from both searches being placed with the deeds. While the Land Charges search only confirms what we already know, i.e. that William Marland was now a retired cotton salesman, the Local search reveals a notice of 4<sup>th</sup> May 1939, served under the Public Health Act 1875, to make up Back Turpin Green Lane, this still being the age of the back yard convenience.

There follows another Abstract of Title of Miss Dorothy Jane Gregson which clarifies the position of the two ladies and establishes Miss Gregson as sole owner of the property. This then prepared the way for Miss Gregson to sell the property on 8th November 1948 to George and Maud Houghton.

### **The Freehold property**

The freehold interest in the property is based on an Epitome of Title of the personal representatives of Alice Waddecar, dated 1979, which details the history of the property from the original freeholder John Goulding of Starkie House. It was John Goulding who, when the Leyland Methodist Church in Chapel Brow became too small, sold a plot of land on Turpin Green, on which was built the school and later the church. Goulding Terrace in Stanley Street built in 1889, and Goulding Avenue, were named after him.

As part of the Epitome, the indenture of 1908 contains the details of John Goulding's will which left the property as trustees to George Gregson, an estate agent, his daughters Dorothy Jane Gregson and Alice Gregson and Alan Chambre Dickson a county gentleman. The will of 11<sup>th</sup> June 1887 mentions Jane Goulding, his wife, and Alice Gregson, his daughter who had married George Gregson.

The Epitome then notes that John Goulding died on 18<sup>th</sup> April 1893, closely followed by the death of his daughter Alice Gregson on 11<sup>th</sup> January 1895. As the indenture had provided for Jane Goulding, her death is recorded on 24<sup>th</sup> May 1911.

The first of the three schedules contained within the indenture list all the land then owned by John Goulding, including land at Cote Lane Farm, Farington, Penwortham and Bow Brook, Leyland. There are many properties listed on Turpin Green Lane, including:-

a house and shop in the name of R Haydock,  
an adjoining property in the name of Mrs Corcoran,  
4 stone cottages in the names of Mrs Jolly, Miss Pedder, I Gregson & Miss Cocker,  
two cottages in the names of Miss King and Miss Moore,  
three cottages in the names of Mr Blackhurst, Mrs Rimmer and Miss Pugh.  
The property called Starkie House with outbuildings, barn, garden and land were in the name of Mrs Goulding.

The last item in the first schedule were described as Hough Lane Field. The second schedule contains all the ground rents payable each year, which totalled £ 69. The main item on this schedule was the Wesleyan Chapel at £ 21 11s 7d



The third schedule includes cottages on Sandfield Street and Stanley Street, seven shops and five houses on Hough Lane and ten houses on Alice Avenue.

The Epitome continues with the marriage of Alice Gregson to Albert Waddecar on 14<sup>th</sup> February 1925, followed by the death of George Gregson on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1936.

If you have followed the story so far, you will realise that Dorothy Jane Gregson has already been in the leasehold story, her death being reported in the Epitome as 10<sup>th</sup> March 1951.

The deed of appointment of Albert Waddecar as a trustee is included in the Epitome dated 4<sup>th</sup> May 1953. This contains further schedules of the property then owned by the trustees. Following a list of personal property in the form of shares and stocks, it then lists the ground rents payable at that time, properties in Turpin Green Lane, Starkie Street and Stanley Street, the Wesleyan Chapel, and a plot of land then occupied by Brook Mills Limited though originally leased to Thomas L Wall.

Other ground rents included property in Hough Lane, further properties in Turpin Green Lane, Alice Avenue, Goulding Avenue, Sandfield Street and Stanley Street. The agricultural land at 30 Bow Lane and Coote Lane Farm, Farington were still mentioned. The Hough Lane field had been developed into Dorothy Avenue, with plots of land rented to Matthew Brown & Co., J Tuson, EW Chamberlain, Leyland Garage Co., Messrs Ambrose & Beaver, M.A Corcoran and twenty other smaller plots. The epitome is completed by a list of sales off, as the freeholds were sold in a period from 1953 to 1970.

The will of Alice Waddecar dated 7<sup>th</sup> October 1974, appointed Edward Chambre Dickson and Frederick John Callow to be the executors and trustees. She subsequently died on 27<sup>th</sup> January 1976, thereby ending the direct Goulding connection with the land. The will founded the Charity of Alice Waddecar for the former North West Lancashire County Scout Council, though by 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1978, the Charity Commission had decided that 15% should go to Cumbria and the remaining 85% to the West Lancashire County Scout Council.

An Epitome of Title dated 1981 established the West Lancashire County Scout Council's claim on 59 Turpin Green Lane whilst the subsequent conveyance dated 9<sup>th</sup> August 1982 transferred the property into the names of George and Maud Houghton.

Thus, the Freehold and Leasehold deeds are now brought together.

As all the above information has been obtained from the deeds, as with most things, it has created more questions than answers. So, if any members can assist me with further research, the main queries are:-

- Who was John Goulding and how did he amass his property and wealth ?
- Who was Richard Heslam ?
- Did he live in Leyland, and did he built any other houses ?
- Did Ellen Heyes live in the property from 1877 to 1898 ?

## The Owners of 59 Turpin Green Lane Leyland in Chronological order

### Leasehold property

23rd June	1877	John Goulding to Richard Heslam
Unknown		
12th November	1898	Ellen Heyes to Caleb Marland
27th April	1935	Death of Caleb Marland
31st August	1935	Executors of Caleb Marland to William Marland
23rd December	1946	William Marland to Dorothy Jane Gregson & others
8th November	1948	Dorothy Jane Gregson to George & Maud Houghton

### Freehold property

11th June	1887	Will of John Goulding naming his wife Jane and daughter Alice and her husband George Gregson and their daughters Dorothy Jane and Alice as beneficiaries
18th April	1893	Death of John Goulding
11th January	1895	Death of Alice Gregson ( Daughter of John )
23rd July	1908	The Indenture setting up the trusteeship in the names of George Gregson, Dorothy Jane Gregson, Alice Gregson and Alan Chambre Dickson ( Solicitor )
24th May	1911	Death of Jane Goulding ( Wife of John )
14th February	1925	Marriage of Alice Gregson to Albert Waddecar
23rd July	1936	Death of George Gregson
10th March	1951	Death of Dorothy Jane Gregson
7th October	1974	Will of Alice Waddecar appointing Edward Chambre Dickson and Frederick John Callow to be the executors and trustees of new trust
27th January	1976	Death of Alice Waddecar
9th August	1982	Trustees of Alice Waddecar for the North West Lancashire County Scout Council Charity to George & Maud Houghton

The story continues .....

**PETER HOUGHTON.**

## A GHOST STORY.

I have never seen a ghost which is not surprising as I don't believe in them. This is in spite of working, for nineteen years, next to a public house, the Sun Inn, in Chipping, which lays claim to the ghost of one Lizzie Dean. Her grave can be seen in St. Bartholomew's churchyard near the ancient yew tree and within sight of the Sun Inn where she worked and eventually committed suicide.

One of the school caretakers of St. Mary's RC Primary, which looks onto the outbuildings of the Sun Inn, claimed to have seen a ghost-like figure in the classroom nearest to where Lizzie lived. The last caretaker, Winnie Walmsley, who worked there for eighteen years, - often working on her own in the evenings - neither heard or saw anything. When I was there in the evenings on my own I often heard many sounds, some of which sounded like footsteps, but on investigation I never saw anything remotely resembling shadowy figures or ghost-like apparitions.

However several children, at the school, believed there was a ghost because they could hear strange sounds (only the urinals flushing automatically). Doors would also open and bang for no apparent reason. (I just put this down to the wind and ill-fitting doors or doors not closed properly.)

As far as I know there are no ghost stories connected with Leyland and I stand to be corrected. There is the cat associated with St. Andrew's Parish Church and there was a Boggart Lane I am told. I believe the ghost story closest to Leyland is to be found near Gradwell's, formerly the home of the Royal Umpire Museum, at Ulnes Walton, where the ghost of a white lady, known as the Sarcow Lady, is reported to have been seen on numerous occasions.

This story is not about her or any specific figure or haunting. It concerns the passing of countryside, footpaths and roads under the name of progress and growth. It is about idyllic days wandering, as a young boy with family and friends, along footpaths, pathways and roads. Less importantly, it was an area in which I trained for running and race walking.

In the early 50's one of my favourite walks, from my home in Towngate, was to Atherton Clough. The route was nearly always the same - up Broad Street, along Eden Street past the Salvation Army Citadel and Tomlinson's Wood Yard, across St. Andrew's Green (though it was always known as the Rec). We might have a few swings before progressing on to St. Andrew's Church passing Tomlinson's Yard on the right and the War Memorial on the left. The area behind Church Road was rough and stony and was used once a year for the annual Fair.

Passing through the churchyard we would stop and say a prayer at my mother's grave. The pathway out of the graveyard took us past the grave of one of the heroes of Lucknow, through the gate and onto the track between the wall and the hedge where St. Mary's altar boys used to play football. It is now built on and is called St. Andrew's Close. Instead of carrying straight on we would turn left along Park Road towards the May Field.

The swing gate (of which only a single iron post remains) opened on to the footpath which led down to the double stile (featured on the dust jacket of George Birtill's excellent book, 'The Green Pastures'). On the left was a pond where occasionally we would look for newts.

In the middle of the field between the footpath and Colt House Wood was a group of brambles and blackberry bushes. They always seemed to be big and juicy and it was a favourite spot for gathering fruit for pies.

The footpath changed course and turned sharp left through a large gap in the hedge and led across the field to a stile and into a further field. The footpath followed the edge of the field and came out on Back Lane (now Langdale Road). This situation is crucial to the ghost story. On the right was Mawdesley's farm. Further down and on the opposite side, Atherton Hall farm could be seen.

Now a decision had to be taken. Although we weren't far from Atherton Clough it was a question of how much time we had spent dallying on the way. We could walk down Back Lane (no pavements but also little or no traffic) towards Worden Lane. Who remembers the triangle of grass in the middle of the road junction? From there we could return home via Vicarsfields and the cemetery. One could also turn left, pass Clayton's farm on the left where the road turned sharply to pass over the railway by means of Rose Whittle Bridge coming out on Wigan Road. Then it was Heald House Lane, Church Road and Towngate to reach home.

The third choice was to cross Back Lane and go over the stile, some 20 yards further up the road, and cross the fields to Atherton Clough (at present this is accomplished by taking the bridge over the Motorway). The footpath led to an iron swing gate and then steeply down between an avenue of iron railings separating either side of Atherton Clough Wood. The railings and gate have disappeared though fragments of ironwork protrude through the churned-up path. (In my garage I have a piece of the old railings along with bricks and other material from 'demolished' Leyland landmarks).

At the bottom was a footbridge over Shaw Brook. If I remember correctly this bridge was constructed of concrete though the present one is wooden. By means of further stiles and fields the path took you to Pack Saddle Bridge. Further decisions! Should one retrace one's route or turn left under the bridge, up the hill towards Leyland, or turn right up another hill, on to the Bay Horse at Euxton and then home via Runshaw Lane, Runshaw Hall Lane and Worden Lane? The latter choice, being further, wasn't chosen very often! Several older members will have happy memories of this route but sadly the footpath from the May Field on to Back Lane has gone for ever. There are traces of it but they are no longer grass – concrete and tarmac have taken over.

By a strange coincidence my present home in Langdale Road is situated on the exact spot where the footpath came out on the old Back Lane. From the front lounge window I can see the track that leads over the Motorway, Runshaw College playing fields and Atherton Hall. From the other side lounge window I am able to look up Langdale Road in the direction of Church Road. It is this window through which one can see visitors calling on the front door which is important to the story. My favourite seat is on the settee near to the window.

Every day at varying times but not at night time, I sense or catch a shadow of someone calling at the front door. When I turn or look up there is no one there yet I have the distinct impression that someone or something has passed the window. I am not alone in having this sensation. My daughter, Julie, has also noticed 'people' but on checking there is no one at the door. My late mother-in-law also used to 'see' people who weren't there. My wife Marie, and other daughter Lisa however, have not experienced this. I tell Marie that these 'invisible' visitors are the ghosts, spirits or what you will of people who used to frequent the old footpath that our house is built over.

The experiences only occur from the side lounge window. There have been no 'sightings' or 'sensations' in the hallway or kitchen or anywhere else in the house. The hallway used to be cold but a new double glazed door has made a tremendous difference.

If these are the spirits of long past travellers, maybe they too are regretting the passing of their favourite 'haunt'. As I said in the introduction, I do not believe in ghosts, but it makes you think!

**EDWARD ALMOND.**

### **THE GREAT STORM — THE 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY.**

*"Earlier on today, a woman rang the BBC and said she had heard that there was a hurricane on the way. Well, if your watching – don't worry, there isn't."* With these immortal words – taken from the lunchtime TV weather forecast of 15<sup>th</sup> October 1987 – BBC weatherman Michael Fish has gone down in history.

On the night of 15/16<sup>th</sup> October 1987, Southern England was devastated by Britain's most violent storm for some 300 years. Wind speeds of up to 110 mph were recorded; 15 million trees were brought down, ships were driven ashore, parked aeroplanes were overturned and, tragically, 19 people lost their lives. A swathe of destruction across the whole of Southern England from West to East caused damage estimated at more than £300 million.

Whenever the storm of 1987 is written about, reference is usually made to the storm of "some 300 years ago". Seldom is it described in any detail, but the storm of the night of 26/27<sup>th</sup> November 1703, is the most violent recorded storm ever to hit Britain, sweeping the length and breadth of the country. The loss of life was enormous, twelve men-o-war with more than 1,800 men aboard were lost within sight of the shore and nation wide the death toll was in the thousands.

It was in this storm that Henry Winstanley (1644 – 1703), artist and engineer, lost his life. Winstanley, clerk of works to Charles II, had designed and built the first Eddystone Lighthouse which he completed in 1700 despite the prophets of doom who maintained that it was unsafe. To show his confidence in the structure, despite the approaching bad weather, he insisted on spending the night of 26/27<sup>th</sup> November on the Eddystone Light - Winstanley and the lighthouse were washed away. Other prominent figures to die in the storm were the Bishop of Bath and Wells and his wife who were killed in their bed.

The opportunity was taken some twenty years ago, when one of the last surviving beech trees in St. Andrew's churchyard was cut down, to count the number of rings to estimate the age of the tree. Although not easy to do the cut was so clean that a figure was arrived at that suggested that the tree dated from the 1720's. One wonders, had the massive beeches that dominated the old Vicar's Fields been planted to replace trees lost in the Great Storm of 1703?

Has any member ever seen a detailed account of this storm?

**W.E. WARING.**

## RAIL TRIP— LEYLAND TO WARRINGTON BANK QUAY

*(L) Left or (R) Right hand side of carriage in Warrington direction.*

From Leyland we are travelling south along the West Coast Main Line, the line between London Euston and Glasgow. This was built and opened, by the North Union Railway, on 31<sup>st</sup> October 1838 from Wigan to Preston, being a continuation of the Wigan Branch Railway from the Liverpool and Manchester Railway. Following the rebuilding of the main stations on the line, together with the closure of the other smaller stations, Leyland's Platform 1 is probably the oldest used platform on the whole West Coast Main Line.

After going under the M6 Motorway on the site of Rose Whittles bridge, we reach the signals and points signifying the approach to 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 the route 'To Chorley and Manchester'. Here also was the site of the **Euxton Junction Station** which survived until April 1917.

As we head through Euxton, we pass the site of two level crossings at Euxton Lane, the site of the original Euxton Station, and at School Lane. These have been converted to under bridges, though the crossing keepers' houses were still in position recently.

The next site of a level crossing was converted into an over bridge when the lines between Euxton Junction and Standish were quadrupled in 1895. The new station, **Balshaw Lane and Euxton** was built on the two new slow lines. The station was closed on 6<sup>th</sup> October 1969, though it is due to reopen in September 1998. The original level crossing was the scene of an accident in 1841, when a coal train ran down the Chorley to Southport stage coach, the crossing keeper having forgotten to close the gates to the road when he went for his midday meal.

As we pass over either the original embankment on the fast lines or, if we use the slow lines, the later viaduct, spare a thought for the serious setback which occurred during the construction of the line on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1837, when about thirty yards of the great culvert over the River Yarrow suddenly collapsed, completely damming the river. Heavy rains on the following two days caused the water to rise thirty feet, the embankment collapsed and a great quantity of earth was washed away. McKenzie, the contractor, was held responsible!

Immediately after the viaduct or embankment, we reach Balshaw Lane Junction where the two slow lines disappear. These lines were cut back when the electrification went through in 1973. We now pass through Charnock Richard in a long cutting with a depth of 60 feet.

As we head towards Coppull, on the right, we can see the remains of the branch to Chisnall Hall Colliery, the small hills in the distance probably having a past life as slag heaps. With the Royal Scot public house to the left, and the Coppull Mill right, we enter the village of Coppull, the site of **Coppull Station** closed on 6<sup>th</sup> October 1969 as it was on the removed slow lines adjacent to Spendmore Lane.

Whilst we have been climbing from Leyland, we now reach the top of Coppull Hill, and begin the descent to Wigan. The final gradient from Standish to Wigan is 1 in 140, the steepest on the West Coast Main Line from Crewe to Preston.

Heading downhill, we reach the site of **Standish Station**. Here the Whelley Route from Standish Junction to Bamfurlong Junction left the main line, avoiding the centre of Wigan and rejoining the main line two miles south of Wigan. This line was singled in 1972, after completion of the electrification from Wigan to Preston on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1973, and went totally out of use in 1974.

As the double track line heads down towards Wigan, we reach the junction with the Lancashire Union Railway at Boars Head. This line opened on 1<sup>st</sup> December 1869, from the junction with the Euxton Junction to Bolton line at Adlington, and finally closed to goods traffic on 25th May 1971. The **Boars Head Station**, which closed on 31<sup>st</sup> January 1949, served both the main line and the branch line.

As we head over the Wigan embankment, we can see the Wigan Football Club (R) whilst in the distance, Trencherfield Mill, which houses the largest working steam engine in the world, shows the position of Wigan Pier, now the heritage centre of world renown. 'The Way We Were' Exhibition is a historical experience with displays and acted out situations which helps to depict the hard life that the people of Wigan endured to bring the coal to the surface. The museum was created from the warehouses that used to serve the canal basin

The name Wigan Pier was first coined as a joke by the music hall star George Formby Senior at the expense of the seaside resorts of Southport and Blackpool. Later George Orwell, in his book '*The Road to Wigan Pier*', in his search for this wonder, used it as a symbol of decay for the failing fortunes of the industrial North. The actual pier, now reconstructed, was to enable coal wagons from the nearby pit to be tipped directly into the canal boats. In fact the last commercial traffic on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal was from the Bickershaw Colliery to the Wigan Power Station until its closure in 1971. On the left, the Wigan Rugby Football Club lights at Central Park can be seen, together with the Santus family's factory, where the world famous 'Uncle Joe's Mint Balls' are made.

As we head over Wallgate bridge, we can see Wigan Wallgate Station (L), opened on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1896. Here the lines from Manchester and Bolton, head under our lines, either north west along the Douglas valley to Southport, opened on 9<sup>th</sup> April 1855, or south to Kirkby along the old Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Liverpool line opened on 20<sup>th</sup> November 1848. However, to continue your journey to Liverpool today, you would have to change at Kirkby and join an electric multiple unit.

The present Wigan North Western Station opened on this site on 18<sup>th</sup> February 1888, replacing the much smaller 1838 station. The station's name serves to remind us of the previous owners of the railway, namely The London & North Western Railway. As well as serving the West Coast Main Line this station also has the Preston to Liverpool service via St. Helens. Originally this line was a further continuation of the Lancashire Union Railway from Blackburn. Other services use the connection to the Wallgate lines thus enabling expresses to run from Barrow and Windermere to Preston, Wigan and thence to Bolton and Manchester, terminating at the Airport.

The line south to Warrington can be divided into three sections: Wigan to Golborne junction, Golborne junction to Winwick junction and Winwick junction to Warrington. The first section was opened as the Wigan Branch Railway on September 3<sup>rd</sup> 1832, from the original Wigan North Western Station to the Parkside junction on the Liverpool & Manchester Railway. The promoters of the railway were the Wigan coal proprietors who appointed C.B Vignoles as their engineer.

As we leave the station, the lines from Wigan Wallgate Station on the left, rise from the cutting under Wallgate and join our lines before diverging to leave again on the left as the lines head for Manchester via Hindley and Atherton. We pass over the main line of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal as it heads up the twenty three locks from the centre of Wigan to the top lock at Aspull.

The Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway, Wigan Wallgate avoiding line, used to pass over the main line at this point. With the remains of the Crow Orchard colliery to be seen to the left, we pass the Springs Branch also on the left. This was opened on 31<sup>st</sup> October 1838, as a colliery branch, it is now a locomotive engine shed though it is less used than in previous days.

At Springs Branch Junction No 1, a line leaves to the left. This is the former London & North Western Railway route from Wigan to Manchester via Platt Bridge, Hindley Green, Howe Bridge and Tyldesley and then onto the Liverpool & Manchester Railway at Eccles. This line now only leads to the former Bickershaw colliery, the colliery being closed after the coal strike in the 1980's.

Opposite the engine shed, the site of the Moss Side Ironworks and Moss Colliery can be seen to the right. Here the train passes Springs Branch Junction No 2, where the former Lancashire Union Railway takes its route to Liverpool via St Helens.

Now the old goods lines from the left head under our tracks to emerge on the right and enter Bamfurlong Sidings. This was the site of the southern junction of the Whelley or Wigan avoiding route from Standish. The train next crosses the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, Leigh branch, on its way from Wigan to Leigh, and the junction with the Leigh branch of the Bridgewater Canal. We then pass the site of the former **Bamfurlong Station** and the nearby Bamfurlong colliery on the right.

On the right, we reach Haydock junction which opened in 1968 to enable the oil terminal on the former Great Central line to St Helens to be served by the main line. This was connected to the Cheshire Lines Committee lines which opened on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1900. This connection allowed the old line from Lowton, that also served Wigan, to be closed. The junction and line is now only open to Haydock Park and used on special occasions.

As we pass the site of the former **Golborne Station**, the line veers to the right as we reach Golborne junction, the original line leaving to the left towards Parkside junction and the Liverpool & Manchester Railway. The original line, which acts as a diversion route when our route is undergoing repairs, is electrified as is the Liverpool & Manchester Railway from Parkside junction to Earlestown junction and thence down the Warrington & Newton Railway to Winwick junction.

Our route from Golborne junction to Winwick junction was built as a cut-off by the Grand Junction Railway to avoid the above mentioned original route and was opened on 1st August 1864. We then pass under the M6 motorway and enter a stone faced cutting over which runs the electrified section of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway. On the left are the remains of the last pit in Lancashire, namely Parkside colliery now flattened, the colliery being formerly served by a siding off the Liverpool & Manchester Railway.

As we head towards Winwick junction, the original line of the Warrington & Newton Railway which opened on July 25<sup>th</sup>, 1831, trails in from the right. The line was engineered by



Robert Stephenson and was worked, at first, by three Stephenson built locomotives, named Warrington, Newton and Vulcan. The factory complex in the triangle between the lines was the site of the Vulcan foundry.

As we head south towards Warrington, we can see the remains of the St Helens Canal on the right with many of the locks being buried to enable eventual restoration to be achieved easily in the future. After passing under the M62 motorway bridge, the line veers to the right as we join the Grand Junction lines towards Bank Quay. The original line, however, heads straight into the Dallam Lane terminus of Warrington & Newton Railway. This was used for passengers until 1840 when it became the goods station.

We then pass under the main line of the Cheshire Lines Committee from Liverpool Central to Manchester Central, via Garston, Widnes, Warrington and Irlam. This opened through the present Warrington Central station in 1873. The station was later by-passed by a station avoiding line, which passed over our line approximately where the Dallam Lane line leaves the present main line, though all remaining signs have disappeared under the new development in that area.

As we reach the outskirts of Warrington Bank Quay station, the Lever sidings can be seen on the right. The station was used for passengers from 4<sup>th</sup> July 1837, when the Grand Junction Railway opened their line to Crewe and thence to Birmingham. A completely rebuilt station was opened by the London & North Western Railway on 16<sup>th</sup> November 1868.

When you leave the train, please note that under the platforms, there is the site of the Bank Quay Station, Lower Level, which served the Warrington & Stockport Railway opened in 1853. However, the line is now only open from Latchford to Widnes, the passenger services to Broadheath near Altrincham being stopped from 1962.

**PETER HOUGHTON.**



**Chorley Guardian and Leyland Hundred Advertiser**  
**18<sup>th</sup> February 1944.**

### **LEYLAND JOTTINGS 'A SWELL TOWN'**

A U.S. Serviceman who recently visited the Catholic Women's League Canteen at the Cross, wrote in the visitors book, '*Leyland is a swell town with swell people*'.

Another U.S. Serviceman who called at the

Canteen, told Father Lightbound, the Chaplain, that he lived in New York and that he found Leyland a little on the quiet side compared with New York.

**Thanks to Bill Waring for this and other snippets from the above Newspaper.**

## MARY ASHURST 1920 – 1997

Both the town and our society have lost a good friend and advocate with the death of Mrs Mary Ashurst. A lady with impeccable Leyland credentials, she was throughout her life a supporter of local charities and good causes of all kinds. Her grandfather was coachman to John Stanning at the Broadfield bleachworks, and before the Great War the firm sent her father to learn how to drive motor vehicles. He duly became one of the first motorists in the district, and succeeded his father as chauffeur to the Stannings. After the war he briefly ran a taxi business, but shortly after he took up the post of chauffeur to the Leyland and Birmingham Rubber Company.

Mary was born at number 69 Towngate in 1920. Educated at Fox Lane school and Balshaw's Grammar School, she began work at the rubber company in 1935. From the Cloth Room she took classes in shorthand and typing and progressed to the Export Department. The company had important markets in Germany and Spain, and further courses in these languages followed at the Harris Technical College. Mary had a particular aptitude with numbers, and worked for many years in the firm's laboratory as a comptometer operator, calculating formulas. Here she would usually check the machine by working the calculations out in her head. Working throughout the war she had amassed some 43 years of service to the L & B and BTR by her retirement in 1978. Accordingly her knowledge of the history of the company was unsurpassed.

A prominent member of the Congregational and United Reformed Church, Mary was a Primary Superintendent of the Sunday School, and the Guide Captain for 27 years. In all she gave some 30 years of service to the Brownie and Guide movements in the town, and always took a close interest in the welfare of young people. She served as a Deacon of the Congregational Church and as an Elder of the United Reformed Church, and was for many years a member of the choir. In 1953 she married Harry Ashurst, a painter and decorator by trade, but latterly the official photographer to Norweb. Mr and Mrs Ashurst thus became well known for their community work of all kinds. They were early members of Leyland Historical Society, and for many years Vice Presidents of the society, rarely missing a meeting.

Keen travellers, they visited many of the Mediterranean lands, as well as Switzerland, Norway and Canada. The couple have been long term season ticket holders at Leyland Cricket Club, whilst from her father Harry Hunter, Mary had inherited a close interest in the events in Deepdale Road. Indeed she was something of an expert when it came to interpreting the often strange goings-on in that place.

From the late 1970s Mary was a prominent helper at the Museum, attending of the last Thursday of each month with Jessie Lawrenson. The pair had never been known to miss. In recent years her activities have been made more difficult, but she refused to allow herself to be restricted in any way. Prior to her death (which followed a very short illness) a series of knee operations had proven successful and she was once again becoming increasingly mobile with hopes of a full recovery. With her death the community, and indeed Leyland based ventures of all kinds, have lost a tireless worker, and many of us in the society have lost a good friend.

**DAVID HUNT.**

# **Leyland Historical Society**

## **Programme 1997 – 98**

Meetings held at Prospect House, Sandy Lane, Leyland. At 7.30pm

### **1997**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> September<br>"Walton le Dale Roman Dig"<br>Lancaster University  | Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> February<br>"Our Railway Heritage"<br>Mr G Biddle                   |
| Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> October<br>"Just The Job"<br>Mikron Theatre Company              | Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> March<br>"Whittle le Woods & Clayton le Woods II"<br>Mr K Hodkinson |
| Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> November<br>"Waterways to Castlefield"<br>Mr J Fletcher          | Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> April<br>"Bess of Hardwicke"<br>Mrs I Jones                         |
| Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> December<br>"History of Gas – Dolphinholme 1811"<br>Mr S Bennett | Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> May<br>"The Co Op Movement"<br>Mr I Williamson                     |
|   | Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> June<br>"Lancashire 300 years ago"<br>Dr A Crosby                   |

### **1998**

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|---|--|
| Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> January<br>"A Historical Mystery"<br>Dr D Hunt | Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> July<br>A G M & "The Life of Frank Randle"<br>Mr K Clifford |
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