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C O N T E N T S

<u>Page No.</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Contributor</u>
1.	Editorial	
2.	Tribute to Bert Morris	F. Cumpstey
3.	Leyland Hundred - an evocation	Mrs. N. Markland
4.	Local History and the Library	R. Rushton
5.	Doors	P.F. Barrow
8.	Whittaker Lane, Leyland	W.E. Waring
16.	Thatching in Lancashire	S.E. Robson
19.	Bamber Bridge Weavers and Farington Knobsticks	D. Hunt
23.	Lower Farington Hall and Mill	G. Thomas
24.	Notes and Queries	Editor
26.	Leyland Mill	G.L. Bolton
<u>Meeting Reports</u>		
31.	Blackpool Gipsies	Mrs. E. Chaloner
33.	Lancashire Riots	A.W. Seguss
35.	Our North West Heritage	Bobby Willis
35.	Federation Meeting	G.L. Bolton

LEYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

(Founded 1968)

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Tel. No. 21268

AIMS

To promote an interest in History generally and 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	£4.50 per annum
Adult Members	£3.50 per annum
School Members	£0.20 per annum
Casual Visitors	£0.50 per meeting

A MEMBER OF THE FEDERATION OF HISTORICAL SOCIETIES IN
THE COUNTY PALATINE OF LANCASTER

AND

THE HISTORIC SOCIETY OF LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE.

EDITORIAL

In the last issue of the "Lairland Chronicle" my predecessor had the sad task of reporting the death of Edgar Mason. This time, unhappily, I have to record the passing of our President, Bert Morris. A tribute to him appears on a later page.

The season 1982/83 is now well under way and has been marked by several changes in the officers of the Society. Mr. A.W. Seguss and Mrs. E. Chaloner have taken up the responsibilities of Chairman and Secretary respectively. Mr. N. Iddon, Vice-Chairman and life member has kindly agreed to act as President.

Present economic conditions are making it difficult for many societies such as ours and I can only endorse our Chairman's appeal for additional members. Membership of the Society is an excellent means of listening to and participating in lectures and discussions about the history of Leyland and its environs.

For my own part I hope to maintain the high standards of the "Lairland Chronicle" which has in the past received favourable comment, some of it from recognised academic authorities; but I must emphasise that it is the efforts of you the members which will ensure the frequency and quality of future issues. Longer articles or short notes and queries are all equally welcome and preference will be given to those of local interest.

It is perhaps not generally realised that there is a large amount of local historical information available in Leyland Library on almost all aspects of the subject. In this issue, therefore, I have asked the Librarian of South Ribbles Leyland Library to outline the material available.

G.L. Bolton

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TRIBUTE TO BERT MORRIS

It was very sad to hear of the death of our former president, Bert Morris, even though he had been ill and suffering for some time, and I feel that it is a serious loss both personally and also to our Society.

I had known Mr. Morris about thirteen or fourteen years - in fact ever since the Leyland Historical Society was formed - and during that time he was always one of the stalwarts of the Society, ready at all times to pass on his wide knowledge and discuss old Leyland with anybody and everybody.

I am glad that he was able to achieve his ambition and produce his book "Memories of Old Leyland" and this will be a sort of monument to him, reminding us of him whenever we browse through it.

Always, one found him to be kind and considerate in his dealings with everyone - he was in fact a gentleman in the true sense of the word.

In conclusion, I am sure that all members of the Society will join me in extending sincere sympathy to his family.

F. Cumpstey

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LEYLAND HUNDRED

From Martin Mere to Gunnolvesmores,
The Leyland Hundred ran;
A little heart-shaped plot of land,
Beloved by many a man.

From sea-shore, sand-hills, peaty moss,
The Leyland Hundred ran;
Through fields, some resting fallow,
Some with crops for beast and man.

To lonely moorlands climbing
High heavenwards to the sky,
Where curlews nest in Spring-time
And singing sky-larks fly.

There River Lostock winds its way,
From Denham to the plain,
And meets with Bryning Brook and Bow,
And Wymott and soft rain.

Here men have lived for centuries,
As ancient relics show:
Dug-out canoes, bone fish-hooks too,
Stone hammer and stone hoe.

The Britons and the Angles,
Vikings from North and West,
And Normen, all have found a home,
A place to toil and rest.

The villages, the farms and fields,
Have names that tell their tale;
From Charnock, Runshaw, Clayton-le-Woods,
Croston, and Walton-le-Dale.

Leyland is named in Domesday Book,
Recorded long ago;
Now its name is read on buses
And trucks where'er we go.

From Martin Mere to Gunnolvesmores,
The Leyland Hundred ran;
From marsh to hills, a happy place,
Still loved by many a man.

Mrs.N. Markland

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- 3 -

LOCAL HISTORY AND THE LIBRARY

South Ribble District Libraries has operated a Local History Centre in Leyland Library since 1977. It has three aims:-

To provide material both for the serious student of local history and for the casual enquirer.

To encourage the study of South Ribble among the schools of the area.

To provide a focal point for the collection of material about the district, thus acting in a conserving role.

Unfortunately, very little information on the area has been published in book form. Because there is quite a lot of interest in local history, the library has issued some publications to help satisfy demand, e.g. A Look at Leyland, A Look at Hoole, etc.

For a more detailed approach, however, some of the major works available for reference include the Victoria History of the County of Lancaster in 8 volumes, various town histories, e.g. Walton-le-Dale, Samlesbury, Leyland, Preston and histories of topics such as railways, industry, etc. There are also council Minutes, pamphlets, periodicals, theses, etc., in stock.

A major recent acquisition is the Leyland Parish Magazine 1883-1980, donated by the Rev. Sawle, for which there is also a name and subject index. In the first issue of the magazine, T. Rigby Baldwin writes that:-

"Every information will be given concerning the church and her services of every kind; the choir; the belfry..... the sewing classes; provident societies; sick and burial clubs; with the advisability of establishing a coffee tavern in the cause of temperance".

An important source of local information is the Leyland Guardian, which is kept on microfilm from 1945 onwards. This is valuable for reports on town planning, politics, company histories, biographical information, events, etc. The problem with newspapers, of course, is in finding the information wanted. We have recently started indexing the Guardian, but it is going to take a long time to complete.

There is also a file of newspaper cuttings taken over the past few years in which information can be more readily found.

Research into family history is becoming more popular, and many people make use of the census returns which are available from 1841 to 1881. They list all the people resident at each address, their age, occupation and place of birth. Also useful are the printed parish registers which are in stock, e.g. Leyland 1653-1710, Penwortham 1608-1753, and Walton-le-Dale 1609-1812.

Maps are fascinating to study, and show how land usage has changed, and how towns and villages have grown. There is a collection of maps for the district, of various dates, at the scales of 6" to 1 mile, 25" to 1 mile, and 50" to 1 mile.

The Library has a growing photographic collection which includes aerial views, street scenes, individual buildings, industry and vehicles.

The Centre can be used at any time, and the staff will be pleased to help with any enquiries. There are many gaps in our knowledge of the area, however, and the Library would welcome donations of material in any form: photographs, pamphlets, information about societies, events, etc.

R. Rushton A.L.A.

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DOORS

The old Lancashire admonition to "Put wood i't' hole" meaning to close the door, may not be too far from the historical truth, like many dialect terms. The original doors to peasant dwellings may well have been little more than a large board or piece of wood unconnected to the structure of the hut and simply wedged into position at night to keep out the weather, unwelcome intruders and wild animals.

In the domestic dwellings of the ordinary people up until Tudor and possibly Jacobean or even later in some remote areas, the inside of the usual one room dwellings was lit only by the open doorway, or the fire - originally in the centre of the floor, as windows were too expensive. Probably because of the lack of light together with smoke from the fire, many household tasks must have been carried out on the outside, weather permitting, or actually on the threshold of the doorway.

There are four major items involved in considering or in the study of doors:-

- (1) The door itself - its size and constructions.
- (2) The method of hanging or fixing to the opening.
- (3) The frame or structure of the opening itself.
- (4) The ironmongery to the door i.e., the locks, bolts, bars, hinges and handles.

It is not the intention, even if it were possible, given the limited space available, to describe and illustrate a complete history of these elements but simply to outline them in the hope of stimulating the readers interest, so that he, or she, may be encouraged to look at these features in the future with a better understanding and appreciation.

First the door - its dimensions related to the size of human beings have varied little over the centuries. There are, however, some odd occasional variations in width for no obvious reason. It may be that greater widths than usual are related to the past requirements of cattle in addition to human beings.

The earliest doors were simple vertical planks fixed to horizontal battens at the rear. Iron nails were far too expensive and therefore here as elsewhere oaken dowels or trenails were employed with the ends left projecting. The corners were chamfered by the carpenter and this pattern was followed much later on by the nailmaker and can still be obtained although purely decorative now. Doors similar to these can still be seen in a few old houses and churches.

Gradually doors became lighter and panelled doors became universal and more sophisticated. Have a look around Winckley Square and Ribblesdale Place in Preston for some fine examples of mid and late 19th century joinery.

"Hanging" a door means securing it to the structure so that it swings. Early doors were "Harr-hung", that is, large dowels formed out of the end plank at the top and bottom pivoted in the threshold and lintel. This method survived until the 19th century in some areas although only in barns and similar buildings and can still be seen occasionally. Varying types of the 'band and gudgeon' evolved and modern variations are still common. The gudgeon or hook can be fixed to stonework or timber while the band was often beautifully scrolled and decorated by the blacksmith. As doors became lighter in weight, the modern type of concealed 'butt' hinge developed.

The original door frame was simply sides and top of the opening in the structure whether of timber or stone. Much embellishment was devoted to this feature as a status symbol and making certain that everyone knew where the front door was situated.

Modern design at times seems determined to make it as difficult as possible for you to find your way in. Look out for such things as the so called 'Pennine Lintel', the heavy stone lintel decorated and sometimes dated and everyone different.

The history of ironmongery, especially locks and bolts, would fill a book and even to touch on them would make this article too long. One could do worse than start by examining the lock to the door to Croston Parish Church. If it is still as last seen, the case appears to be made out of part of a tree trunk.

F.F. Barrow

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WHITTAKER LANE - A NAME FROM LEYLAND'S PAST

During the early part of this century several of Leyland's roads were renamed. Older inhabitants will recall Bradshaw Street becoming part of Spring Gardens, Water Street and Union Street becoming parts of Towngate and Fox Lane respectively; more recently Back Lane became Langdale Road. As time passes, these names will go out of living memory and will live on only in deeds, maps, and articles in the library and record office.

Whittaker Lane is just such a name: known by that name for several hundred years until circumstances changed the lane entirely and, perhaps understandably, changed the name also.

LOCATION OF WHITTAKER LANE

In 1618 we have the first instance of the name in a Farington document of Court Orders (DDF158 - Ref.1) concerning the upkeep of roads in the Township of Leyland:- "The way from Richard Beardsworth's house to Whittaker Yeatte and from William Park's house to the same way and from the Town of Leyland to the Fox Lane Yeatte, to be amended and kept in sufficient repairs by...." (Note 1). This introduction is followed by twenty two names, the people responsible for the upkeep of the three mentioned ways.

Nothing in this deed helps us pinpoint the location of the lane, nor does the next document (DDF2061) where the name occurs, undated but c.1725, again concerning the upkeep of roads.

However, in 1729 we find a Bond (DDF2063) between George Farington, Esquire, of Shaw Hall and Christopher Sudell, vicar of Leyland, together with seventeen other people for "the repair of Whittaker's Lane from Leyland Town to Shaw Hall gates". Leyland Town being a common expression from the 16th to the 19th century for the area around the Cross we see immediately that we have the old name for Worden Lane.

HOW THE LANE GOT ITS NAME

Since the name Whittaker has no local significance - it does not appear in the printed register of the Parish of Leyland as surname or placename - why was it so named?

The Tithe Map of 1838 (Ref.2) confirms the name of the lane but that is all; the Farington Survey map of 1725 (DDF81) makes no mention of the name but does provide a clue: a large portion of the land lying to the west of the southern end of the lane is marked "Poors Land".

The Osbaldeston charity report of 1826 (Ref.3) provides the answer.

John Osbaldeston, of Strand-on-the-Green, in the parish of Chiswick, having left £500 to the poor of the Township of Leyland by his will of the 26th of November 1665, the trustees in 1691 bought property and land in Leyland which included three fields - the Nearmost Whitacre, the Middlemost Whitacre, and the Furthermost Whitacre.

Comparing the acreages given in the report with the Tithe Map we find the three fields called Plantation, Field near Plantation, and Field opposite the Lodge, correspond exactly with the three Whitacre fields, and also with the area marked "Poors Land" on the map of 1725.

So the lane took its name from the fields that bordered almost half its length, but the question of the name remains - why were the fields so named?

ORIGIN OF THE NAME

Checking Whittaker, Burnley parish in Ekwalls "Lancashire place names" we find the meaning given as 'White Acre' from the elements O.E. HWIT (white) and O.E. AECER (acre meaning cultivated field).

John Field in his "English Field Names" confirms the above but elaborates on "White" in this context as "being land with a white surface". Just what is meant by that is hard to say; certain weather conditions, e.g. strong winds on freshly ploughed land, can cause a temporary whitening effect, but nothing in the general appearance of the area suggests any reason for the name White. Did the name, perhaps, come from a dramatic "White Harvest" (i.e. a late harvest, when the ground is white of a morning with hoarfrost)?

Another explanation occurs in "The Old Straight Track" (Alfred Watkins P.92, 161). Watkins maintains that place-names including Red, Black and White seldom get their name from local colouring: he states particularly that "the Whiteacres were not called from the whiteness of the ground". In the case of places containing the name "white" his theory is that such places lie on ancient salt tracks.

The true origin of the name must remain a matter for surmise.

WHITTAKER LANE IN HISTORY 1569 - 1844

1569 In a Farington Survey book of 1569 (DDF52) we are given details of three dwellings and landholdings on the west side of the lane from the Cross to the brook by what is now the park gates.

Starting from the Cross where Occleshaw House now stands, we find "one tenement in the holding of John Worden and late parcel of the lands purchased of Thomas London", the house is described as "covered with thatch and containing three bays" and the barn "also covered with thatch and containing two bays". The northern boundary of the land belonging to this house (A on map) is described as "upon the north side it adjoineth to the highway that leadeth from the town of Leyland to the Fox Lane" (the earliest record of the name Fox Lane so far seen). The above land is described as being "a dowl in the lower town field of Leyland". John Worden also held the Clay acre (F on map).

In describing the southern boundary of plot A, we are told it adjoins the Farm Croft "a parcel of the inheritance of Sir Edmund Huddleston, knight", and in the holding of Thomas Charnock (B on map). (This item is of great interest as it appears to show that the Charnocks were not at Old Hall at this date - 1569. A Huddleston document of 1570, now in the Farington collection (DDF412) seems to confirm this: it describes Thomas Charnock as living at the Upper House and his mother Elizabeth, widow of William Charnock, at the Lower House. The field names belonging to the Lower House place it where Lower House Farm used to stand at the bottom end of Fox Lane, so the connotation of "Upper" and "Lower" is easy to see). Thomas Charnock also held plot D.

The third dwelling described is that of the widow of Alexander Clayton "one fire house of four bays, a barn of three bays, and an oven house of three bays". The boundaries of the holding are outlined so precisely that we can identify it with certainty as plot C on the map. Widow Clayton also held plot E the Slack Meadow half acre.

1725 On the Farington Survey map of 1725, we find the occupation of the three plots as follows:-

A - Ellen Harrison, B - Roger Lyne, and C - Mr. Preston, with the general shape of the plots the same as in 1569.

Obviously there had been no great development except possibly the rebuilding of what had been John Worden's house as an intriguing note is made alongside Ellen Harrison's house "NB that about 9 inches of ye south end of E. Harrison's house stands on Mr. Preston's land by consent of Mr. Preston". This seems to imply that Mr. Preston had by this time bought plot B from the Faringtons.

1729 In 1729 in the list of people responsible for the upkeep of Whittaker Lane we find Richard Clayton, clerk, - was he a descendant of the widow Clayton of 1569? Christopher Preston, gentleman, as in 1725; and most interestingly, John Occleshaw.

The name Occleshaw, which still survives in the name Occleshaw House (plot A) has long been a puzzle and has generally been accepted as an old Leyland name. However, in the many Farington rentals examined prior to this date, the name has never been noted, but the name has been found in the printed Leyland Parish register (Ref.4) showing that there were families of that name in the 17th century in both Euxton and Eccleston. We know from the "History of the Faringtons" (Susan Maria Farington) that Margaret, widow of George Farington (1697-1742), "lived in her long widowhood in the sufficiently good house 'Occleshaw' in Leyland and died in 1771, aged 70". So we see that John Occleshaw's occupation of the house was some 17 years at the most, and yet, it is his name that survives to this day.

Later, in the 18th century, saw rebuilding on plot B. Pollard Hall, now demolished, stood between Occleshaw House and Leyland House which still stands. (A photograph of Worden Lane - "The Green Pastures", G. Birtill p.6 - shows the unusual alignment of these three properties). On the larger plot C a rebuilding occurred in the early 19th century with the building later known as Rose Cottage, long the home of John Jump, auctioneer, in the years before and after the Second World War. This cottage is now demolished and four detached houses stand on the site.

In all the preceding, no mention has been made of the east side of Whittaker Lane; the northernmost part was not Farington land so does not appear in the documents examined and the southern part shows no dwellings at all on the map of 1725.

The first building on this side of the lane, standing behind the present Parish Hall, is the Old Vicarage, the age of which appears never to have been established but has been estimated as early 18th century: quite possibly a re-building of an earlier edifice.

Close by, and possibly on the site of a much older house, is Clough House, recently modernised to incorporate the cottage which stands behind it. A cottage built onto the southern wall of Clough House made the lane very narrow at this point and was pulled down when the lane was widened shortly after the Second World War. (A photograph of this cottage appears in 'Green Pastures' p.8). The exact age of this cluster of three buildings is not known, but in the "roads" document of 1618 Thomas Clough is one of the names of those responsible for upkeep as is John Clough in 1729.

Next we come to "The Laurels" presently the home of Dr. Fotheringham. Not shown on the Tithe Map of 1838, its appearance suggests it was built shortly after this date. The garden of this house is interesting as it appears not to have altered at all in shape or size since 1725 when it was known as the "Long Croft". An interesting double hedge borders the lane and this property.

Finally, almost at the southern end of Whittaker Lane was the Lodge: believed to have been built originally as a Dower House in the late 18th century, it had a succession of occupants through the 19th and early 20th century before being pulled down in the 1930's - just one of a long list of interesting old houses pulled down in Leyland in the last hundred years. (A photograph of the Lodge appears in "Memories of Old Leyland" - B. Morris - as also do photographs of Occleshaw House, Leyland House, and the Old Vicarage).

1841 We now come to the end of Whittaker Lane. As already shown the name appeared on the Tithe Map of 1838 yet three years later in the Census of 1841 (Ref.5) the name had gone: the top part of the lane being included with Main Street - a fore runner of the present name Towngate - and the lower part being referred to as Lodge Lane.

1844 Three years later, again, we come to the final chapter of Whittaker Lane and the event that changed it completely. By a deed of the 19th of January 1844, the trustees of the Osbaldeston's Charity made an exchange of land with James Nowell Farington, esquire, of Worden Hall: the three Whitacre fields and Clough field - a total of almost 18 acres - for six pieces of land totalling 21 acres. By this exchange the Faringtons paved the way for the imparkation of Worden thereby cutting off the southern half of the old lane entirely, necessitating a new road from the park gates to Holt Brow: the whole character of the lane was changed.

CONCLUSION

In many ways this was the end of an era. For several hundred years the Whitacre fields had been a part of the lower fields of Leyland; we have traced them and Whittaker Lane back to 1569 - just how far back the name goes we do not know but after 1844 both passed into history.

But as one era ends another begins; sadly however the time of the Faringtons at the newly made Worden Park lasted little over a century. The beginning of the end came during the Second World War; in April 1941 Worden Hall was so badly damaged by fire that the Farington family had to move out never to return.

Henry Nowell, the last "Squire" Farington to live at Worden, died on the 31st of May 1947 and with his heir deciding not to reside at the hall - the passing years had put the building beyond economic repair - the hall and park were bought in November 1950 by the Urban District Council of the day.

The official opening of the park by the Chairman of the Council - Frank Marsden - took place on the 18th of June 1951 as part of the Festival of Britain celebrations - the wheel had come full circle: the Whitacre fields closed to the public just over one hundred years before, returned once again to the people of Leyland but the old lane had gone for ever.

POSTSCRIPT

Walking in the park, it was realised that the southernmost end of Whittaker Lane, approximately 100 yards, still survives as part of the road from the Worden Lane car park to the Hall; the rest, from the old Lodge to the park gates

is now part of the grassland of the park. However, at certain times of the year it is possible to see the line of the old lane. Standing by the remains of the entrance to the old Dower House or Lodge, and looking towards the Lodge by the park gates, the edges of the old lane, being slightly depressed, are usually noticeable. Recently, after several days frost, leaves which had gathered in the depressions, marked the line of the lane with great clarity: a feature of such antiquity is hard to eradicate entirely.

Note 1. 'Yeatte' here meaning gate which in this period was used synonymously with Lane: use of the expression 'Fox Lane Yeatte' seems to imply that in this case there was a gate.

Ref. 1. All DDF references in the text are from the Farington Papers in the Lancs. Record Office, Preston.

Ref. 2. Leyland Tithe Map of 1838. Lancs. R.O., DRB 1/125.

Ref. 3. Endowed Charities (County of Lancs.). HMSO, 1900.

Ref. 4. Leyland Register. Record Society of Lancs. and Cheshire. Vol. 21, 1980.

Ref. 5. Census Return of 1841. Microfilm at Leyland Library.

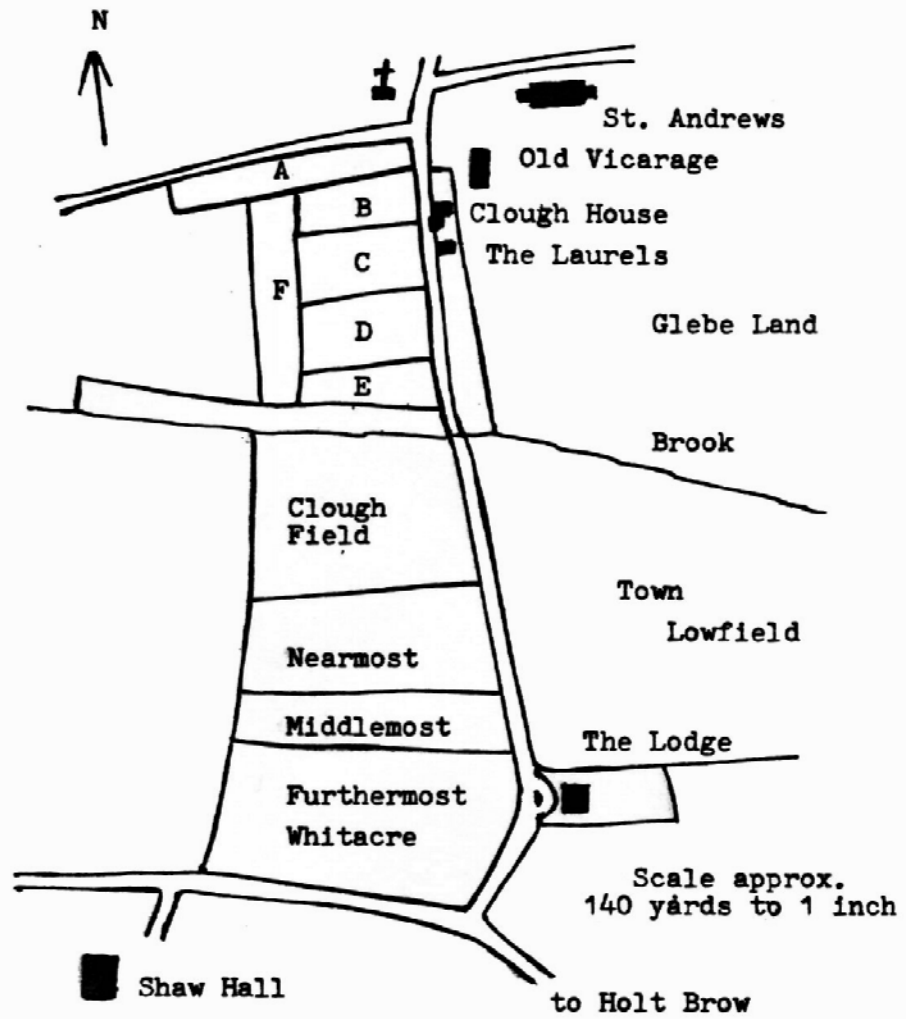
Acknowledgements:-

Thanks are due to Mr. B.L. Bolton and Mr. P. Barrow for their assistance with the Tithe Map of 1838, and the Farington Survey Map of 1725 respectively; and to Mr. N. Iddon for his reminiscences of the Dower House, Worden Park. Also to the staffs of the Record Office, Preston and Leyland Library for their kind assistance.

W.E. Waring

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WHITTAKER LANE



Composite Map of the period 1569 - 1844
from the sources quoted in the text.

THATCHING IN LANCASHIRE

Thatch is probably the oldest surviving building craft still practised today. The derivation is from the Old English word "thaec" meaning the outer covering of a roof, and as so many buildings were covered in this way, the word thatch acquired the restricted meaning in use today.

It may seem strange that thatch was once a widespread roof covering in the North West which is notorious for its wet climate, but the availability of local materials was by far the most important factor in deciding building types at a time when transport was a greater problem than it is today. Descriptive records of cottages and farms up to the middle of the last century show there were considerable numbers of thatched roofs, although it is likely that the tradition was in decline from about the middle of the eighteenth century. Wheat straw was available in large quantities, since we can be certain that the quantity of arable land was greater in this area before the end of the eighteenth century when industrialisation was beginning to make its mark.

Thatch was always the domain of the poorer cottager and farmer whereas at the same time in, for instance, the seventeenth century, the Hall or Manor House would be roofed in stone flags. Clay tiles it appears were never a feature of the Lancashire vernacular despite the availability of clay, possibly because skill in this process developed mainly in the south and east of the country. However, thatching had many advantages apart from its availability, most important being its comparative lightness, meaning that savings could be made in the roof structure by using less substantial timbers. Nevertheless, it was weatherproof and no other roof covering keeps a room cool in summer and warm in winter due to the insulating properties of the air filled straw.

In order to protect against the consistently wet weather, a peculiar process of wet thatching was developed in the Fylde and the central part of Lancashire which is well documented as being an active tradition at least three hundred years old.

The thatcher selected the straw, frequently whilst still growing, having thin stalks which required to be growing on a soil that had not been heavily manured.

The straw was cut, bound into "bottles" threshed with a flail, care being taken not to damage the reed. The bottles of threshed straw were carted to the side of a pit near to the house to be thatched and piled up in a stack or "dess", about five feet high, all the bottles laid tight together with heads at one end, butts at the other. As each layer was finished it was given a watering or "degging" with water from the pit.

The dess when completed was allowed to stand for about a week, degging each day with water from the pit (which presumably returned after soaking through the dess). At the end of this period heavy planks were laid across the top and the thatcher pulled out handfuls of straw from the butts end which would be stripped clean by being dragged through the heavy pile.

A new dess would then be made of the clean straw and this would be degged with water every day for two or three months until the straw was almost black and very slippery. In this condition it was fit for use.

When placed on the roof in armfulls the straw held together because of its sticky condition. Starting at the eaves on the right hand side, the straw was laid in layers to give a finished thickness of about twelve inches. Spars of split hazel or willow were driven into the thatch in an upward direction to allow for drainage to hold the thatch together. Lengths of round hazel called sways were laid horizontally across the thatch course or gang and secured to the roof timbers with iron hooks. Further courses of straw were laid, covering the sways of the course below. At the ridge the straw was secured and made weathertight with a mixture of puddled clay and straw. This was also used to seal the thatch at the chimney stack and against the gable walls.

Thatching was superseded by other materials as the need for a more durable construction became desirable and straw became less readily available. As people became wealthier and transport improved, the choice of durable materials became greater. The first to come into this area to supplement the local sandstone flags were the grey-green slates of north Lancashire and Westmoreland during the eighteenth century and some of these can still be found on local buildings. Once the railways made their appearance in the nineteenth century a reliable supply of blue Welsh slate meant that this became the dominant roofing material.

Today comparatively few sound thatched buildings are to be found in the area around Leyland, although a public house in Bamber Bridge and a cottage in Gregson Lane do come to mind as modern representations of the old tradition. In fact many thatched buildings can be identified by the appearance of a substantial volume of roof with wide overhanging eaves, frequently covered with corrugated iron. There are many examples in this condition, for instance, Pickerings Farm at the corner of Browndge Road and Todd Lane in Bamber Bridge, Malt Kiln Farm, off Slater Lane near Seven Stars, and several at Moss Lane, Bretherton, between Leyland and Carr House. Other formerly thatched roofs can be recognised by the steep roof pitch of 55 to 60 degrees which was necessary to throw water off the roof as quickly as possible since rain should never penetrate more than an inch into the thatch.

Thatching skills still survive and there are over 600 thatchers registered with the Council for Small Industrial Rural Areas and many are booked solidly more than a year ahead. Suitable materials are rarer now since mechanical threshing breaks up the wheatstraw and straw length has decreased by breeding in favour of wheat yield. Suitable wheat is grown and threshed in the West Country specifically for thatching, but the commonest material chosen today is Norfolk Reed, and this can be recognised by its more manicured quill-like appearance compared with the shaggy and looser straw thatch. Reed can last 50 years but straw as short as 20 before replacement is necessary. The ridge is the weak point and may have to be renewed several times in the life of the thatch.

References:

The English Mediaeval House	Margaret Wood	Ferndale
Traditional Houses of the Fylde	Watson McClintock	University of Lancaster
Vernacular Building Conservation	Jack Bowyer	Architectural Press
The Craftsman: Thatching	Richard Filmer	Period House Vol.1, No.2

S.E. Robson

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BAMBER BRIDGE WEAVERS AND FARINGTON KNOBSTICKS

Though recent research has done much to clarify the central themes in the social history of nineteenth century Preston, the picture south of the Ribble is less clear. By 1840 Preston had been transformed from the "Beautiful town, built of brick, with neat streets and fine walks" noted by the Rev. Wm. MacRitchie in 1750, into one of the most important, manufacturing towns in the Kingdom, possessing all the attendant ills of overcrowding, poor public health and bad labour relations. In many respects the social history of Preston, up to say 1870, is the saga of how the Borough came to terms with the rapid development thrust upon it between 1790 and 1830. Similar processes may be inferred to have operated in Walton-le-Dale, Bamber Bridge and Leyland, though the emergence of the fully fledged cotton industry in these townships by the 1850's appears to have diverged in several ways from the pattern in Preston.

South of the Ribble the handloom industry appears to have developed very early, and to have been very widespread by the early 1800's. Comparatively large numbers of handloom weavers cottages have survived the town planners, (giving us a geographical indication of the dimensions of this trade) in Chorley, Feniscowles, Mellor, Hoghton, Higher Wheelton, Brindle, Leyland, Walton-le-Dale and Bamber Bridge. (1) The importance of the family unit in the old domestic system has frequently been commented upon nostalgically, obscuring the harshness of the reality, as Joseph Livesey recalled, "The Cellar where my uncle and grandfather worked held three looms, and so soon as I was able I was put to weaving; and for seven years I worked in the corner of that damp cellar, really unfit for any human being to work in... And to make it worse, the Ribble and Darwen sometimes overflowed their banks and inundated this and all the cellars adjoining". (2)

The privations and fierce independence of this lifestyle profoundly marked the subsequent emergence of the factory industry, and the inhabitants of South Ribble frequently proved at least as willing as their fellows in Preston to challenge authority. As J.E. King has recently commented, "Bamber Bridge was typical of the 'half civilised villages of the cotton districts' that so alarmed Middle Class observers from the South", indeed "No debt collector had ventured into one area of Bamber Bridge before 1848,

when an order was made for the seizure of goods belonging to two residents. Twice the bailiffs were driven out by a large crowd which informed them that 'no distress was ever made by "bums" in Club Street, nor ever shall except by force'. It took forty policemen armed with cutlasses to overcome their resistance". (3) W. Pilkington, a Methodist historian, concluded of the 'Briggers', "For the first three decades of the present century (1800/30), it was not safe to go out alone after dark. Though the people of this district were comparatively poor, and lived by working the treadles, and throwing the shuttle across the handloom, yet they excelled in drunkenness, fighting and profanity". (4) There appears to be little justification for suggesting that the denizens of the handloom weavers colonies in Walton, Hoghton or Leyland were any more receptive to civilising minions.

By 1850 the transformation of the home industry into the factory system appears to have been complete. The tendency for the satellite townships to go their own way often at odds with developments at the main social and industrial centre in Preston, persists however. It was largely due to the efforts of the 'rural' Guardians (i.e. non-Borough) that the introduction of a large workhouse was long obstructed in the Preston Poor Law Union. (5) This divergence has also been brought to light in a recent survey of the 17 week Preston lockout and strike of 1853/4. (6) Resisting the wage claims of the Weavers and Spinners, the Preston Masters Association closed their mills, locking the operatives out on Saturday, 15th October 1853. Relief donations collected from workers in those towns which had gained a 10% pay advance, enabling the unions to pay 7/- weekly to spinners, 4/- to weavers and 2/6d for cordroom hands, and so avoid their need to claim relief from the Preston Board of Guardians.

Labour unrest also extended to the surrounding area, though local owners appear to have been less enthusiastic to join the Preston Masters Association, perhaps due to the £5,000 bond they had to deposit to preclude a breaking of ranks. Many of them were owners of relatively small enterprises far removed from the concerns of Horrockses, Birleys and Swainsons, and must have been less able to withstand the financial cost of the lockout. (7) In January 1853, Richard Bashall at Walton conceded a 5% increase, though his workforce had asked for 10%. (8) Orrell's Mill in Bamber Bridge eventually left the Association and conceded the 10%. (9) Richard Ashworth also of Bamber Bridge likewise

refused to join the Association but locked his workforce out just the same. He appears to have diverged from the hard line pursued in Preston, for in November he agreed to pay his spinners and cord-room hands the 10% they sought, but nothing to the weavers who consequently stayed out. As a member of the board of Poor Law Guardians he argued that the workers had a right to poor relief whilst the mills were closed. When the mills re-opened in February 1854 the operatives refused to return to work on the terms offered by the owners, and the strike began. Ashworth then suggested that the 19 boys under the age of 13 then incumbent in the Walton Workhouse, "Might earn their living in the Spinning Mills". (10)

The strike south of the Ribble thus appears to follow a differing path from events in Preston, probably reflecting the economic factors noted. This was most marked at Bashall and Boardman's factory at Farington. This firm did not openly join the Masters Association but locked out their workforce in October 1853. (11) This was a sizeable concern as Charles Hardwick noted: "Cotton spinning was introduced a few years ago by Messrs. Bashall and Boardman, in consequence of which an entirely new village, of considerable extent, has sprung up a little to the north of the Leyland Railway Station... Farington, in conjunction with Leyland, promises to become, in a few years, a very populous locality". (12)

For some reason the workforce were excluded from trades union relief payments made at the other local mills, and were forced to apply to the Poor Law Guardians for help. (13) Late in October they asked to return to work, but the company perhaps by now a Member of the Masters Association and bound by the £5,000 bond, refused. (14) When the masters offered to re-open in December 1853 the 1,000 Farington workers desparately offered their services, leading to their bitter condemnation as 'knobsticks' by the remaining strikers who refused all such overtures. (15) The lockout continued. Farington hands found work at the Royal Sovereign Mill when it opened in January, despite intimidation. (16) In January 1854, the Board of Guardians passed a motion giving the Farington Workers Outdoor Relief without the Labour Test, because the bitter winter weather made the daily six mile journey to Preston difficult. (17) When the mills re-opened in February 1854 the Farington operatives gladly returned to work, further adding to their general unpopularity among the Preston strikers, of whom only one twentieth had returned to work, and who were not to be beaten until May 15th. (18)

The reasons for this exclusion from the Strike funds is unclear, but the Farington operatives do not appear to have been any less militant than anyone else, having struck for higher wages in 1849. (19) Indeed "In May 1838, Irish navvies working on the Preston to Wigan (railway) line at Farington picked a quarrel with the workers at a local cotton mill. The outcome was a pitched battle in which one man was shot dead and 40 others were wounded. Guns, pikes, forks and clubs were among the weapons used". (20)

In conclusion, the welcome analysis of events and processes in the social landscape of the large towns of nineteenth-century England, must not be allowed to obscure more localised responses. Echoes of the former handloom weavers communities persisted long in the townships south of the Ribble.

David Huht M.A., F.S.A., (Scot.)

FOOTNOTES

1. J.G. Timmins - "Handloom Weavers' Cottages in Central Lancashire" (1977) pages 25, 32, 33, 35, 36, 40, 49, 52 and p. 60-74.
2. J.G. Timmins (1977) P.12 quoted from the 'Staunch Teetotaller' January 1868, No. 13, P.197
3. J.E. King (1981) - "Richard Marsden and the Preston Chartists 1837-1848"
4. J.E. King (1981) P.1 Quoted from W. Pilkington 'The Makers of Wesleyan Methodism in Preston' (1890) P.110
5. D.A. Hunt (1978) "Poor Law, Private Charity and Self Help: Aspects of the relief of the Poor during the Lancashire Cotton Famine 1861-65" Unpublished dissertation (Dundee University) Lancashire Record Office Library.
6. H.I. Dutton and J.E. King - "Ten Per Cent and No Surrender: the Preston Strike 1853-4" (1981) In future referred to as D & K. For the main details of the strike see P.27-45, P94-115, 177-194.
7. D & K P.97, P.227 8. D & K P.28 9. D & K P.114
10. D & K P.144, 146, 97 11. D & K P.90
12. C. Hardwick (1854) - A History of the Borough of Preston P.588-9
13. D & K P.101 14. D & K. P.101 15. D & K P.107 -
 "According to a local legend this term originated during a dispute of nearby Catterall, when an old man said of a group of blacklegs "They are no better than my knobstick, and I can make as good men as them out of it" " B & K P.231

16. D & K P.109 17. D & K P.145
18. D & K P.114 19. D & K P.217
20. B.27 The First Industrial Society - Author ?
 Aspin (C) (1969) The First Industrial Society B.27

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LOWER FARINGTON HALL AND MILL

The site of Lower Farington Hall lies at the bottom of Hall Lane, Leyland. There are traces of a moat. I discovered this on a recent walk. By following Hall Lane until it crosses Mill Lane, then passing through a large wire mesh gate, the remains of the hall can be seen. Only the large stone slabs on which the brick walls were built remain. The orchard was still there, with ripening fruit hanging from the branches. Just over a high wire fence to the rear was the test track, built originally with the Ministry of Supply (M.O.S.) Tank Factory.

From the 1832 Tithe Map of Farington a fascinating insight of the area could be seen. A large tract of woodland known as Hall Wood covered an area where the test track now lies. Some nearby fields had interesting names, such as Margery Croft, and Fearney Hey.

The mills lay to the West of the Hall, and were driven by mill races coming from a large reservoir that stretched about 200 yards behind the mills and hall. The reservoir itself was fed by two streams that originated from the River Lostock at a place where a weir now exists. By 1921 this reservoir had shrunk and only the Western end remained. The Tithe Map had it named as "Mill Reservoir".

Originally two streams crossed Mill Lane, not including two sections of the River Lostock. They all ran back into the Lostock further downstream. Only one bridge remains, this crosses the Lostock near Brookfield Cottage. By walking East from this bridge about 50 yards on the right, the wall of one of the other bridges can still be seen.

The land on both sides of Mill Lane has been raised by the continual dumping of rubbish. I walked along the River Lostock North as far as a gate with a weir on left. This is where the streams forked away from the Lostock to feed the reservoir. The high wire fence enclosing the test track was over to the right. I followed this back to a wood.

From this stretch of wire fence an inclining of the original field level could be seen. Along the edge of the wood one of the mill races could be seen. Now stagnating having been blocked by the rubbish dumping on South side of Mill Lane.

Coming back to the footbridge I took a hedged footpath that passed between Brookfield Cottage and a large white house. This path passed through fields behind Manor House Farm. The large old barn had a roof that looked very unsafe. The 1848 6" Ordnance Survey Map had this farm named "Armetriding". The path led to Leyland Lane, coming out opposite the Wheatsheaf.

References:

Lancashire Record Office, Preston:-
Tithe Map of Farington 1839 N.77 DRB/1
6" Ordnance Survey Map 1848
The Green Pastures by George Birtill
Tithe Map of Leyland 1838 No. 125 DRB/1

Graham Thomas

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NOTES AND QUERIES

Under this heading, which it is hoped to make a permanent feature of the "Laird Chronicle", members are invited to submit short items of local historical interest and also to ask for information on specific points, hopefully getting an answer from some other member for inclusion in the next issue. To start the ball rolling a few queries are given below.

No. 1 - Cocker Bar Station

From some notes in our archives I find that our former President, Mr. J.N. Banister, as long ago as 1931 was in correspondence with the railway authorities about a station with the above name which existed over the period 1846-1860 before the later Midge Hall Station was built. Who knows anything about it and why the change of location?

No. 2 - Railway Hotel

Again on railway matters, a member has asked why on the 1849 6" O.S. Map the Railway Hotel near Leyland Station was marked as the "Railway Bridge Inn" although it is not at all certain if there was a road bridge or what form it took.

No. 3 - Chingle Hall

I have a note from a Mrs. Harrison regarding Chingle Hall, that well known haunt, she states that in 1764 the hall passed into the hands of the Farington family of Worden Hall. Could we learn more, please?

No. 4 - Heald House

Another note from the archives. Heald House is stated to have been built in 1706 for Andrew and Mary Stones (nee Armetriding), the woodwork of the staircase coming from broken up sailing ships. In Victoria's time it was used as a girls school, boarding pupils arriving by the London Stage Coach on Wigan Road. All very interesting - is there any other information about this building?

No. 5 - Leyland Court Leet.

Still in the 19th century. The Chorley Guardian for 3rd November 1888 reported that the annual Court Leet Meeting had been held at the Roe Buck to elect 12 officers for the ensuing year. Two barleymen and a pinder were nominated (NB. A barleyman or burleyman was a manorial officer appointed to enforce the Court byelaws and a pinder was in charge of the "pound" in which stray animals were kept until claimed) Two queries: How long did this Court Leet, a relic of manorial days, continue to function and where was the pound?

No. 6 - Worden Portraits

An unpublished manuscript by Susan Maria Farington entitled "Companion to the portraits at Worden" written about 1870 is known to have existed. This would be a valuable source regarding these portraits, now dispersed. Does anyone know where the original, or a copy now exists?

Editor

LEYLAND MILL

or

WHAT HAPPENED TO MR. CRAWSHAW?

Considering the fact that Leyland owes its continuing existence and expansion to the industries within its boundaries, it appears to have paid little attention to the preservation or even recording of what certainly must be the earliest example of a mechanical power driven installation in the township.

I refer to the water driven corn mill which used to stand on Mill Lane which leads off Leyland Lane just north of Seven Stars (approximately NGR 530219). I have deliberately chosen to ignore the corn mills, both water and wind driven which formerly existed in Worden Demesne (Old Worden) as historically this is better considered as a separate vill or manor.

The names by which Leyland Corn Mill has been known are intriguing and I hope to retrace the sequence of changes which have occurred by using the fairly scanty documentary references available, followed by some general notes on the mill.

1977 One of our life members, W. Rigby, in his descriptive ambulation of Leyland Lane, mentions Crawshaw's (note the possessive case) Corn Mill on Mill Lane, driven by a water wheel from Mill Brook. In recent conversation he states that in living memory it was always called thus, but could offer no comment on the existence of anyone with the surname Crawshaw. (Ref. 1)

1968 G. Birtill in one of his volumes (Ref. 2) shows a photograph of cottages with the caption "These cottages mark the spot where Crawshaw's Corn Mill used to be".

1938 The O.S. 1:2500 map shows in detail the outline of the mill, cottages and a very large mill pond but unfortunately does not name the mill.

1877 A Leyland directory (Ref. 3) for that year (typed copy-original not seen) under the heading for corn millers shows J. Stanning and Sons as owners of Cranshaw Mill. This is believed to be an error of spelling for Crawshaw rather than a genuine original reference.

1861 The census returns for this year (Ref. 4) are more specific. Under the location Crawshaw Mill Valentine Farington, aged 29, is shown as a corn miller by occupation.

1851 In this census the mill is not named but Mill House is with Richard Fazackerly farming four acres and John Strickland, corn miller, as a lodger.

1849 The O.S. 6" map, surveyed in 1846-7 clearly shows Crawshaw Mill (Corn) with cottages and a large Mill pond.

1841 In this, the earliest detailed census return, the location is named as Crosshall Mill with Richard Gornall, aged 25, as the miller, together with his wife, Mary and four children. It is very probable that at this date the return was filled in by the enumerator on the basis of verbal information from the householder and the returns show several instances of wrongly transcribed names.

1838 The Tithe award plan and schedules detail all the field names round the mill and give the millers names again as Gornall but do not actually name the mill.

1768 The interesting 1" to the mile map published by William Yates shows a large heart-shaped mill pond with the toothed-wheel symbol indicating the mill, not of course named at this Scale. It is interesting that Yates indicates two streams feeding the pond, one running approximately NE-SW from Northbrook and the other running E-W clearly defined as arising somewhere behind what Leylanders know as Damp's Smithy.

1735 From this point backwards in time it is necessary to examine the documentary (manuscript) records in the Lancashire Record Office (Ref. 5). A lease dated 1735 from George Farington of Shaw Hall (New Worden Hall) to William Farington, Vicar of Leigh, his brother concerns 31 acres in the vicinity of Lower House, together with a water corn mill in Leyland called Leyland or Crossaw Mill (DDF 1831).

1725 The beautifully drawn survey map of the Farington estates (DDF 81) shows the mill and pond but only names it as Leyland Mill. The water supply previously mentioned appears to be confirmed.

1692 A court roll of Leyland Manor Court (DDF 170) complains that "Whereas the brook running from the Township of Clayton into Grossall Mill Dam is very much growne up and stopped with wood poles bushes bowes and other things...". This appears to be a clear reference to the supply of water from Bannister Brook via Northbrook already discussed.

1690 A lease from Henry Farington to Henry Wright (DDF 1791) includes a requirement that he is "not to grind his corne at any other millne save only at the watercorne milne of Henry Farington commonly called Crossaw Milne if soe bee that the water and weather will..... and that the miller of the same milne doe his dutie in every respecte".

1672 It appears from a document of this date that the Farington family only then purchased or repurchased the Lower House holding, including the mill fields, Milnegate Lane, the water cornmill and kiln, the right to levy multure and the ground on which the mill and kiln stood. The kiln was of course for drying the grain.

1570 At this period a considerable area of Leyland was in the hands of the Huddlestons and a survey of 1570 covering these lands (DDF112) includes the information that the widow of William Charnock was tenant of the Lower House holding, 28 acres in all, including Creswall Mylne.

1542 A rental of Leyland (the Huddleston portion) shows that John Butler and William Charnock were paying 7/6d per year for the rent of Creswall Mylne. This is the earliest reference so far found to the name of the mill itself, but much earlier references are available confirming the mill's existence.

1296 VGH p.11n, (Ref. 6) makes reference to an unsuccessful claim by William de Lea and Maud his wife, to a messuage and half the mill in Leyland against Master Adam de Walton (Ulnes Walton) and John his brother. This reference to half the mill is a reminder of the complex early history of Leyland when the manor was subdivided in moieties between the Faringtons and the Waltons.

C.1250 A highly significant document of this date (DDF 1548) still exists in Lancashire Record Office. Internal evidence and the style of the Latin handwriting put it about the middle of the 13th century. It seems worth repeating most of the abstract in full. It consists of a description of land boundaries (probably the sub-manor of Northbrocke).

"Within these bounds, beginning at the lands of John following Nortvalle to the great mill dam of Adam of Walton following the dam to Cresseuallebroc thence to Chaynestalledhock in the new assart and so to the middle of Blackelache thence to the oak tree marked with a cross thence to Schinerhaker and to the bank of Northbrook and then to the land of John son of Roger".

We can get only a suggestion of the location of some of these marker points but two features emerge. The mill dam was obviously unusually large (over an acre in fact) and the dam was fed by Cresseuallbroc that is Cresswall Brook. I believe this to be the stream arising at the back of Water Street already mentioned and it is quite obvious that the mill took its name from the name of the stream that fed it. I also believe that the feed water from North brook was a later addition to supplement the supply.

The name Cresseuallbroc is interesting. West (Ref.7) in his glossary of words found in Saxon charters and place names gives Caersa Waell as meaning - watercress bed. Again, Ekwall (Ref.8) actually mentions a place name Cresswell found in Derbyshire, Northumberland and Somerset recorded in the period 1176-1242 and derives the meaning "stream where watercress grew".

The name of our stream is thus derived from three elements, all Old English (i.e. probably 700-1100 AD)

Caersa or Cerse = Watercress

Well, Wiell or Waell = Stream

Broc = Stream (rather than river)

The repetition of the element for stream need cause no concern as it is quite common where one culture is imposed on another (cf Pendle Hill). It is apparent that the feature of the stream from which its name arose was that watercress grew prolifically there.

Grigson (Ref.9) states that watercress, *Nasturtium Officinale*, was first mentioned by its present name in the 15th century but has been known much longer as its O.E. names were EA-CERSE (river cress) or WIELLE-CERSE (stream cress) and Grant (Ref.10) states that it is one of the oldest of health foods being rich in iron and vitamins A,B,C, and D. It is tempting to think that early Leylanders supplemented their diet with watercress from Cresseuallbroc, it was certainly a highly valued wild plant.

In summarising I hope to have shown that we need not worry what happened to Mr. Crawshaw, I don't think he ever existed.

The name of Leyland Mill has been traced to its origin in the name of a small stream, now non-existent as such. Its structure is traceable to pre-conquest elements. The mill was manorial in nature and could well have been very ancient although this latter point is unlikely to be proveable.

Further work on tracing the surface water features of the area concerned and also the later history of the mill itself could be done.

I wish to thank the staff of Lancashire Record Office for production of documents and permission to reproduce extracts.

G.L. Bolton

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2. G. Birtill. The Green Pastures. Guardian Press 1968 p.90.
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5. Lancs. Rec. Office. Farington of Worden muniments DDF (various) and miscellaneous deposits DDX, as quoted in text.
6. Victoria County History of Lancashire, Vol. 6.
7. J. West. Village Records. Phillimore 1982.
8. E. Ekwall. Oxford Dictionary of English Place Names Oxford 1951.
9. G. Grigson. Dictionary of English Plant Names Allen Lane 1973.
10. D. Grant. Your daily food. Faber and Faber 1973

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BLACKPOOL GIPSIES

On May 10th 1982, Miss Kathleen Eyre addressed the Leyland Historical Society. Her subject was 'Blackpool Gipsies'. Miss Eyre began her talk by mentioning and listing the reasons for our mistrust of gipsies. These are mainly traditional, but certainly based on fact. In the past they have abducted children. Miss Eyre cited the case of Dorothy Hincksman. They earned their light-fingered reputation too. Consequently we have developed an apprehensive attitude towards gipsies. However, they have in the past been a source of seasonal labour.

They are an interesting peoples who claim to have extra sensory perceptive powers. This is quite possible, but there is no evidence to back up their claim. Their performance in this line being no better than others. But they are sensitive and observant and they train their children to use these qualities and become skilful readers of 'signs'. They are skilful salespeople and 'tell fortunes' - telling people what they want to hear and observing their reactions.

Miss Eyre then went on to give an account of the history of the gipsy race. It is thought they originated in India 3,000 years ago. The evidence for this being that their language and caste system is very similar. Probably they entered Europe from Egypt. Now they are world wide. Over the centuries the true gipsies have taken great pride in keeping their blood 'pure gipsy'.

Miss Eyre then continued by giving an account of evidence of gipsy life in Roumania and France. There is evidence of gipsies living in Paris by 1427. From France the gipsies spread to Scotland where they enjoyed royal favour. In 1505 James IV gave a group of gipsies a letter of introduction to the Court of Denmark. In 1530 a group of gipsies danced before James V. By 1870 after periods of favour and persecution they were expelled. In England it was a different story. There is evidence of gipsies in Suffolk in 1520, and in Cornwall in 1522. But unfortunately due to their cheating and deception of people, moves were made to rid the country of gipsies. By Elizabethan times it is thought there were 10,000 wandering gipsies. During Cromwell's time harsh laws were enforced against them and by the end of the 18th century many thousands had been transported.

During the 18th century Blackpool was developing as a health resort. By 1780 there were 4 hotels and many cottage landladies and the number of visitors were increasing. About 1810 the gipsies arrived in Blackpool. The main families being Boswells, Smiths, Lees and Coopers. The Boswells claim to have gipsy royal blood. Among their forbears was a clairvoyant who foretold the development of wireless, the death of Queen Victoria, the death of her own son, and her own death too. Her daughter, Marianna Lee, was the Gipsy Queen. Sara Lee was a fortune teller.

Uncle Tom's Cabin in Blackpool started as a gipsy encampment where fortune tellers' stalls and other stalls could be seen. It became a centre of entertainment. After 70-80 years they moved to South Shore where there was a fresh water supply. Visitors followed them and further attractions developed.

Eventually commercial interests formed the Pleasure Beach Company and the gipsies were no longer acceptable. They lived in tents and in summer other itinerant gipsies arrived in caravans, and this did not present a favourable impression. So in 1910 the gipsies were evicted from South Shore.

Miss Eyre concluded her talk by mentioning Alma Boswell who was good with animals, He treated them with herbs and many people prefer his services to those of a vet.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks given by Mr. A. Seguss.

Mrs. E. Chaloner

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LANCASHIRE RIOTS

On Monday the 6th of September a talk was given by the Reverend Carmyllie on the "Lancashire Riots".

Mention was made of the rioting at Toxeth and in the Manchester area illustrating that rioting still occurs in our time. The talk on the Lancashire riots dealt with the Ramsbottom area for 1826 the price of bread, and the handloom weavers, in 1846 the railway riots and in 1880 the church riots.

In 1826 riots occurred in the Ramsbottom area against the price of bread. The Corn Law was introduced into the British Isle to protect the growers of corn against foreign imports, this led in turn to the price of bread being rather costly. As the wage of a weaver was about 40p (8/-) a week, and the price of bread was 5p (1/-) bread cost about 12% of the weavers wage. Rioting occurred in an effort to get the Corn Law repealed. Allied to this was the introduction of power looms into the Rossendale Valley.

Due to the introduction of power looms, it meant that the handloom weavers were being put out of work, which meant the loss of earning. Therefore mobs of people attacked places like Accrington where the power looms had been installed and smashed them to pieces. In some areas there were gangs of 5,000 people and only 200 troops to oppose them, and it was not possible for the troops to prevent the mob from destroying the power looms.

Bolton did not suffer from mobs attacking the power looms, they recruited most of the able bodied men of Bolton as special constables, and the troops were of sufficient numbers to prevent any destruction of machinery. Compensation of £18,000 was paid for loom damage, and a further £20,000 for other damage. Rioters who were brought before the magistrates were given a death sentence, but later this was commuted to life imprisonment or transportation to Australia.

In 1846 the Corn Laws were repealed by R. Peel and a statue was erected in the Ramsbottom area to R. Peel in gratitude.

In 1846 the Railway Riots occurred in Ramsbottom, the main cause of disagreement was between the navvies building the railways.

There were the English navvies and the Irish navvies. Thomas Carlyle maintained that the English navvies were causing all the trouble, they were always getting drunk and causing fights, while the Irish navvies, according to the local postman, were sober, and sending money home to their families in Ireland. The Irish also complained that the English were paid better wages than them, causing more friction between both parties.

In 1880 occurred the Church riots, this happened because some members of the Presbyterian church were in disagreement and it was decided to break away from the church and form their own church, the group became Congregationalists. They found a building suitable for a church, and to prevent the Presbyterians from obtaining possession of their church, placed a guard to watch over. Later, feeling secure, the guard was removed. This, thought the Presbyterians, is our chance, they went down and changed all the locks on the doors to prevent the rebels entry into their newly acquired church. But the members of the new church had left one guard behind to keep a watch, and when he reported what had happened, down went the Congregationalists and changed the locks again, denying access to the Presbyterians.

Fighting also occurred between the two church opponents, and the fighting was very bloody - so much for Christian Charity! Nowadays both churches are now together as the United Reform, so peace has returned to the area. A poem was written about the church troubles entitled "Dundee", this was read to the meeting by the Reverend Cormyllie.

The lecture was enjoyed by all and the vote of thanks was given by Mr. Williams.

A.W. Seguss

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OUR NORTH WEST HERITAGE

The speaker of our October meeting was Mr. Sherdley, who comes from Pilling.

Mr. Sherdley showed us a varied collection of slides depicting our North West heritage with an interesting speech for each one.

In the Lake District at Langdale there is a 'stone axe factory' where between the years 1,000-2,000 B.C. hand made axes were made by man from flint stone.

The main Roman road was in the South East of Lancashire, which started at Chester. The road then carried on up through Manchester, Ribchester, etc., and joined on to Hadrian's Wall, up on the border with Scotland. The Romans left England in 420 A.D.

St. Patrick's is the oldest remaining Christian Chapel in the North West. It is dated from as far back as the 9th century. The chapel, which is situated at Heysham, is now a ruin.

You could tell that everyone really enjoyed Mr Sherdley's subject by the enthusiastic applause.

I hope it won't be long before Mr. Sherdley makes a return visit to our Society.

The vote of thanks was given by Mr. G. Thomas.

Bobby Willis

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FEDERATION MEETING

The Society was represented at the one day conference of the Federation of Local History Societies in the County Palatine of Lancaster, held in Lancaster Castle on 6th November 1982, to commemorate the 800th anniversary of the emergence of Lancashire as an administrative unit.

The splendid setting of the Shire Hall, bedecked with the heraldic shields of the High Sheriffs from the 12th century, and the excellent speakers made it a day to remember.

It was pleasing to see that the Leyland Hundred had at various times taken its turn in providing a High Sheriff for the county.

Subjects chosen by the speakers gave us a new insight into the formation and emergence of our county and highlighted the special place occupied by the County Palatine in the history of England.

G.L. Bolton

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