

No. 49 2003 - 2004

Chilworth

The journal of
THE LEYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY



LEYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

(Founded 1968)

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1024919

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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

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PAGE 2 WAS EMPTY IN ORIGINAL COPY

CONTENTS

<u>Page</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Contributor</u>
5	Editorial	Mary Fowler
6	Chairman's Report	Peter Houghton
11	Cromwell and Astley Hall	George L Bolton
14	Farington House—What Does the Future Now Hold?	Joan Langford
19	Some More Home Guard Musings.	William Hawksworth
20	Leyland s First Olympian	Edward Almond
25	Three “Must Get There”s	Joan Langford
28	Tenon Topped Gatepost – A Leyland Hundred Enigma?	Ian Barrow
30	Memories !!	Various
33	Racing Driver Genius	Edward Almond
41	Farington Mill Wage Tins	Joan Langford
42	Medieval Forest Management in North West England	Ian Barrow
46	Memories of Kay Davenport's Childhood Christmases in Leyland.	Joan Langford
48	Hutton Marsh - Calls and Calling.	Derek Wilkins
55.	The Writings of Robert Rowe of Euxton	Ian Barrow
61	Well Fancy That!	Joan Langford
63	Obituaries.	



PAGE 4 WAS EMPTY IN ORIGINAL COPY

EDITORIAL

Welcome to this year's edition of "The Lailand Chronicle".

I hope you will enjoy reading it as much as I have enjoyed putting it together.

This year the articles seem better than ever. We have a good mix of subjects; some highly specialised and well researched, some nostalgic and some to make you smile.

Research not being one of my strong points, I always particularly admire the scholarly work of some of our contributors. Much time and effort must go into producing these informative and enlightening items.

Some of the articles must bring back happy and maybe not so happy (see Page 30!) memories of days gone by; time when the pace of life was slower and the sun always seemed to shine. Surely other members have memories such as this from the past, which would be of interest to others in the society. All contributions are welcome. It is this mix of personal and the more intellectual, which makes for an interesting read. Do please consider writing something for the next edition.

Articles about the more recent past are also welcome, especially from some of our younger members. It would be interesting to get your angle on life in Leyland and possibly your ideas for the future both of Leyland and the Society.

Leyland is changing, not always for the better, almost from week to week. Now Tesco is up and running, there is talk of another supermarket in town and there are proposals for improvements to Chapel Brow. From the plans, this seems to be a worthwhile project. There must be much material here for more articles on the changes taking place.

It is with sorrow that we record the death of two of our members. Both served the Society well in their own way and they will be missed and mourned by their many friends in the Society. Their obituaries are at the end of the Chronicle.

My thanks to everyone who has contributed to this edition. I am particularly glad that you were able to give me the work earlier this year and consequently I hope to be able to distribute the finished publication at the December meeting. Your work is a record and I hope an inspiration, which will educate and inform, not only today's members but also those who read your articles in the future.

Now everyone start writing for next year!

MARY FOWLER – Editor



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.

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

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2001 – 2002

Society Affairs 2002 – 2003

With the first meeting of the new season on Monday 2nd September we were assured of a good turnout with the subject of the Farington family and their life in Leyland and in particular the story of Worden Hall. Our expert guide through the family history was our own Elizabeth Shorrocks whose great knowledge was clearly on show.

Her story begins with the later Faringtons (relatively) and their move from Old Worden Hall (now being knocked about a bit within the R.O.F. redevelopment) to the new Worden Hall (formerly Shaw Hall) in Worden Park. As the Hall got rebuilt under the various generations, their search for the next heir got more and more difficult. With the main family line finishing with the death of Susan Maria Farington in 1894, there were various relations until the last squire of Leyland passed away in 1947, the contents of the fire razed hall being sold at auction and the grounds of Worden Park going to the council.

On 7th October, we again welcomed the Mikron Theatre Company on their ninth visit to us. They had just completed their 31st Waterways Tour and were on their 21st Autumn Tour, which included a week's tour around Shropshire (we being in the middle of this week – so they came a long way to see us).



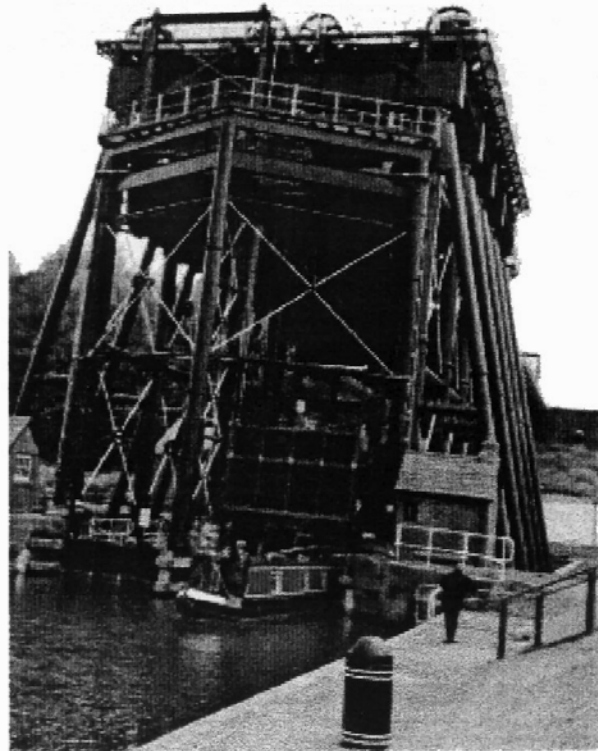
This year for their performance, they acted out the life of Richard Trevithick, a man whose life story could cover quite a few books (though the best one is by L.T.C. Rolt – The Cornish Giant). The play “All Steamed Up” told the full story of his life, love and his enthusiasm for his ideas. While being almost famous for inventing the steam locomotive, (an idea developed by George Stephenson amongst others), his other inventions read like a wish list from the industrialists of the time.

The four professional actors took the large audience on a journey from his native West Country. Here his early work with the Cornish mining engines made him very popular with everyone but Messrs Boulton & Watt who were very keen to keep their patents for the steam engine, and therefore their profits, untouched by this upstart from Cornwall.

The story continued with Trevithick and Gilbert taking the steam carriage up Camborne Hill in 1801. This was the first steam locomotive on the Pen y Darren tramway in 1804 that won him a wager but broke the fragile track not used to such heavy loads. With the “Catch Me Who Can” in 1808, he tried to interest the people of London in his new inventions, though he had another track problem. Eventually he got an offer he could not refuse and went to Peru to install his engines in the gold mines there. As usual his luck ran out when the revolution came under Simon Bolivar, and his mining interests went west. He luckily met Robert Stephenson in Nicaragua who paid for his trip home after 12 years away. He had many other great ideas and finally died in London whilst planning another grand scheme.

As far as this correspondent is concerned, this show is probably one of the best I have seen in the 23 years of shows I have viewed. Charley Moon played the part of Trevithick with as much enthusiasm as the man himself. This left Peter Toon, Kate Buxton and Shelley Halstead taking the parts of all the people that filled Trevithick's life, including Kate playing his much put upon wife, Jane Harvey and Peter, his assistant and friend Gilbert as well as an interesting Peruvian. Here's to their tenth visit.

On the 4th November the members were treated to the return of Peter Worden who this time entertained with a collection of "Waterway Films", though as we discovered this description was in some respects somewhat outside that title. He started with a ten-minute film on, in and through the Anderton Lift in 1978, prior to its recent renovation. There then followed a Mining Review film from 1973, which included film of the Bridgewater and Manchester Ship Canal.



Anderton boat lift today

For local effect we were then shown a twenty-minute film on the cranes supplied by an Aberdeen based firm that could be found in Preston Dock in 1968. Going back to 1959, we saw a canal holiday on the then un-restored Kennet & Avon Canal, before heading underground with the Mining Review of 1955 when the Bridgewater mines at Worsley were receiving their usual inspection.

As the films got earlier, we were shown three films, again local, with the launch of Crook & Thompson's boat "James" at the boatyard, Riley Green in March 1947, the site now occupied by "The Boatyard" public house. The second film was quite interesting as it featured Lancashire Police with their new MG sports radio cars in 1937. Those five minutes of film were subsequently banned for the duration of the war as the news that the police had radios in their cars was considered a state secret in the run up to the Second World War. With a one-minute film of a horse drawn coal barge on the Lancaster Canal near Hest Bank in 1936, we reached the final film.

This was the silent film from April 1901 of a visit of torpedo boats and crew at Barton on the Manchester Ship Canal. The film included views of the bridges, the docks and the numerous people seeing the navy in town.

For the last meeting of 2002, on **2nd December**, we welcomed the return of Dr Alan Crosby whose talk was entitled, "Food, Feasts & Festivals 1600 – 1900". He told the members about the numerous events that took place throughout the year from the New Year celebrations, the pancake rituals including the "Stang" (ask anyone who was there what that meant) and the Easter events with the eggs.

The talk then developed into a slight version of Ready Steady Cook as Alan described how to make a simnel cake from his own recipe. With the coming of the church, they took over the pagan celebrations at Harvest time and the winter solace; the previously wild events being replaced by the religious traditions we know today. However, the importance of the Christmas cake, which was the special food of the season, seems to have been lost over time.

Beginning the New Year with an old friend, we welcomed Stephen Sartin on **5th January 2003** with "More Lancashire Paintings". He brought with him a collection of slides that showed the wide selection of paintings that are held on our behalf by the Lancashire County Museum service. With Stephen's usual style, the members were told of the painter's history, the painting's history and the person or place in the painting's history too.

Coincidentally, he had in the slides that he explained to the attentive audience, a set of paintings depicting the slave traders of Lancaster and their families, which unbeknown to him, was the subject of the following month's talk, by Janet Nelson which was greatly appreciated.

So on Monday **3rd February**, Janet made the perilous journey from Forton near Lancaster to talk to the sixty brave souls who made their way through the snow to listen to the story of the "Slave Traders of Lancaster and District".

From the homes of the slave trading families to the voyage and life that the men from Lancaster inflicted on their human cargo, Janet brought it all to life. It's a pity now to see the wharf buildings that today line the banks of the River Lune and realise all the pain and suffering that went on to obtain the money to build them.

Dr Paul Hindle returned on **3rd March** to tell the members "The History of the Ordnance Survey". His story told of the development of the Ordnance Survey from its military beginnings under the control of the army. Its small-scale beginnings in the south, then the larger scales in Ireland lead to our own area being covered in the mid 1840's at the new six-inch to the mile scale.

Unfortunately, while this was a good thing for our area, being the first at this scale, it meant that when the scale was increased to 25 inch to the mile, our area was the last to be covered. Paul went on to tell us of the set of maps produced by Paul Godfrey featuring old maps of England. I have since contacted Mr Godfrey who is looking into producing a map of Leyland.

On **Sunday 23rd March**, the Society members and friends went to Alston Hall near Longridge for a three-course meal followed by a talk by Ann Kelly on, "Sandcastles and Cruet Charge", the story of the Blackpool landlady. The talk led us from the beginnings of the town as an offshoot of the development in the new town of Fleetwood. With the early residents of Blackpool always being able to make a fast buck, it was soon developed as a watering hole for the wealthy. However, they soon discovered that appealing to the lower classes with cheap and cheerful accommodation made the residents much more money. Hence the Cruet Charge of the title of the lecture, when the holidaymakers brought their own food, which was cooked by the owner of the boarding house and for which they made the charge.

On **Monday 7th April** Julie Maund of British Waterways who gave a talk on "Restoring the Northern British Waterways", visited us. Julie led the members through the problems and benefits resulting from the reopening of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and the Rochdale Canal. This she achieved with the aid of the latest computer equipment, which certainly impressed some of the members. She included a preview of the future project now in the planning stage on the Manchester, Bolton & Bury Canal (known by some as Fletcher's Canal – that's John and Margaret of course).

For the meeting on **12th May**, we welcomed back Don Richardson who gave the members his slant on "The History of Farming in the North West". From the days of the drovers bringing their cattle down to the markets of the south, we followed the farming story of the development/breeding of the cow through the years. We then discovered the adjustment of breeds also applied to the various sheep, pigs and other animals that can still be found around the farm today.

On **Monday 2nd June**, Brian Marshall returned to entertain the members with "Cathedrals of England" which was a whistle stop trip around England looking at the various designs of cathedrals that have evolved over the years from the abbey church.

On **Saturday 7th June**, the Society again took part in the third Leyland Craft & Local Societies Fair. There was the Slide Show with Elizabeth Shorrocks & Bill Waring, with the exhibition in the talk & slide show room featuring the history of the buildings along the Festival route through Leyland and the story of Sandy Lane. The display in the main hall featured "Leyland – Then & Now", an enlarged series of photographs from the archives of the Society showing many various and some foreign imports.

The Annual General Meeting on **Monday 7th July** began with Secretary Michael's reading of the last year's minutes, followed by Edward the Treasurer presenting the Society's accounts for the year. No queries from members were recorded. There was then the Chairman's report, (which you are presently reading).

Besides mentioning the above events, on the Society front, our editor, Mrs. Fowler has been keeping up with the computer and not so computer literate members who contribute to the Chronicles. We have continued our watching brief on the planning applications front thanks to Elizabeth, who has made sure that the Society keeps in touch with events in and around the conservation area.

Now I realise that this report may have been read in part by the members already, be it via the bi-monthly newsletter or from the infamous website. This has continued to grow since its inception in December 1999 to a point that up to the end of June the number of visitors to the site was over **9660**, over 4600 hits in the last year. The enquiries resulting from the site came from the U.S.A, South Africa, United Arab Emirates and especially **Canada**. The new departure for the website this year has been the Leyland Museum pages, with the main page attracting 1200 hits already with its 'what's on' page getting loads of hits.

I would just like to thank all the committee members for their assistance in the last ten years and I hope they will continue to carry on in the future.



The speech was followed by the election of the officers and committee. We have to record the sad loss of committee member Derek Brundrett. We welcomed any willing replacement volunteers to the committee and were pleasantly surprised by the immediate volunteers in Ms Joan Finch, followed later by Mrs Marie Almond, Mrs Sylvia Thompson and Mrs Monica Lea. Our President, George Bolton, then read out the winner of the Historian Of The Year judged by Dr David Hunt. This was won for the first time by Edward Almond. (Congratulations Edward – Ed.)



Our member, Joan Langford, then entertained us with an illustrated talk taking a walk through the village of Farington. With the use of an overhead projector, which was kindly lent by the Jarvis Hotel, Joan showed various photographs of the village from Leyland station along Preston Road over the border at Boundary Street and on to Stanifield Lane.

After taking in the area around Farington Mill, including the mill itself, she moved onto the mill owner's homes at Farington Lodge and Farington House. The photographs varied from early in the 20th century to the mid 1950's. Each one brought back memories for most of those present, and probably accounted for the fact that the attendance was a record for an annual general meeting.

PETER HOUGHTON CHAIRMAN

CROMWELL AND ASTLEY HALL

INTRODUCTION

There is a long-standing legend that Oliver Cromwell stayed and indeed slept at Astley Hall, usually attributed to the period of the English Civil War. At the Hall itself various rooms and pieces of furniture are labelled with the appellation "Cromwell" but neither the official guidebook nor the room guides make any mention of the substance of the legend.

So far as the present writer is aware the legend is merely repeated, but not authenticated in the literary descriptions or histories of the Hall or its occupants which have been published. None of the above comments however, precludes an actual visit by Cromwell being a true historical fact. As might be expected, there is a considerable literature available on the Civil War in general and indeed for that portion of the war which took place in Lancashire; because of my present circumstances it has been possible for me to refer to only a small portion of this literature.

A relatively modern (1973) but very useful account of the Civil war in Lancashire is given by Ernest Broxap (Reference 1) and I have used this as the main basis of this essay. Most accounts of specific events are based on identifiable primary sources. The above source, like others, is clearly based on a nearly contemporary publication usually referred to as "the Discourse" (Reference 2)

A local author mentioning the Astley legend in 1923 was the Reverend T.C.Porteus in his little book on Astley Hall (Reference 3) and this will be referred to in this essay.

THE EVENTS OF THE LOCAL CONFLICT IN AUGUST 1648

It seems most probable that any visit to Astley that might have occurred would have been during the time when the parliamentary armies led by Cromwell had their conflict with the Royalist forces in South west Lancashire, particularly in the area south of Preston, in late mid 1648, the period of the "second civil war". The Parliamentary force fought against a mixture of Anglicans, Royalists and an army of invading Scots, the latter being the most significant faction in our present enquiry, the principal engagement between the two forces being the well documented battle of Preston which took place on 17th August 1648, only a few miles north of Astley.

The conflict was no set piece in a chosen spot, indeed it was a backwards and forwards running fight stretching from Kirkby Lonsdale in the north to Wigan and Winwick in the south. The Scots army led by the Duke of Hamilton entered England and proceeded south, through Carlisle and Lancashire aiming for their political target, namely London. The Parliamentary army under Lieutenant General Oliver Cromwell moved southwest from its location in Yorkshire into Lancashire intending to intercept the Scots somewhere near Preston.

Cromwell stayed the night of 16th/17th August at Stonyhurst Hall, the home of the Shireburns, quartering his troops in the park there. Early the next morning (17th) they marched towards Preston, meeting and engaging the enemy at Ribbleton Moor where a fierce fight took place (in this instance more of a static battle). The Scots also managed to enter the town of Preston and needed to be displaced from there, as also from the bridge over the Ribble and the area of Walton.

At the end of the day the troops on both sides seemed to have laid down (17th/18th) near where they had fought. Cromwell himself retired to the town of Preston where he wrote up his dispatches. In spite of the overnight proximity of the two opposing armies some or all of the Scots managed to leave their position with the intention of resuming their southward march through Lancashire towards London. On the morning of the 18th Cromwell, possibly returning from Preston at first light, about 5 am, resumed his pursuit of the Scots, sending an advanced mounted unit under Colonel Thornhaugh after them. The latter officer caught up with a party of the enemy near Chorley but was killed in the conflict.

There were two roads between Preston and Wigan, one equating with the modern A6 and the other equating with the modern A49, these roads meeting south of Chorley. The account suggests that the Scots had chosen the former route for their attempted escape, whereas Cromwell with his main force chose the latter (suggesting local knowledge) to pursue them. The Royalist cause was not helped by their cavalry and foot bodies being confused about their choice of roads, it should be noted that these were not roads as we know them, rather were badly defined tracks.

Engagements between the two forces continued on the road to Wigan, particularly at Standish, until late in the day. Cromwell quartered his very tired army for the night (the 18/19th August) in a field outside Wigan. The context of the account confirms that Cromwell himself also stayed nearby them overnight. "*We lay that night in the field close by them (the Royalists) after marching twelve miles of bad road from Preston (Walton)*". This overnight proximity is a repetition of the events at Walton after the battle at Preston. It is thus quite clear that Cromwell lay in the field the night of the 18th and not at Astley or any other indoor house.

T.C. Porteus, whilst agreeing that any possible stay at Astley would have taken place during the period postulated above, suggests that Cromwell may have slept at Astley this night (18/19th); but I cannot see any evidence for his supposition. The remainder of the campaign, whilst equally interesting for students of our local history, is not relevant to the purpose of this particular essay

RELEVANCE OF "THE DISCOURSE"

This document, almost contemporary with the events it described, remained in anonymous document form in private hands until 1864, when it was edited by William Beamont Esq., and printed by the Chetham Society as Volume 62 of their Transactions.

The authorship of the document had long remained anonymous but was suspected as being the work of Major Edward Robinson then of Buckshaw Hall of Euxton; near Chorley. William Beamont, in his introduction to the 1864 reprint of "the Discourse", gives a masterly analysis of the internal evidence showing that without doubt the author was indeed Major Robinson.

Robinson was of Newton-with-Scales near Kirkham and joined the parliamentary side rising to the rank of Major. He was born about 1610, and from his own claimed pedigree was a son of Richard Robinson of Euxton (exact place unknown), he was married to Ellen Browne of Scales (which may account for his residence in that area).

Thus when he was living through and observing the events of the war he was based in the Kirkham area, but in 1652 he had bought the Buckshaw estate from William Stansfield and hence in 1655 he wrote the Discourse from his home in Euxton.

My purpose in discussing this aspect of the treatise is to suggest that he would be unlikely to omit an event like Cromwell's stay at a local mansion like Astley if indeed such an event had taken place, in a venue with which he would have been very familiar through his later position as a Justice of the Peace.

CONCLUSIONS

The literature surveyed confirms that the period I have described provides a possible time for a visit to Astley but nowhere is Astley mentioned in this literature, which, however, is detailed enough to account for his exact movements over the period of time concerned.

Strength is thus given to the legend being just that - A LEGEND

REFERENCES

- Reference 1 - "The Great Civil War in Lancashire, 1642 to 1651" by Ernest Broxap, Manchester University Press, 2nd Edition, 1973
- Reference 2 - "A Discourse of the Warr(sic) in Lancashire" by Edward Robinson(?), Chetham Society Volume 62, 1864.
- Reference 3 - "Astley Hall, Chorley" by T.C. Porteus, W J. Sandiford Chorley 1923

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Rosemary Boyd, L.H.S. member and also Collections and Conservation Co-ordinator, Astley Hall, Chorley, for her interest and help in the project, but who must remain neutral in her attitude to the legend.

W.E. (Bill) Waring for his continuing help and interest in the project.

Myself for maintaining an interest in Astley Hall during an acquaintance of some eighty years with this historic building.

G. L. BOLTON

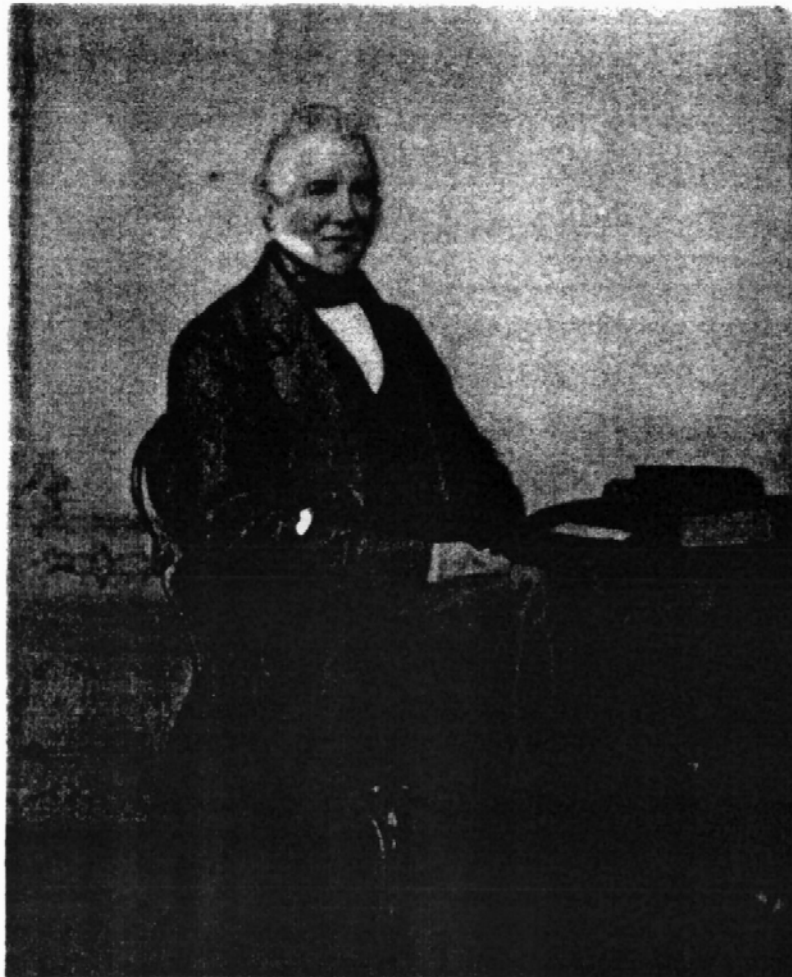
FARINGTON HOUSE – WHAT DOES THE FUTURE NOW HOLD?

Waking with a start at 7.00 a.m. on Monday, 26th May 2003 I heard the news on my bedside radio. *“There is a serious fire at Farington House on Stanifield Lane in Farington. Fire-fighters are still at the scene, but the old house has been almost completely destroyed.”*

Now, some 30 years since Farington mill closed, fire, the scourge of cotton mills and the cause of great heartache for the mill owners, was again affecting old mill property.

WILLIAM BOARDMAN

Farington House was built in the late 1830's, as the home of Farington Mill's co-owner, William Boardman. Rev. William Bashall recorded in his diary that *“William Bashall was the making of his brother-in-law William Boardman. Mr. Boardman found a good share of the capital (for the mill), became Mr. Bashall's partner, and built himself Farington House, adjoining the Lodge, very like it, but with not so good an aspect.”*



Bachelor William Boardman's home was a fine Georgian building, very similar to Farington Lodge, but slightly smaller, and which he shared with his widowed mother, and their servants.

FARINGTON HOUSE

The House was square in plan and was constructed of red brick in Flemish bond style. It had a sandstone plinth and dressings and a hipped slate roof. The front of the House faced north and had a stone entrance porch with Ionic columns and pilasters.



FARINGTON HOUSE

The ground floor comprised five rooms – two large reception rooms at the front, and behind them a dining room, a study, and a small, very narrow, 'service' room, where food from the kitchen could be prepared for the table. All of the ground floor rooms and hallways had elaborate cornices and ceiling roses. The cornices had beaded and egg & dart bands with inner flat bands decorated with medallion flowers. The hall also had a horizontal frieze of bead and rail compartments, with applied Tudor roses in two alternating designs. The two reception rooms had deep casement friezes of entwined vine fruits and leaves. The ceiling roses were decorated with floral designs, and deeply moulded acanthus leaves.

On the first floor there were two large bedrooms at the front of the house, with a dressing room between them (above the front entrance). A medium size bedroom and another small bedroom (with a dressing room off it) were at the rear. The two front bedrooms had plain roll moulded cornices, the rear room ceilings were plain.

Originally the servants quarters were in the basement of the house, but proved unsatisfactory, and by the 1840's a service wing had been built onto the south side of the house. This service wing comprised three rooms on the ground floor (for kitchen, pantry and scullery/laundry) and three bedrooms upstairs.

The basement was entered from the ground floor hall, down a flight of stone steps, to a flagged passage. Two rooms led off each side of this passage and ahead of it was the coal store. To the right a kitchen and pantry (with keeping shelves) and to the left a scullery/laundry and a bedroom. The floors in the basement were all stone flags, and there was obviously no daylight at all.

OCCUPANTS

Farington Hall was William Boardman's home until his death in 1869, when he left the building and its 8 acres of land to William Bashall, as part of the Farington Mill estate. Records show that subsequent occupants were eminent local gentlemen, who described themselves as 'Cotton Manufacturers' – William W.B. Hulton Esq., JP from 1870 to 1880; John Eccles, Esq., JP from 1880 to 1909. (In 1881, with John Eccles were his wife Victoria, their children John, Constance and Tom, plus six servants.)

After John Eccles death in 1909 the mill owners decided to sell Farington House and Mr. Tom Hartley Roberts, the owner of Wood Milne Rubber Company, purchased it, when it became the Roberts family home.

SOCIAL & RECREATIONAL CLUB

When Mr. Roberts retired and sold his business, the use of Farington House then changed from that of a family home to a social and recreational club, and the 1926 Barrett's directory lists the property as 'British Goodrich Social & Recreational Club' with Mr. C.A. Sanderson as Secretary.

By the 1940's Farington House and its grounds had become the property of the British Tyre & Rubber Company, but continued to be used as recreational and social club facilities.

In the 19th century the grounds were extensively developed, including the building of greenhouses in a walled garden. In the 20th century they were further developed, with sporting/recreational facilities such as tennis courts, bowling green and a small boating lake. As the BTR Social and Recreational Club, the building and grounds were very popular and much used. Unfortunately, though, when alterations were made to Farington House to make it more suitable as Club premises, little attention was paid to the building's historic and architectural importance.

Consequently much permanent damage was done – especially to the mouldings on the ceilings. Despite this, in February 1984, the House became a Grade II listed building.

Without the proper care and attention needed, especially to old buildings, by the 1990's Farington House was in a sorry state and needed much money spending on it. When I visited the House in 1996 some parts of the 'service wing' had already been condemned.

With the closure of the Club and the sale of the building and grounds numerous stories circulated as to who the purchaser was and their possible plans for its future use. These 'stories' did not bode well for the old House, which was boarded up and fell further into a state of disrepair and decay.

With so few buildings of architectural and/or historic importance left in Farington it was vital that Farington House be saved if at all possible.

It was therefore with some relief that early in 2003 I heard of a planning application to re-instate Farington House as nearly as possible to its original plan and design, and use it as offices (together with a limited amount of office space development in the area where the greenhouses had once stood in the walled garden.)

But ... on 26th May 2003 vandal's actions threatened the entire survival of the House with an arson attack. Flames and smoke could be seen for miles around and, although fire-fighters did their best, little more than the shell now remains, hidden from general view by the famous 'Bashall's Wood' trees between it and the Stanifield Lane thoroughfare.



Farington House 5.20 a.m. 26th May, 2003

THE FUTURE

What does the future now hold for William Boardman's once beautiful Georgian House?

After inspections by the Georgian Society, English Heritage, County Architects and Surveyors and local authority representatives, it was reported in the local papers in July 2003 that "A Georgian mansion ruined by fire could be in line for a renovation. Rowland Homes of Station Brow Leyland want to carry out the work and, subject to planning permission by South Ribble Borough Council, it could be repaired and converted into offices to house the Rowland Homes headquarters."

We can now only hope that this permission is granted, that money is available to restore the lovely old house, and that it will eventually 'come alive' again.

TAILPIECE:

"Mr. T.H. Roberts, Farington House Leyland, has had his 33 – 35 h.p. car converted into a motor ambulance, with four stretchers, for the Red Cross Hospital which has been organised by Countess Helene Gleichen and Lady Eva Wemyss. The work of conversion has been carried out in accordance with the Red Cross Society's requirements, by Messrs. W. Harding & Co. Ltd., Preston. The hospital, the personnel of which will comprise three doctors and eight nurses, is being at once taken to the front at the expense of Lady Wemyss.

Mr. Robert's brother, Mr. Norman Roberts, Llandudno, is having his car converted for a similar purpose, and intends taking it to the continent and driving it himself.

The directors of the Wood Milne Co., Preston, have given the cost of a car through "The Times" fund to the Red Cross Society."

Preston Guardian. Saturday, 14th November 1914.

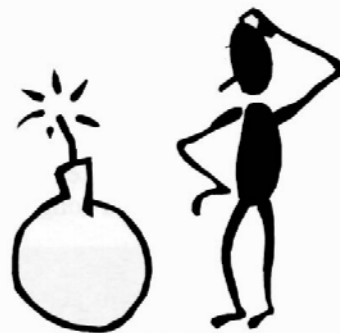
JOAN LANGFORD



SOME MORE HOME GUARD MUSINGS

I've found my old Membership Card for the Home Guard signed by my friend Bill Waring's Dad, Lieutenant H. Waring. Did I promote him or did he become Captain?

Never mind: one Sunday we went on an exercise to Ecclestone on Camouflage in the field, which meant we had to proceed with caution through "enemy" territory to our objective map reference. Our little platoon went as directed, led by Lt. Waring, to be met by an Umpire who told us we were all dead. He blew his whistle and the surrounding bankings came alive with about twenty others who had been blending in with the scenery. We never saw them at all, but they showed us a quick way to the Brown Cow in Ecclestone for a get together. Just like Captain Mainwaring's lot on T.V. we were.



Another one to make you think. During the war when we first joined the Home Guard, clothes rationing was in force; so, as the Home Guard had to be in a continual state of "readiness" in case of invasion, we were instructed to go to work in uniform and take our rifle and bayonet with us, also gas mask and steel helmet and small kit. Truly a fighting force to be reckoned with!!!



We kept our rifles in racks by the main gate and collected them on the way out. The same applied to the other emergency services, N.F.S. the A.R.P. Wardens etc. So clothes rationing didn't really affect us. Perhaps this explains why there was such a rush to "volunteer" for some sort of civil defence service? I'll leave it there for now, more to come later.

From over the Pennines,
WILLIAM HAWKSWORTH.

LEYLAND'S FIRST OLYMPIAN

This is not about Leyland buses or chassis even though some were given the name Olympic and Olympian. I would like to think that these names were chosen in honour of a local sportsman but I doubt if it was the case.

Next year, 2004, is Olympic year and the eyes of the sporting world will be focussed on Athens where the Games are scheduled to take place. It will be the first return, for the Games, to the Greek capital since the revival of the Modern Olympic Games in 1896. (Games were held in Athens in 1906 but are not recognised as official.)

It will be 80 years since a Leyland resident, who also happened to be a Leyland Motors employee, represented Great Britain at the Olympic Games held in Paris in 1924. He was the first to be so honoured. He was John 'Jack' Higginson who lived at 10 Wellington Avenue.

Jack was born in Preston on June 21st 1891 and worked as a core maker at Leyland Motors. In the early part of the 20th century he joined Preston Harriers and AC and became an important member of the club's committee. He was a versatile athlete who ran cross country before the first world war, but he came to prominence in Leyland at the first Leyland Motors Sports in 1921, where he won the works high jump and long jump handicaps and the open 100yds representing Preston Harriers.

Putting his jumping prowess and sporting ability to good use, he took up the hop, step and jump and became a pioneer of the event in England in the early 1920's. Jack was the first Northern Counties champion in 1923 and repeated this feat five times up to 1928 by which time he had been instrumental in founding Leyland Motors Amateur Athletics section.

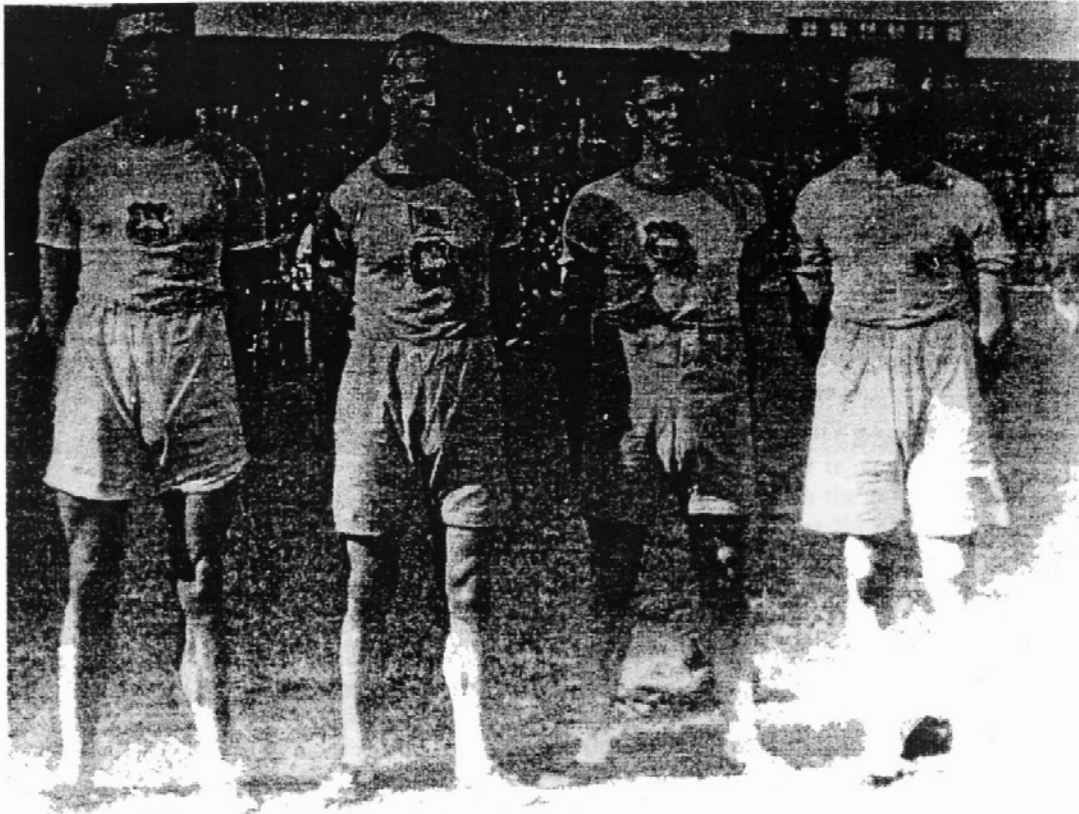


Jack Higginson Senior in action. The white flag is his own marker. The date and venue of this competition was not mentioned in the original caption to the photo.

There were few competitions available for the hop, step and jump and apart from exhibition events his only opportunity to compete in his chosen event was at the Northern Counties Championships. In spite of this he was chosen to represent the Northern Counties in the AAA Championships in 1924, which were in effect the Olympic trials. He improved his best performance dramatically and won the AAA Title with 45' 11". A newspaper report stated, 'The hop, step and jump produced a distinct discovery in the Northerner, J Higginson.'

In all, 61 male athletes were selected for the Olympic Games in Paris. (Women were not allowed to compete in Athletics until 1928.) Of these ten were from the Northern Counties and three from Scotland. Nineteen came from the Universities: Cambridge had 11, Oxford 5 and one each from Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen.

The quality of British jumping and throwing was poor by international standards with only eight being chosen. The hop, step and jump was fully represented with Odde (actually Norwegian) from Polytechnic Harriers and Langley of Sparkhill in addition to Jack Higginson. At 33 Higginson was the third oldest in the team at the time of his participation.



- J. Higginson wearing olympic vest from July 12th 1924. R.Cookson, J. Higginson, G. Groake, J.H.Davies.
Preston Police Sports - North End July 24th 1924 1 mile relay - 1st.

Competing on July 12th in the Colombes Stadium, Jack was unable to proceed beyond the qualifying stage and did not make the final six. His distance of 43' 9'' was the thirteenth best and 2¾" less than Odde in 12th place. The event was won by A. Winter of Australia with a new world record. The champion from Antwerp (1920), V. Tuulos of Finland was third, whilst a future champion, M. Oda of Japan, was 6th. Even Jack's best would not have got him into the top eight.



Two other finals were held on the same day as the hop, step and jump. The Decathlon, on its second day, produced a winner in H. Osborn (USA) who had already won the individual high jump five days earlier. He too set a new world record. The day was one of the hottest in Parisian history and of 30 runners who started the cross country only 16 crossed the finishing line, some in a distressed state. Finland provided the winner in Paavo Nurmi. Three days previously he had won both the 1500m and 5000m in a period of an hour. He proceeded to win the 3000m Team Race the following day after the cross country. He had run seven races in six days and won five gold medals.

The 1924 Games were immortalised in the film, "Chariots of Fire", concentrating on Harold Abrahams and Eric Liddell but totally ignoring Douglas Lowe, a Manchester born athlete, who won the 800m. Lowe also won in Amsterdam four years later.

Another Preston born athlete, Harry Houghton (1901), competed in the 800m too and finished ninth in the final, held on July 9th. He competed for Birchfield Harriers.



Jack's participation in the Olympics received scant coverage in the local press but this did not deter him from continuing his career. He did not represent his country again as the only opportunity occurred at the Olympics. Of 26 international matches held during Jack's athletic career, none staged the hop, step and jump.



In the AAA Championships Jack competed on three further occasions. He was champion again in 1926, 5th in 1927 and 4th in 1928. On the latter two occasions he took part in the colours of Leyland Motors Athletic Club.

In May 1929 Jack was involved in a motoring accident near Hoghton and received an injury that prevented him from appearing, a few days later, in an exhibition of his chosen event at Bowerham Harriers Sports. His last competitive race would appear to have been a win in the Veterans 80 yds at Leyland Motors Sports in 1933.

At the Northern Counties Championships in 1926 at Wath-on-Deane, he set an English Native record of 46' 9" just two days before his 35th birthday. In addition he was also the last winner of the English Native Championships in 1925. Technically he still holds the championship but Preston Harriers have the credit not Leyland Motors though Jack did much of his jumping in a pit dug, during the summer months, on the grass surrounding the football field, in preparation for Leyland Motors Sports.

He continued as Secretary for the Athletic Club at Leyland Motors and became involved as an official of the Northern Counties combining time-keeping and judging roles. Jack made regular contributions to an athletics column in the local press. In 1934 he acted as judge at the Empire Games held in London, where his son, also Jack, competed in the hop, step and jump. By this time Jack had moved from Wellington Avenue and was living at Woodside on Stanifield Lane, Farington.

When the Olympic Games were held at Wembley Stadium, in 1948, Jack was again a judge for the hop, step and jump. Of the British athletes who competed in the 1924 Games, eight were involved in an official capacity in 1948.

In 1949 Jack was elected President of the Northern Counties AA and the following year he ceased his association with Leyland Motors and Preston Harriers and founded Preston AC. Whilst taking a walk in his local park in Nelson, he suffered a heart attack and died on his way to hospital on October 15th, 1966. He was 75.

Leyland Motors introduced new chassis on a regular basis. In 1949 there was the appearance of a production underfloor-engined bus, the new Leyland/MCW Olympic and in 1953 the Tiger Cub based Olympian.

Both types had similar badges incorporating a lighted torch and an olive wreath. Both torch and wreath have Olympic associations. Fortunately the Company did not include the five Olympic rings in their design as this would have been an infringement of copyright as only the International Olympic Committee can issue a licence to its official sponsors.

In March 1951, John Fishwick and Sons purchased two Leyland Olympic HR44 chassis buses followed by a further one in April, two more in July and one in October. Two HR40 chassis buses were also acquired in October. These were in use until the early 1970's.

The first Leyland Olympian chassis, six in all, were obtained in November 1957. The last one was in service up to March 1978.

SOURCES;

Who's Who of UK and GB International Athletes, 1896-1939	Ian Buchanan
Track Stats Vol 40 No 4 November 2002	
The Complete Book of the Olympics	David Wallechinsky
Triple Jump; A Statistical Survey of British Jumping	Ian Tempest
The AAA Championships 1880-1939	Ian Buchanan
Official Athletics Programme for Friday August 6 th 1948 (Olympic Games)	
Leyland Buses in Camera	Gavin Booth
John Fishwick & Sons 1907-1997	David Prescott
Official History 1896-1996	Leyland Motors Ltd
Chorley Guardian and Leyland Hundred Advertiser 1921-1939	
Lancashire Daily Post 1920's	
Barretts Directories	

EDWARD ALMOND

THREE "MUST-GET-THERE"S

The newspaper advertisement announced that a recording of the BBC's Antiques Road Show would take place on Thursday, 24th July 2003 at The Queen Katharine School in Kendal

Three members of the Leyland Historical Society decided that, as enthusiastic 'collectors', they simply could not miss an opportunity to see this popular programme in the making, and also try to find out more about some of their treasures.

Armed with a good supply of sandwiches, cakes and flasks of hot drinks, we set off, up the M6, in great anticipation and excitement. Kendal is not the easiest town to find one's way around, but with the help of a street map (and some AA road signs) we arrived at the school in good time, and even found a convenient parking space without any difficulty. So far, so good.

We knew that there were likely to be lots of people on the same 'mission' as ourselves, but we were a bit surprised to see just how long the queue was. At that stage it stretched along one side of the sports hall, around three sides of a quadrangle, and well along another building – and all outside in not very promising weather. As we joined the queue of resigned participants we were told that our wait (outside) could be about 2½ hours. Well, at least we were well supplied with refreshment, if not seats.

It was interesting watching those people already in the queue, as well as all those still joining it – some clutching their treasures closely, others struggling to manage theirs. Big ones, small ones, very strangely shaped ones. I think there could even have been a 'kitchen sink' as well!

Then a stroke of luck. We saw someone on the production team whom one of us knew and were almost immediately taken into the hall where "it was all happening". Saved from the long ordeal outside, we were soon at the Reception desk, where items were all scrutinised briefly to assess which area the owners should go to for their advice, given the appropriate ticket, and then despatched.

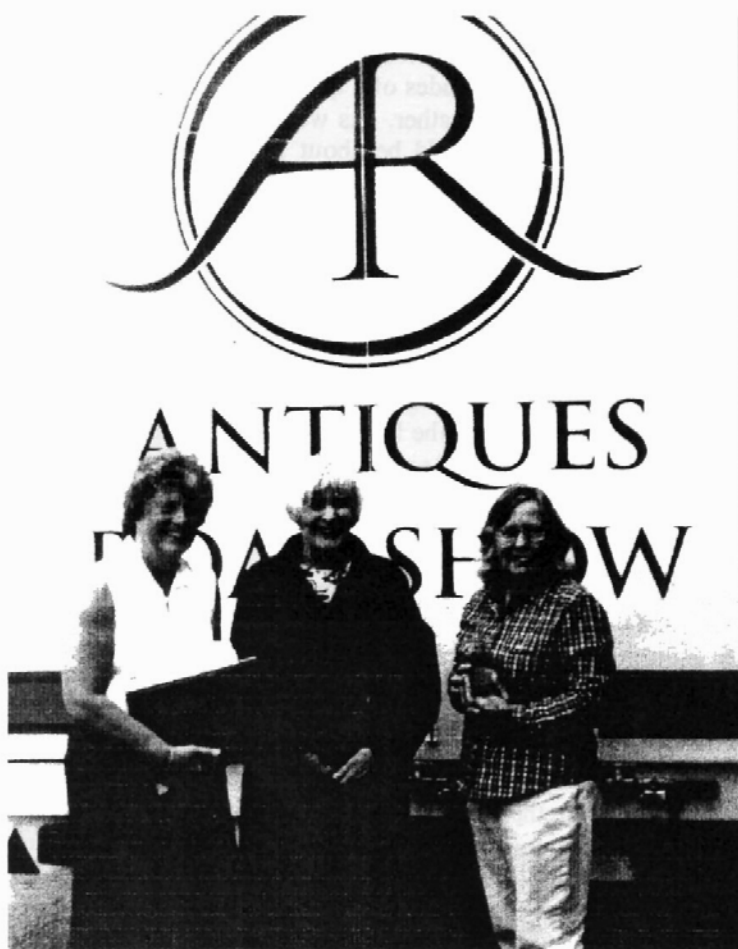
One of us had a slightly different experience here though. A beautifully illuminated manuscript of St. John's gospel caught the Receptionist's eye/imagination and she took it straight to the programme Producer. Yes, he wanted to film this item, did we mind waiting for about an hour? Of course not – we had plenty to do **and** to see.

The event was happening in the school Sports Hall, which meant that everything was rather crowded together. However, the many stewards on hand kept a keen eye on the queues, and did their very best to ensure that people were in the right places and that there was still space for others to circulate. All around the walls of the Hall there were the Antiques Road Show banners and 'name boards' familiar to those who watch the programmes, together with photographs and details of all the experts. On one wall there were several large paintings which had been brought in for examination, and in the middle of the Hall was a collection of pieces of large furniture.

Also taking up quite a lot of space in the middle of the Hall was a dais with a static (large) camera and table & chairs, where items of special interest were being filmed. The programme's second camera was a smaller, roving one, whose operator and team moved around the Hall to the various specialist areas, to film other interesting items.

This roving camera recording delayed consultations a little, but the people in those areas were fascinated watching the experts and owners being 'miked-up' as well as watching the filming - which had to be done from several different angles, and often more than once, to help with editing the programme later.

In the Hall there was also an Antiques Road Show Shop, with books, badges, t-shirts, mugs, pens, tea towels, etc. but in the congestion, and trying to see as much as possible of what was going on - we missed it!



Joan Langford, Elizabeth Shorrock, Shirley Robson

We agreed that all of the experts we each saw were exceptional people. Books, paintings, miscellaneous, porcelain, etc. It did not matter how long their queues were, they had time for everyone – their patience and stamina as well as their tremendous knowledge were truly remarkable, especially in that not-very-big, very crowded, sports hall. I was also amazed at the patience of the crowds. I know that we are a nation of queuers, but rarely for so long and so patiently, but the experts made it all worth while, whether telling us we had a real treasure or simply something very nice. And for those who had not seen a television programme being recorded before, this would have been an interesting new experience and possibly quite a surprising one.

Four hours later, having had our treasures assessed and watched some filming, we did a bit of ‘personality spotting’, then left the programme area for a well-earned picnic. What had we taken? Some paintings, an embroidery, some old documents and books, a snuff box in the form of a wooden shoe, a much loved teddy bear and the illuminated edition of St. Johns gospel.

Later we learned that some 2000 people had attended the recording session on that day.

We had a great day out, and are now looking forward to watching ‘our’ programme, which is due to be shown on BBC 1 on 26th October 2003. Our expert on old and antique books was Dominic Winter.

The Three Must-Get-There's?

ELIZABETH SHORROCK, SHIRLEY ROBSON AND JOAN LANGFORD.



TENON TOPPED GATEPOST –

A LEYLAND HUNDRED ENIGMA ?

During last year's (2002) Christmas holidays I was contacted by the editor of the 3rd *Stone magazine*¹ who wanted me to write an article on Tenon top Gateposts. We had already discussed these unique stone posts dotted around Lancashire earlier in the year and he thought it would make an interesting article. I was pleased to see it appear in the spring/summer (No 46) issue. The following essay is based on that article.

At one time, I enjoyed nothing better than walking along the footpaths and lanes around Chorley and Leyland. Then one winter day this simple pleasure ended; I spotted something strange hidden in the hedgerow. I had walked past it many times and never took much notice of it before, but I could now see it clearly without any obstruction from the foliage. This object was a stone post, but not just any post; this one was different. It was a rough cut stone post 8 inches square and about 5ft tall with a cube on its top surface. "Strange", I thought, and put it at the back of my mind. Out walking a few weeks later in another local village, I spotted two more. One I could put down to an artistic stonemason, but in different parishes? Something strange was going on. My walks have now changed and have become a post hunt.

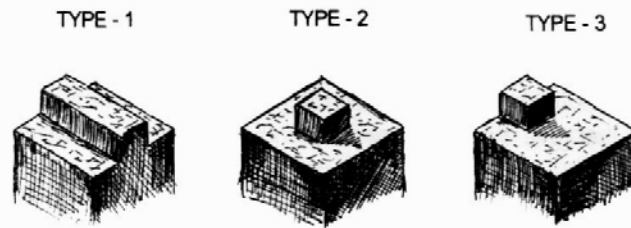
After talking to members from Leyland Historical Society and Chorley and District Archaeological society, I found out that I was not the first person to notice them and in fact these posts had a name locally - 'Tenon Topped Gate Posts' (*T.T.G.P.*). I was also told of the approximate location of another 30 or so in the surrounding district. As there was no definitive list, I decided to take it upon myself to record them. To date, I have managed to survey 18, some of which have not previously been identified. As most are found inside hedges and the broken or fallen ones found in ditches or in the bottom of hedges, I have found winter the best time to find them.

At the present time I don't know the age of the *T.T.G.P.'s* as it is difficult to date stone without any contextual material, or if they are unique to west Lancashire. For this reason I have decided to undertake a full survey of the known posts because once they have been grubbed up in farming changes they will have gone forever and the chance will have been lost. The survey data consists of measurements of the height, width and depth of the post and its tenon, orientation on the long axis of the tenon, a photograph of the tenon and the post and the O.S. grid reference of its location.

I have identified three styles of tenon. In type 1, the tenon extends across the full width of the post. Type 2 tenon is central on the post and type 3 tenons are offset to one side of the post. So far the posts only occur singularly in hedgerows or as one in a pair at a gate entrance and appear to be the right hand post when you are on the lane or track and entering the field.

¹ 3rd Stone is a "Magazine for the New Antiquarian" covering archaeology, folklore and myths.

<http://www.thirdstone.demon.co.uk/home.htm>.



The enigma of the posts is the tenon. Why waste time and energy to carve a tenon on the top of a rough-cut gatepost? Why three different styles of tenon? Was anything fitted on top of the tenon? These questions have caused many heated discussions between friends and colleagues. - The following theories have been put forward as to the use of the gateposts.

The posts were created by one mason who used the tenon as a trademark. From the wide distribution of the post in so many districts and the different types of stone used, I don't believe that the same mason would have worked at several local quarries and over such a large geographical area.

The tenon may have been used as a hitching point for a rope used to fasten a gate. The height of the tenon would suggest that it would be easy for a horse rider to reach without dismounting, but why would the post need a tenon when the rope could just as easily be placed over the post? or how would a type 1 be used in such a fashion.

The tenon topped gatepost may have been used to indicate land use or ownership. I mentioned above that only single posts have been found and so could be used as a marker to signal a message to people in 'the know'. One idea is that they were used to indicate land owned by catholic families, deprived of many civil rights for almost 300 years, and could show a place where safe refuge or passage could be found. It is possible that an inverted wooden 'T' could have been placed on the tenon to give the impression of a cross from a distance and quickly removed in times of trouble.

It has also been suggested that the posts may have indicated land under the ownership of the knights templers. I believe that large areas of land in and around Leyland Hundred were once own by the knights of St. John. More research is required to see if the two tie up.

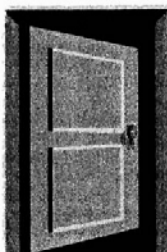
I have found an old lane; now largely overgrown, linking the townships of Leyland and Eccleston. Along its route I have found four posts still upright and another two broken in a ditch, others may now be missing. Walking along the length of the lane, the next post can be seen either over the crest of a rise in the lane or around a bend. I'm not sure if this is significant or just a random effect, but it leads me to think that this may have had something to do with their function. Were these posts used as a method of marking a prescribed route for certain people to follow, i.e. drovers or cattle herders moving livestock around the district?

I am not sure if these posts are unique to Lancashire or to the old Hundreds of Leyland or Blackburn, but I would be interested if anyone has anything similar in their locality. Are they just a simple gatepost, or is there more to it? Any other theories would be welcome. Maybe it's just the 'Indiana Jones' in me and that I like a bit of a mystery, but it would be great if they turn out to be more than just ordinary stone gateposts!

IAN BARROW

MEMORIES!

When I was at school (up to '71) I recall Grundy's dentist on the corner across from Woollies. It was the most frightening place on the planet. There were stories of people dying in the chair, they used to just give everyone gas. I had gas there and I swear I can smell it still.



There were two doors in the dentist's room one in and one out, so no one ever saw the end result of his work. I swear I've given birth twice and it didn't hurt as much as that butchers work on my mouth. Funnily enough we met a man on holiday who, on finding we came from near Leyland, admitted to being Mr Grundy's nephew. He was something posh in Shropshire or somewhere. We tried not to get too close after finding out about his family tree.

Yes, I was forced to go to Grundy, and I'm still paying the price 45 years later. I'm sure everyone remembers the hours of waiting and yes the awful smell of "New gas". Not surprising really, Grundy was struck off for being addicted to it. His mother then took over the business officially, even though she was in her 90's. What a fiddle. My worst horror story was when I had to have 2 teeth pulled and complained about the gas. Grundy didn't bat an eyelid and promptly yanked them out without anything. I didn't get a vote, and never complained again. I was 14 at the time.

All the horror stories in this thread make me think that Mr Grundy was acting as operator / anaesthetist. That was allowed back in the 70's, but was long-since outlawed. The "new gas" mentioned was most likely halothane - it reeks! - No longer in use now. General anaesthetic was confined to specialist centres back in 98 (general dentists no longer allowed to provide it) and as from 1.1.2002 was moved to hospital - largely as a result of bad publicity from one particular case in the Leyland region. Does Grundy's legacy live on in the area?

Oh (while I'm on a roll!) - since the Children's Act was passed, children over the age of 10 can withdraw their consent to any medical procedure, providing they understand the implications of not having the treatment. Anyone forcing treatment on them would thereafter be liable to an assault charge. So Mr Grundy's tactics would land him in court these days!

GRUNDY'S! There was a trail of blood from the door, past the bus stop and round the corner. You couldn't get out of the waiting room once you were in as the door only opened inwards- some brave souls escaped when someone was entering, nearly knocking them over. Waiting room full of smoke and old copies of The Beano in yellowed celluloid covers; view of a sad square of lawn; anyone escaping by the usual way out had to go past, and be accosted by a Forbidding Receptionist. Some sort of liaison here, as Grundy left her all his money, on condition that she never wear lipstick! Sensibly ruled out by ensuing court case as being an unreasonable demand. Grundy got a certain amount per tooth extracted, perhaps more for doubles? I only have five of these left, and imagine him running his fingers through the sackfuls after a good day's harvest.

I wrote Grundy's obituary when a reporter for the Evening Post. He was struck off twice, the first time for cheating the NHS by charging for the services of an anaesthetist while doing it himself, the second time for being found semi-conscious on the floor. Yes he was addicted to the gas!

I also remember his fleet of cars - a Bentley, A Jaguar, a Ford Zodiac and a small Fiat runabout with the registration numbers GRU 21, GRU 22, GRU 23 and GRU 24, which he kept in a specially built garage behind the surgery. I think the building is still there.



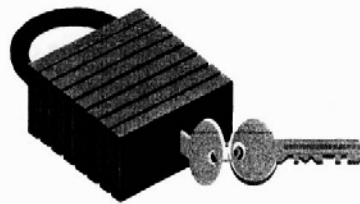
Incidentally his will left his entire fortune (quite a lot as I remember) to his chief nurse ON CONDITION that she didn't wear make-up or jewellery or go out with men for at least 5 years. I wonder if she did keep away from men for 5 years. It would be interesting to hear the ending to that tale

Incidentally the spirit of Grundy is alive and well in NZ. Have just had a huge molar removed, which was causing me grief. The dentist couldn't believe the way it was cobbled together with what looked like a rusty pin. He took great delight in showing it to me. And what's more I clearly remember the particularly painful experience of that filling which was in 1946. At least it stood the test of time I suppose.

Hi all, I worked for a short while in one of the shops that Grundy's was split into. The lady in question visited a few times, no make up or men in sight☹ I hate attending the dentist, still have a fear today (thanks to Mr Grundy) He used to strap you in the chair and thought he was being kind when he gave you a Golliwog (I know its not politically correct but what else do you call them?) to hold! I do have one fond memory of the place though, the garden was lovely and I always liked to stop and look at the fish in the pond, shame they got rid of that.

VANESSA

We were never Grundy's patients. I think someone had died in the chair in his surgery and my mother wouldn't allow us to go there. We went to Proctor's in Preston (next to the Gaumont) instead. But I did once go to Grundy's to give moral support to a school friend, John Birchall, and what I saw was later confirmed by my sister-in-law who worked there. Under the receptionist's counter were three buttons operating electric locks. The first was pressed when you rang the doorbell to release the front door. Patients presented their appointment book for checking, after which the receptionist pressed the second button, unlocking the waiting room door. This closed automatically behind you, locking itself. But there was no handle on the other side of the door anyway.



Once in the waiting room, a patient had to leave by the door at the far end, which led to a hall (hexagonal, I think) off which were the surgeries. There was a corridor leading back to reception from this hall, but there was a third locked door at the end of it, next to the hatch where you had to pay for your treatment. Only when you'd done so was that door opened and you could leave.

I also heard that after the NHS came in and paid dentists "piece work" rates for treatment, Grundy designed and had built a chair on rails with three or four cupboards alongside, each filled with separate sets of the necessary equipment for extractions. This way, he could speed up the system by pushing the chair back to the next equipped cupboard between patients while the nurse re-equipped the used cupboard. He got through dozens of patients in a day, and made a mint!

All those locked doors would never get past a health and safety inspection these days - how would all the patients get out in the event of a fire? Crafty way of ensuring payment though - all general practice dentists have their share of bad debtors.



RACING DRIVER GENIUS

Eighty years ago, a man considered a genius by his contemporaries left the employ of Leyland Motors Ltd. to pursue a dream which was fulfilled but ultimately led to his death. He was Parry Thomas who had joined the then named Leyland Motors (1914) Ltd in 1917

Although known as Parry Thomas, his parents had registered his birth in the name of John Godfrey Parry Thomas. His birthplace was at Wrexham on April 6th, 1885. His father was the Rev. J.W. Thomas who was a curate at this time and his mother had been a Parry and it is said her family had connections with the infamous Judge Jeffreys.

John was the second child having a brother, Geoffrey, who was two years older. Whilst still a toddler the family moved, in January 1887, to the village of Bwlch-y-cibau in Monmouthshire (now part of Powys) where the Rev. Thomas had been appointed vicar.

During his sixteen years at Bwlch-y-cibau there were three further additions to the family - all girls-Molly, Madge and Joyce. John attended Oswestry School (founded in 1407) which lay approximately 12 miles to the north. Unfortunately the school have no records of him except for his motoring exploits of later years. As the headteacher wrote, *'There is no particular mention of any academic or sporting success.'* What we do know is that at 17 he had left Oswestry and enrolled on an electrical engineering course at the City and Guilds Engineering College in London. On completion of his course he was involved in research work on induction motors under a Professor Ayrton.

The transition from the nineteenth century to the twentieth century was a period of growth and development for mechanical vehicles and undoubtedly the advent of the motor car had caught the imagination of the young Thomas. He gained further experience as an apprentice at Siemens Brothers & Co Ltd. between 1905-7. He was also employed at Clayton and Shuttleworth Ltd.

The growing importance and popularity of engines probably influenced Thomas in setting up his own business for electrical transmissions for motor vehicles. He evidently had the makings of an entrepreneur but he could not have managed without the backing of his mother who *'assisted him, financially during his early years as an engineer.'* (Tours)

His mother was not his only financial support as K.Thompson and W.F.Hickman helped to form the two companies bearing his name. These were Thomas Transmissions Ltd and Thomas Foreign Patents Ltd., with Thomas as a joint managing director.

Somewhere between 1907 and 1911 Thomas Transmissions had attracted the attention and interest of Leyland Motors, for in the latter year Leyland had produced railcars for overseas railways which were equipped with the Thomas system of petrol electrical transmission. Locally, Morecambe acquired a number of 20 seater tramcars.

However, Thomas had problems with facilities for coping with heavy work. When Leyland was approached by Thomas, Henry Spurrier arranged for one of Leyland's bays to be made available for his use. Not only that, but Leyland allowed some of their mechanics and fitters to be hired when Thomas required them. Another local firm, Dick Kerr Ltd, situated in Preston, was employed to do the electrical work which was unavailable at Leyland.

The advent of WW1 changed the course of his life. It had become apparent that Thomas' transmissions were too expensive to produce and their efficiency did not outweigh their economic value, so the two companies he had formed were wound up. However, his work had not gone unnoticed in government quarters for he was employed as an advisor working on aero engines. Then, in 1917, he was also sitting on a committee concerning itself with the design of tanks.

Between 1914 and 1918 Leyland Motors production was diverted to the war effort, in particular to providing military transport vehicles for the Army Service Corps and the Royal Flying Corps. Significantly, Leyland had been experimenting with an 18 cylinder aero engine in 1916 but an earlier than expected visit by Inspectors meant that the engine was not fully ready and a failure ensued. The Inspectors were not impressed.

By the following year Thomas had been taken on by Leyland Motors as their Chief Engineer. No doubt his advisory role with the government and the early experiments by Leyland in aero engines left an impression that may have influenced his future career.

The Directors and Henry Spurrier III in particular, for whom it was a pet project, had designs on producing a luxury touring car. In Thomas they had a willing and enthusiastic designer. According to Tours, *'The idea of starting from scratch to produce a perfect motor car, with no restraint in the matter of cost, must be a designer's dream.'*

His stay as Chief Engineer was brief but he made an impression on those who worked or came into contact with him. From the early editions of the Leyland Torque it is possible to garner some indication of his character whilst working at Leyland.

In September 1919, there is a snippet under 'One Hears': *'That Mr Thomas has a queer pocket where he keeps his young—as an experiment no doubt.'*

From December 1919, there is a cartoon of him at Paris Railway Station with a tyre round his neck and suitcase in hand with the caption, *'A Very Tired Traveller—Mr J G P Thomas.'* In the same edition there was an announcement of new HQ appointments. *'Mr J G P Thomas, Chief Engineer, takes charge of both Drawing Offices.'*

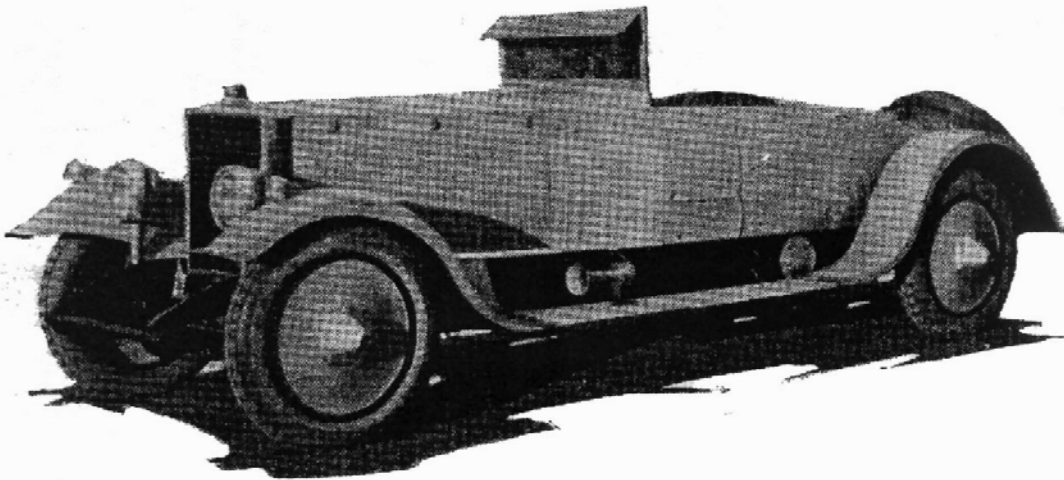
The Company had recently instigated a 'Suggestions' scheme with a committee consisting of General Manager, Chief Engineer, a Charge Hand and a Mechanic to act as Judges.

In the Spring of 1920 he represented the Staff, in a Charity Football Match, against the Married Foremen, playing as a forward. There is a photo of him in shorts and jacket preparing to take part. His sporting talents could not prevent the Staff from losing. His sporting activities also included cricket and tennis. There is well known local photo, from June 1921, of Leyland Motors Cricket Team in front of the old (though then recently built) wooden pavilion. Playing alongside in the team was Jack Iddon who would later go on to represent Lancashire and England at cricket.

Thomas assisted at Leyland Motors Sports as did other Senior Management and Directors who took prominent roles in officiating at the annual Sports Days. His role seems to have been organising the Children's Races and he is reported as providing for the cost of the prizes and helping with the starting. He was also known for his generosity in providing beds for sick children in Hospitals, though he did this without seeking any publicity.

On September 15th, 1920, the Wellington House Engineering Society had been formed and the programme of speakers for 1921 included Parry Thomas who was to read a paper on 'Power Transmission.' He was obviously involved in all aspects of the Leyland Motors enterprises. However he did not live in Leyland but was in 'digs' in Preston. Later he shared his accommodation with his assistant, Reid Railton, who had been appointed to that position in 1921.

Meanwhile Thomas was working on the Straight Eight. Turner in 'The Leyland Papers' wrote; *'As the war came to an end, the directors relished the prospect of peace-time business—they had been working on a luxury, 8-cylinder car, the Leyland Straight Eight, designed by Parry Thomas and originally priced at £2,500, which was intended to provide a worthy sparring partner for Rolls-Royce.'*



Leyland Straight Eight car, designed by J.G.Parry Thomas

The Leyland Torque for July, 1920 had this to say about the new car; *'The Leyland eight-cylinder Touring Car is no longer a secret, its existence has been detected and recorded in one of the trade papers. This handsome machine, on the design of which so much thought has been expended, is now on its early road trials and so far the progress reported is remarkable. Space has been booked for it at the Olympia Show in November.'*

It would appear that when the car was exhibited it was highly praised. The Leyland Torque for January, 1921, reported that *'Prince Albert and the royal personages were very interested in the 'Eight' at Olympia,'* and that *'a visitor at Olympia was heard to say of the Leyland Eight that 'Nowt but Lancashire could do it.'* The new model was displayed 'next door to the Rolls and Lanchester and nor far from the Lancia and Isoltee.'

The 'Motor' wrote of the car; *'The most interesting car of the Show this year. Its designer, Mr Thomas, has built a car which aims at and succeeds in being the most remarkable and probably the best in the world.'*

Working in the Leyland Eight car department was an apprentice, Newton Iddon (later to become a member of the research division at Leyland), who, between 1983-88, was President of Leyland Historical Society. He served on the Committee for 18 years.

Another who helped with the development of the car was Anthony Reid Railton who was ten years younger than Thomas. He had been born at Alderly Edge and educated at Rugby and Manchester University. He served an apprenticeship with Leyland Motors from 1915-17.

In 1918 he was serving with the RNVR Motor Boat section. Then, in 1920, he went to the USA to study Factory Layout and the following year was appointed assistant to Thomas. After leaving Leyland he worked with both John Cobb and Malcolm Campbell on vehicles which held the land speed record and the water speed record (Blue-Bird II). Ironically both Cobb and Campbell were to be Thomas' rivals in the mid 1920s.

There were only fourteen production models of the Straight Eight made. The first one was an open four seater with disappearing hood. Two of the cars were purchased by the Maharaja of Patiala and because no maintenance manuals were produced Railton travelled with the cars to India. Once there he explained the working and upkeep to the garage staff.

Another owner was Michael Collins who was once a director of intelligence for the IRA and who negotiated Irish dominion status in 1921. He did not enjoy his new acquisition for long as he was shot and killed in August 1922. The car suffered a bullet through the windscreen.

1922 saw the demise of the car. It was the last time it was displayed at the Motor Show at Olympia and financial problems meant that Leyland had to cut back on expensive projects. Before this Thomas had persuaded the Directors at Leyland that it would be good publicity for the Straight Eight to be entered in racing at Brooklands.

So, in 1922, Thomas took part in thirteen competitions between May and November. Eleven of these were at Brooklands and one each at Holme Moss and Laindon. At most of the meetings he competed in more than one race. Races were organised according to Class (relating to engine size) and some were handicap events.

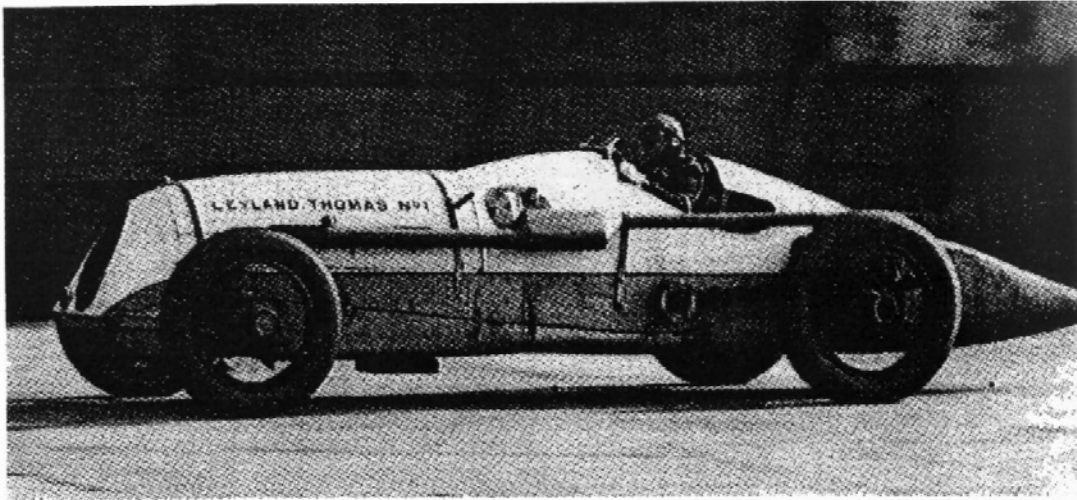
After initial difficulties and teething problems, Thomas became accustomed to the intricacies of the Brooklands track. By the end of the racing season he had achieved 4 first places, 10 second places and 6 third places. His first win at Brooklands was on June 6th. He had also set 16 British Class records for races with a flying start covering a range of ½ mile to 10 miles. The 10 miles record was also a world record and was achieved on November 9th.

The following year he took part in 13 competitions between March and September. Holme Moss had been substituted for Boulogne, his first foreign race. He was more successful with 9 firsts, 4 seconds and one third. He set 20 Class records over a wide range from ½ mile to 200 miles and from 2 hours to 9 hours. Two more world records were recorded at 5 miles and 10 miles at Brooklands on June 20th.

During both years he had been competing in a Leyland car. However, when the Leyland Motors Directors made the decision to abandon production, they gave Thomas a virtual ultimatum. Hugh Tours wrote, *'Leyland had been extremely kind and understanding. They made it quite clear that their Chief Engineer must either attend to his work at Leyland or become a racing driver at Brooklands, and Thomas had not been in two minds about the decision.'*

Thomas and Leyland parted company amicably and *'he was allowed to take to Weybridge several complete chassis and all the available spares and parts that he would reasonably require. The career that was to bring him so prominently into the public eye had now begun.'* (Tours)

His racing season for 1924 began in April. During the year he took part in 26 competitions of which 21 were at Brooklands. The others were at Montlhery(2) and one each at Boulogne, Skegness and Saltburn. He gained 10 firsts, 8 seconds and 5 thirds. It proved to be a prolific season in terms of records - 47 Class and 15 world records were established at distances from ½ mile to 1800Km. By now he had changed his racing car to the Leyland-Thomas No 1 and he set world records at Brooklands on June 20th for one mile (FS) in both directions. Again at Brooklands (July 14th) he established a 5 miles (FS) world record. A week later at the same venues he broke the 100Km (SS) world record. However on September 2nd. at Brooklands he drove a Lanchester to a new 12 hour world's best.



- The car that set records at Brooklands

In November he had reverted to his faithful Leyland-Thomas No 1 and at Brooklands on the 14th set world records for 50Km and 50miles. Three days later the one hour, 100miles and 150Km world records were broken. The following day the 200Km, 250Km and 150miles records became his property. His appetite for racing was outstanding for on November 19th world records were set for 200km, 200miles and 2 hours. All his records had been achieved in the G Class category.

1924 is remembered in motor racing circles for the death of Count Louis Vorow Zborowski during the Italian Grand Prix whilst driving a Mercedes. His father, Count Eliot, had also died in a motoring accident on a hill climb in France in 1902. The Zborowskis were a wealthy family and Louis indulged himself in big cars powered by large engines. These cars were known affectionately as the Chitty-Chitty-Bang-Bang tribe. Ian Fleming, the creator of 007, modelled his story, Chitty-Chitty-Bang-Bang, on Zborowski's cars.

Parry Thomas visited the Zborowski home in Kent and purchased the Count's 'Higham Special' for £125. It was a monster of a car with a 27 litre V12 Liberty aero engine.

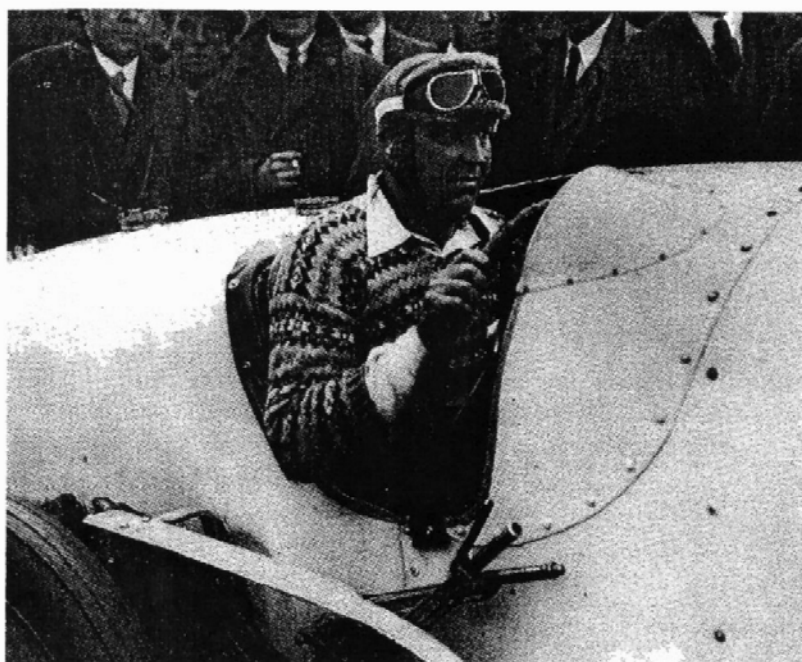
The vehicle was towed to Brooklands where Thomas set about modifying it and renamed the car 'Babs.' Unfortunately Thomas did not have the resources available that he had had at Leyland and any development was limited by finance.

Thomas had set his sights on setting the absolute land speed record but he had other British drivers with the same dream.

He resumed his next season on April 25th and continued up to September 12th, during which time he took part in 12 competitions - 10 at Brooklands and 2 at Montlhery—gaining 8 firsts, 4 seconds and 3 thirds. He established 19 Class records in the B and E categories. Still driving his Leyland-Thomas No1 he set a 10 miles world's best on June 15th; 50Km, 50miles and 100Km on July 2nd, and finally 1 hour and 100miles on July 14th—all at Brooklands.

Work had continued on 'Babs' and finally in October he felt ready to make an attempt on the land speed record. This took place on Pendine beach, overlooking Carmarthen Bay, but conditions were far from ideal and he was unsuccessful.

The 1926 season opened on April 4th. In all he participated in 16 competitions/trials—14 at Brooklands and 2 at Pendine. He gained 8 firsts, 4 seconds and 3 thirds.



Parry Thomas in "Babs" at Pendine Sands in 1925

His moment of glory came on April 27th at Pendine Sands when, driving the 35cwt 'Babs', he set world records for the 1km and one mile (FS) achieving 169.238mph and 168.074mph respectively. The following day he improved both records with 170.09mph and 170.624mph.

Reverting to his Leyland-Thomas No1 he broke more world records at Brooklands. On June 8th the 10miles, October 7th the 500Km, 500miles and 3 hours, and October 21st one hour. During the year he had established 21 Class and 9 world records.

He could not rest on his laurels for on February 4th, the following year, Malcolm Campbell took the land speed record at Pendine. February had not been a good month for Thomas. He had had influenza and 'was looking older than his 41 years.' (Tours)

However he would not be deterred and was determined to regain the record.

The beginning of March was dreadful at Pendine. It was raining and the temperature was cold. Conditions improved considerably on the 3rd and Thomas decided to make a trial. His first run was fast but not fast enough to break the record. Black smoke could be seen coming from the car so Thomas had his mechanic, Jack Pullen, tune the car, make some alterations to the carburettor settings and change the plugs.

Holthusen describes what then took place;

'Smoke was still billowing out of the exhausts when he started his sixth run close to the Beach Hotel. Thomas had just completed the measured mile on his return when 'Babs' was seen to slow. It suddenly went out of control, rolled, righted itself, then swathed a gigantic arc in the sand, ending up with the engine ablaze.'

What of the driver? Thomas was found sitting upright in his seat but he was horribly injured and almost certainly dead when the rescuers arrived. The drive chain had broken and whipped into the car catching Thomas on the head and nearly decapitating him.

His former friend and assistant, Reid Railton, arrived at Pendine half-an-hour after the accident and conducted an unofficial investigation. His conclusion was that the wire spokes of the rear wheel had collapsed due to the great speed and a piece of one had caught between the chain and the chain wheel causing it to break the chain.

The official cause of death according to the verdict of the inquest was *'Mr Thomas had died from wounds in the head which were the result of a motor accident.'* Parry Thomas was the first fatality in the quest of the world's land speed record. It was 29 years from the first time records were officially begun.

His funeral was a private service at The Hermitage on Monday, March 7th. Afterwards his coffin was taken for burial to Byfleet Church. Six vehicles were required to transport the numerous floral tributes to the cemetery. Those from Leyland included.- C M and Mrs Nixon, Henry Spurrier snr, Henry Spurrier jnr, Chairman and Directors of Leyland Motors, General Manager and Staff at Leyland Motors, The Old Workmen who knew him at Leyland's. Others were from R Railton, John Cobb and Captain and Mrs Campbell.

His grave was marked with a large granite stone cross and contained the epitaph;

*'Life is eternal and loss is immortal
and death which is only the horizon
is nothing save the limit of our sight.'*

The Chorley Guardian and Leyland Hundred Advertiser for March 5th contained only 2½ column inches (27 lines) at the end of a heading 'Here and There' tucked away on the inside pages. It noted that *'the flag over the main entrance to the Chorley Branch of the Leyland Motors was flown at half-mast yesterday (Friday).'* Presumably a similar mark of respect was shown at headquarters in Leyland. Subsequent editions of the paper made no reference to his funeral or his career.

'Babs' was buried almost immediately on Pendine Sands and remained there until 1969, when it was unearthed from beneath the site of an old police hut belonging to the MOD who had used the beach as an experimental range. The car was rebuilt by Owen Wyn Owen and placed in a museum.

What was Thomas like? Holthusen wrote -

'People liked Thomas. He was a large, friendly man, unmarried, slightly awkward in company, who smoked a lot, had very few topics of conversation apart from automobiles and whose teeth, it was once said, looked 'as though they had been thrown in at a distance.'

His obituary notice in the Leyland Journal included the following description;

'Thomas was a very shy fellow, he clearly discouraged intimacy, he disliked hero-worship and blatant publicity. ... He was diffident of praise, very proud but very modest, He could be angry. When worried or troubled he could at times be irritable. But the deep kindness of his nature brought him almost at once with an apology or a proffered handshake to one whom he may have felt he had hurt. His brilliant technical skill, his primal strength and athleticism, his amazing nerve and pluck, his high sense of honour, even his moods of abstraction, all these endeared him as a colleague and a comrade.'

Railton described him as 'a master of original thought' who had 'an outstanding ability to arrive at a sound solution of a new problem by the logical application of first principles.' George Birtill wrote, 'so far as Leyland is concerned Parry Thomas was the greatest genius after Sumner.' (James Sumner, born in Leyland, was an early pioneer of steam driven vehicles in the latter part of the nineteenth century. He formed the Leyland Steam Company, which was the forerunner of Leyland Motors.)

In Leyland there is no monument or plaque to mark his presence in the town. The British Commercial Vehicle Museum in King St, in Leyland, does have a wide collection of Leyland vehicles which, no doubt, featured many innovations and designs for which Thomas was responsible. Sadly the future of the Museum is in jeopardy and is likely to be transferred out of the district.

SOURCES;

Parry Thomas, Designer Driver	Hugh Tours (1959)
Leyland Torque (1919-21)	Leyland Motors
The First Fifty Years	Leyland Motors (1946)
The Leyland Papers	Graham Turner (1971)
The Fastest Men on Earth	P J R Holthusen
British Motor Manufacturers Web Site	
The Game	Marshall Cavendish
Oswestry School	
Chorley Guardian and Leyland Hundred Advertiser (March 6 th , 1927)	
The Green Pastures	George Birtill (1968)
Who's Who 1944	

EDWARD ALMOND

FARINGTON MILL WAGES TINS

In the 1800's when mill workers collected their wages - usually on a Saturday lunchtime - they went to the Cashier's office where, laid out in rows on his desk, there was a series of wooden trays containing the workers wages tins. The Cashier's trays each had the department names (e.g. Card Room; Spinning Room; Weaving Shed) on them and every tin had a worker's number on it. Each worker told the Cashier his/her department and then their work number, and they were then handed the tin containing their wages (coins).

When Farington Mill closed in 1972 the equipment and stock was removed, but much paper work (including mill ledgers) and other items were simply abandoned in a loft. This was only accessible through a hatch in the ceiling of the building which is now owned by Centurion Furniture Supplies. Tragically, the paperwork and ledgers were later put onto a huge bonfire. Also in the loft were about 10 of the wage tin trays, together with 200 - 300 wage tins, and thank goodness some of these were saved and 'given new homes'.

Wages trays and tins varied from mill to mill, but the Farington mill trays were of mahogany and measured 18" x 24", each with gold lettering on the front edge indicating the department to which it related. The wage tins themselves measure 45 mm in diameter and 50 mm high, with the worker's numbers stamped into the hinged lids.

The small size of these tins was probably an indicator of the amount of wages paid - an old penny and an old half-crown just fit in. In 1840 the average wages paid to mill workers for a 69-hour week were:-

Carders - 8s.3d; Spinners (usually men) - 25s. 8d; Weavers - 10s.10d.

I find it incredible that these delicate little containers have survived all the problems at the mill during its 140+ years, including several serious fires, the cotton famine years, the change of mill ownership in 1905, weekly handling plus the years since the closure. Perhaps it is because they were forgotten in the loft that they did survive.

I now have two of these tins, in safe keeping for posterity. I do not know which department trays they came from, but their numbers are 174 and 908.

JOAN LANGFORD



MEDIEVAL FOREST MANAGEMENT

IN NORTH WEST ENGLAND

The woodlands and forests of Northwest England, including Lancashire, in the medieval period were a permanent and important part of the landscape, both physically and economically. As such their management would have been of prime importance to both the ruling and the peasant classes, providing both raw materials and work.

The extent of medieval woodland in this area would have been formidable. Being a remnant of the *old wildwood*ⁱ, In the early medieval period (1000 – 1100 AD), North West England was still heavily wooded, broken only by trackways and settlement clearings. Large areas of woodlands were under the control of the king and his earls, to the exclusion of the local peasant population.

The Domesday Book lists the amount of land that was under woodland and who held it. For the area of Lancashire "*inter Ripam et Merham*" ("between the Ribble and Mersey") 1619 Miles² (419611 Hectares) were woodland (see appendix) compared with 1.2 Miles² (314 Hectares) in 1988ⁱⁱ.

The management and use of trees during this period produced different types of woodland depending on how the landscape was put to use. Michael Astonⁱⁱⁱ suggests that woodland management was a self-generating system, the supply of wood and timber were infinitely renewable and two types of crops were taken. The first crop was taken at intervals of 30 years; this was trees for timber production. Timber being defined as any trunk or tree branch that was greater than 5" in diameter i.e. thicker than a man's upper arm^{iv}. The second crop was of underwood and coppice cropped in seven year cycles. Underwood which was the small, bushier younger growth found on the woodland floor was used especially for fencing, thatching wood and for wattle in wattle-and-daub walling. A system of rotation was adopted so that different crops could be taken from different parts of the wood each year, and in order to guarantee a regular supply of these raw materials, specific management techniques were used.

Coppicing known as *Silva minutia* in the Domesday Book, is derived from the French word *couper* 'to cut'^v. This technique required the tree to be cut down to ground level leaving a stool, the main trunk then regenerates by putting out a number of smaller trunks. Until the young growths were strong enough to withstand browsing by animals, the coppiced tree required protection, and earth banks topped with a fence of dead or live hedge surrounded the coppiced areas. In large woods, different sections of coppice were cropped at intervals over several years to provide usable wood for various uses depending on the variety of tree. Evidence for such activity is in place names such as Spring Wood on the Heskin Hall estate at Heskin, which may indicate an area of coppice woodland. The name is derived from the fact that once cut new growth would 'spring' up from the old stools. Typical trees species suitable for coppicing were ash, elm, hazel and maple.

Scattered throughout the coppiced woodland were *standard trees*, usually of oak, that would be allowed to grow to their full height, over a period of between 30 to 70 years. These were used to produce the heavier constructional timber; and would only be felled in special circumstances.

On the edges of the woodlands and in hedgerows *pollarded trees* would be found. Derived from the Dutch word *Polled* or N. Fr *Poll* to behead^{vi}, these trees were clean cut at a height of between 2 to 5m and, just as in the case of coppicing, the tree would regenerate and produce new growth, the only difference being that this was out of the reach of grazing animals. Typical trees species suitable for pollarding would be oak, ash, hornbeam, willow and beech.

Producing a 'lollipop' shaped tree, *shredding* was the regular removal of lower lateral branches from the tree trunk. This produced a thin trunk and a permanent leafy crown at the top^{vii}. The branches were probably used for firewood and the trunks for long straight poles.

On the lowland areas of Lancashire and especially around Croston and Eccleston, oak would have been the most common tree to be found in woodlands, and in fact still is. It is a strong durable wood, which is pliable and workable years after felling, but when seasoned it is virtually impossible to saw and axe across the grain^{viii}. A tree grown in the open could have a 25m canopy with several massive branches whilst a tree grown in a woodland environment would grow tall and straight with fewer branches. The smaller trees would be felled 'as and when' required. Evidence from medieval timber framed 'Cruck' building show that the carpenter would choose the smallest tree that would generate the required size of beam to minimise waste and effort. Northwest England has a high density of 'cruck' building; the curved uprights are formed from bent trees, which usually grow on steep exposed sites^{ix}. The massive centre posts of Windmills required a specific size of wood and were made from a standard tree usually oak and could easily be 12m long, 600mm diameter and weighing 3-4 tonn.^x Prestige construction projects could require unique timbers of such large dimensions that they would have to be sourced tens of miles away from the construction site. This was the case for the Lantern at Ely cathedral in 1328. These beams needed to be 19m long and a diameter of 800mm at the top^{xi}. This type of sourcing must surely have taken place in the Northwest also.

Following the Norman victory at Hastings in 1066, the management of the countryside became more focussed on its profit making potential. Just like a present day multinational who are only interested in asset stripping taking over a smaller company, the new Norman rulers needed a comprehensive survey of what land was available, how it was used and who owned it. This was carried out in 1086 in the form of the Domesday Book. The Normans wanted to squeeze every penny they could out of the land and one way in which this could be achieved was to maximise the way that the land was managed.

As well as producing wood and timber from the woodlands, other types of 'businesses' were incorporated into them, one of the simplest being the introduction of 'managed' animals in the form of deer, boar and game birds within the new parks. Deer and wild boar would live deep in the woods, and to assist with their capture a clearing of woodland pasture known as *launds* (*Silva Pastoralis* in the Domesday Book) would be formed. Food would be placed in these clearings and once the wild animals were used to this regular supply of food they would become semi-domesticated and easier to catch.

Documentary evidence exists that shows that at in 1295 at Ightenhill, an income of £3-6-1d was generated from the capture of 80 wild boar from the wooded park^{xii}. In higher districts of Lancashire and particular in Yorkshire, areas that were once launds may be indicated in place names that contain the element *thwaite*, derived from the O.N. *þveit* a forest clearing such as Micklethwaite – the large clearing^{xiii}.

Woodland was also managed to allow various other ‘crops’ and activities to take place. At certain times of the year domestic animals would be let into the woodland to graze ‘at a price’. In the autumn, domestic pigs would be allowed to graze on the *pannage*, that is the acorns or beechnuts that fall from the trees. Specialist management techniques would be required to ensure the availability of this crop. Cattle may have been brought in *agisted* and fed on the stubble once the hay had been cut and removed from the launds. In Toxteth Park in 1258, £0-4-3d was paid to allow cattle to feed on the *fogg* (hay stubble)^{xiv}.

Tan Pit farm, part of Gillibrand Hall estate in Chorley, once stood adjacent to the Halls woodland; this may have been an early tanning site. The bark would have been stripped from coppiced thinnings and used in the tanning of hides, producing a dual income from one raw material.

A raw material that was highly valued during the mediaeval period was bees wax. One of its main uses would be for bees-wax candles, used by the monastic communities. These candles produced a cleaner burn than the tallow candles used by peasant classes. Place names containing the element *Biker* may indicate areas of woodlands used by beekeepers such as Bickerstaffe in Lancashire^{xv}.

Physical evidence for the management of mediaeval woodlands has all but disappeared in the 21st century. But, indicator species such as Dog’s Mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*), Lesser Celendine (*Ranunculus ficaria*), and drifts of Bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), and Ramsons (*Allium ursinum*) found growing in an isolated copse may be the only evidence left to show that it was once part of a larger woodland environment. ‘Out of context’ place names now found in the middle of new housing estates may also hint of past uses. Colt House Close, part of the Langdale housing estate at Leyland is built on the site of Colt House Wood. Colt Wood may be a clearing in a woodland section of a park used to separate juvenile male horses from the rest of the herd.

The former BAE SYSTEM factory at Chorley (the ROF) was a 1000-acre site that has been closed to public access for over 50 years and contains the largest expanse of untouched woodland in the area. Worden wood takes its name from Worden Hall, the original seat of the Anderton/Farington family, which dates back to at latest 1509^{xvi}. This woodland still contains ditches and banks, and large pollarded trees once stood on its edge (these trees were cut down during the redevelopment of the site). The 1928 Ordnance Survey Map clearly shows rides and possible fish ponds still existed within the wood.

Following the Norman invasion in 1066, the governing of the country and in particular the countryside and woodland management passed over to the ‘accountants’. This fundamental shift in management required the maximisation of profit from the woodland environment.

MEMORIES OF KAY DAVENPORT'S CHILDHOOD CHRISTMASSES

IN LEYLAND

Travelling by bus at Christmas time – all the way from Preston to Leyland for the family Christmas dinner – was an annual ritual not long after the First World War. It was a never-to-be-forgotten experience that journey to Bow Brook House. We might have been going to Leningrad instead of Leyland, for our Christmas dinner. The excitement was intense as we made preparations to depart from our Frenchwood home before it was properly light, and the lamplighter was still about in Selbourne Street. Christmas stockings had been emptied and the pink sugar pig with its thin string tail had been wrapped in a paper bag for the bus journey.

Would we really travel on a Leyland Lion? Would we see Golden Hill, where dad had been born at the Police Station? Lions and Golden Hills sounded magical then. So we set off, dad wearing his bowler hat and mother wearing her fur tippet with her 'facecloth' coat. I had the task of buttoning up the little pearl buttons on dad's grey spats. I was annoyed because I had to wear my purple felt gaiters which buttoned right up over the knees, and were so stiff that I walked with a slight stagger. How I longed for gaiters of soft brown leather like the ones my friend Alice owned.

We set off through the silent early morning streets to where we caught the bus at Starch-house Square. It was cold in the bus, so I was then glad of the despised gaiters, and my yellow woollen gauntlet gloves. I think the bus must have been the only one to get us to Leyland in the morning, else why the start from home soon after the crack of dawn?

It was almost all countryside on the journey, which seemed endless – misty fields, stark, bare trees, the air frosty, breath like steam against the cold bus windows. Leyland was really just a village, mother said; indeed, dad had once danced on the village green as a Morris-man. (It was hard to believe that my pipe-smoking, balding father had tripped lightly on the grass, waving little fancy sticks with bells and ribbons on them, and that he had once dressed in silk breeches and a fancy waistcoat.)

At grandfather's house in Bow Lane there was a flagged path to the back door where stood a huge water butt for the rainwater for washing woollens. After the cold, the warm kitchen with its big fire and smell of dinner cooking was delicious. Aunts bustled about helping in the buttery and kitchen; uncles didn't help in those days! The house was impressive after our terraced home, and I was a bit in awe of Grandfather Williams. He had been Leyland's first Chief Inspector of Police before he retired, and I could never believe that as a constable he had had his collar ripped by a poacher.



Grandma was a small woman who had borne 11 children, all alive and most of them with their families at Bow Brook House for Christmas dinner. All the small fry were packed on low horsehair sofas, very prickly to bare legs – and we mostly found sixpences in the pudding. There were presents from the tree and games later, but first the men retired to the study to smoke cigars; children were not allowed there without permission, for grown-ups with large families knew what they were about when they wanted peace and quiet.

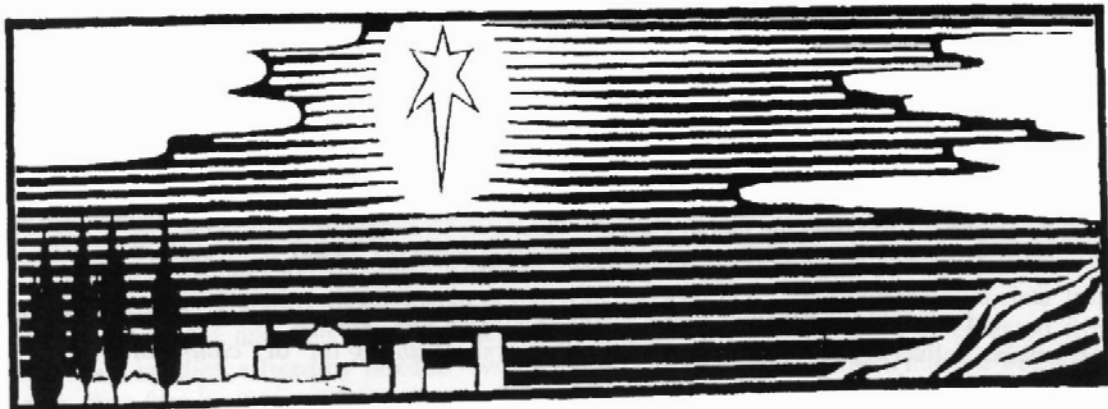
There was an inside lavatory beyond the kitchen, and the ladies and little girls had to line up to use it, the only time I've ever seen a queue for a loo in a private house.

The games were simple - ring-on a string, hunt the thimble and musical chairs. We learned to play bezique at an early age, and I can still feel in memory the chenille of the tablecloth in the sitting room of that Leyland house when we played the game each Christmas.



The last time we went there was in 1926. I remember going with my parents to catch the bus home, and walking down a Leyland lane with hedges at the sides and the trees bare and ghostly in the fading light. A young couple passed us, pushing a wickerwork bassinet and dad raised his hat as we stepped off the pavement to let them pass. "Goodnight", said dad, and they replied "Goodnight, Happy Christmas". "Do you know them dad?" "No", he replied "but everyone speaks to everyone else in Leyland".

Contributed By J. LANGFORD.



HUTTON MARSH - CALLS AND CALLING

One of the many fascinations about delving into the past is the discovery in old documents of words which have long ago passed out of everyday use. Probate inventories, especially of the 17th & 18th centuries, are well known sources yielding such gems as “rackentithe”, “kine” and “worthing”. Their meaning can usually be found without too much trouble, either in the Oxford English Dictionary or a more specialised reference work, and hence we find that a rackentithe was a crane for hanging cooking utensils over a fire; a kine was a milk cow and worthing was dung!!

However, should a word which is still in common use occur, but in a context where its archaic meaning is not immediately obvious, the search may prove more of a challenge – maybe because we have a preconceived idea of what it ought to be. As will be seen, the search may lead to some interesting discoveries.

One example of such a word, the subject of this article, was unearthed some years ago by the author, whilst carrying out genealogical research in the Lancashire Record Office. LRO Collection DDX103 contains many documents relating to Hutton and the Rawstorne family. It is, at present, largely uncalendared.

One box is labelled “*Hutton Marsh Callings*”⁽¹⁾ and contains a series of documents covering the years 1712 to 1733.

In the absence of guidance from a professional calendar the amateur sleuth is faced with the question: - “*What are callings?*”

The documents are detailed annual accounts relating to the grazing marsh and list expenditure in broadly four areas: -

- Wages paid to local tenants working as day labourers.
- Deliveries to the marsh of large quantities of wood in various forms.
- Repairs and maintenance work.
- Provision of specific goods and services.

Typical examples are: -

- | | |
|---|--------|
| - “Pd John Greenhalgh for 14 dayes worke. | 14s” |
| - “Pd for piles bought at Osb(ald)eston being 240 trees at 4d
and 120 at 2d. | £5” |
| - “Pd for 800 of windings at 1/6d the 100. | 12s” |
| - “48 loads (of brushwood) from Mr Rawstornes tenants. | £4/2s” |
| - “Pd for mending the marsh gates. | 8d” |
| - “Pd for pitch and tarr etc. at the first putting on of the cattell. | £4/7s” |

At first sight the headings of the accounts suggest that “*calling*” is being used in the sense of making deliveries, especially of wood, to the marsh. (“*calling on*” or “*calling at*”). The 1722 account is typical: -

“*A particular of all moneys laid out in calling on & looking after Hutton Marsh in the year 1722*”.

However on a more detailed reading this is seen not to be the case. "Call" is clearly used to describe an object i.e. "a call", as well as the activity of "calling". For example, in 1719 Richard Bamber was paid 1/- ".... For piles for the sd. call"

So, just what were calls and calling in this particular context and what was the purpose of all the wood?

The O.E.D. gives various meaning of call but none which seem relevant to these accounts, but there is a cross reference to it as an alternative spelling of "cawl" or "caul".

In 1724 the spelling in the accounts changes to "cawl", one meaning of which is a type of groyne. Since groynes could be made from wood, as they still are, this seemed a worthwhile line of enquiry.

If calls were a type of wooden groyne, what was their purpose? A search of relevant literature revealed one possibility. In the 16th century salmon fishing in the Ribble was carried out using fish "garths" or fish "calls": - "....long temporary weirs built across the channel from bank to bank." (2)

Although there are a couple of isolated references to fishermen in the later accounts they are only by way of payment for damage to nets, and assistance with wood "wrafted" down river and there is nothing in the accounts to indicate that these Hutton calls were connected with fishing.

Their true purpose eventually became clear whilst researching the background to the accounts – a trail which led to the Public Record Office at Kew and records of a Chancery Court case heard in 1716. (3)

In 1709, articles of agreement were drawn up between William Rawstorne, Lord of the Manor of Hutton, and 18 freeholders or "charterers" for the enclosure of 134 acres of common pasture on Hutton moor and, by way of compensation, the simultaneous creation of a stinted or controlled pasture of 113 acres on the marsh.

One of the articles reads: - "....the said marsh shall for the future be preserved and repaired by calls or otherwise at a charge in proportion to each ones gates...."

A gate or cattle gate was a measure of each charterers share or "stint" of the marsh grazing. It was strictly proportionate to his allocation of enclosed moor which in turn was proportionate to his freehold "old lands".

Enclosure and stinting eventually took place in 1711 and hence the start date of 1712 for the accounts.

Neither the method of construction of the calls nor the manner in which they were intended to preserve and repair the marsh is stated in the accounts. Nevertheless, it is clear from the descriptions of materials used and activities undertaken that they were constructed from brushwood bundles, affixed by flexible "windings" to sharpened piles driven into the bed of the marsh, thus forming a type of groyne or breakwater. But how did calls preserve and repair the marsh? Presumably they were an early type of sea defence.

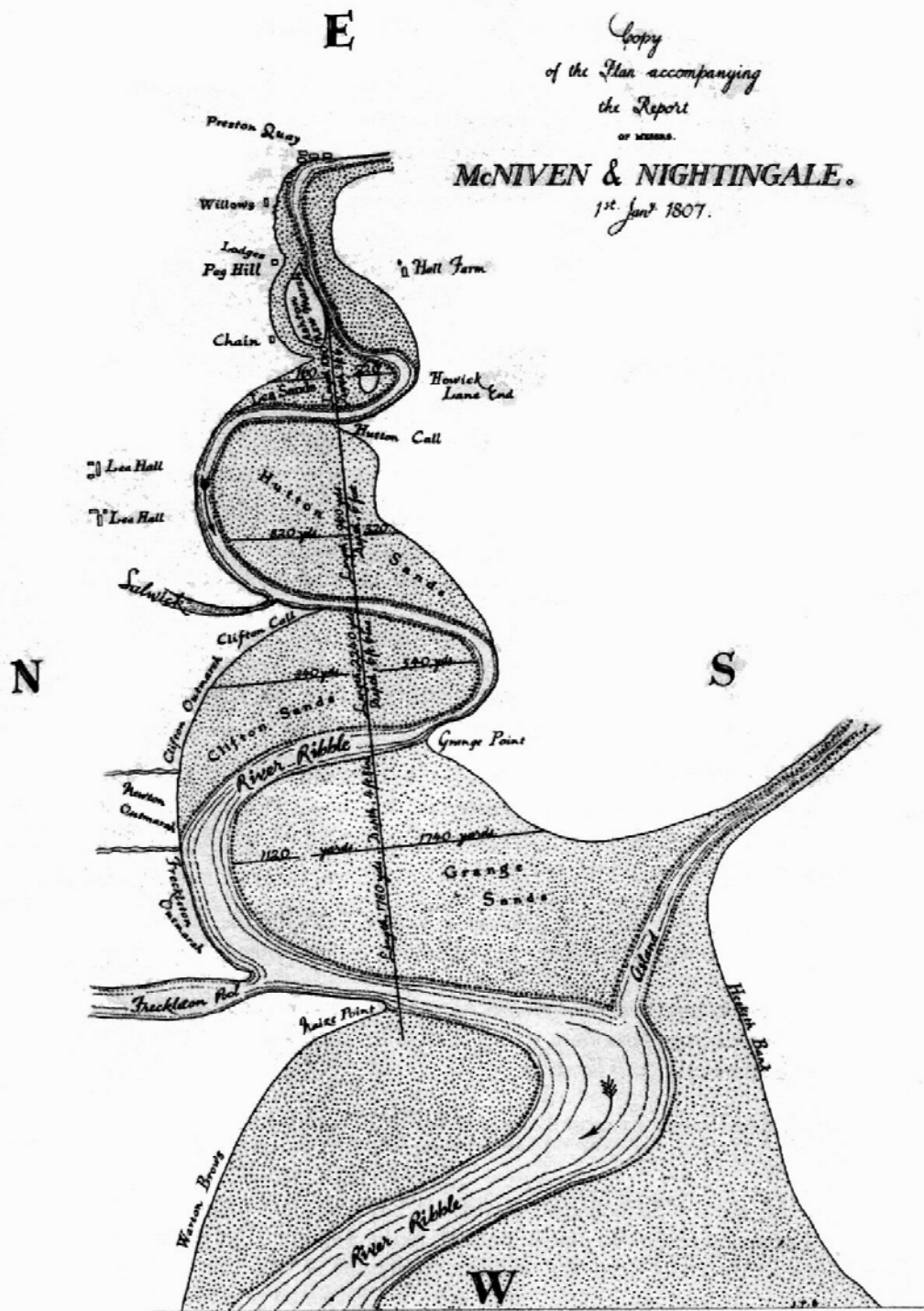


Fig 1 Showing existing calls prior to first Ribble Navigation Co.

Although this series of accounts ends in 1733, calling continued, not only in Hutton, but also in other townships on both banks of the Ribble until the end of the first Ribble Navigation Company in 1838. It is from this period that we see how the calls were intended to preserve the grazing marsh against the continual ravages of tide and freshwater floods and later as an attempt to improve the navigation in the river. (4)

(Note:- From 1806 "caul" is mainly used in contemporary sources. For the sake of continuity, "call" is used throughout this narrative except where an original source is quoted.)

The first Ribble Navigation Act was passed in 1806 with the stated aim of improving navigation for the benefit of Preston merchants. However the main shareholders of the company formed by the act were the landowners on either bank, one of the largest being Lawrence Rawstorne of Hutton. It is clear that *their* main aim was to protect and extend their grazing marshes and hence rental income.

A report prepared in 1807 by McNiven and Nightingale recommended the construction of calls in addition to the cutting of an experimental channel at Lea. The plan accompanying the report (fig 1) clearly shows the position of the already existing Hutton call. Another can be seen on the south bank and three on the north bank and it is striking how each corresponds to a sharp bend of the river.

Over the next 32 years a total of 31 calls were built, 14 on the south bank and 17 on the north bank. These seem to have been built mainly of stone, although they continued to incorporate brushwood. They produced little, if any, improvement in navigation and by the 1830's the capital of the company was exhausted.

Consequently a second company was formed in 1838 and a report by Robert Stevenson & Son, civil engineers, advised against the continued use of calls, advocating training walls and dredging – methods which would eventually prove successful.

The Rawstornes were not giving up their calls without a fight and a pamphlet (5) intended to lobby interested parties in 1837 is entitled: - "Remarks on the improvement of the River Ribble with plans illustrating the best method of cauling".

It is from this that we can understand exactly how calls were intended to work and why they coincided with the sharp bends in the 1807 plan. Fig 2 is a sketch from the pamphlet and illustrates one of the methods:

"This will gently break the force of the River Current and make it fly off round the point. The effects of this will be that a sand bank will be formed on the lower side, which will be continually increasing, and by these means will be throwing the channel further off; and as it raises itself in height, it will act as a protection to the main land, That this is not a mere wild theory may be fully exemplified on the Hutton side of the river. There is no doubt but that the River may be twisted and turned about in any shape"

(Hardly the best way of improving the navigation !!)

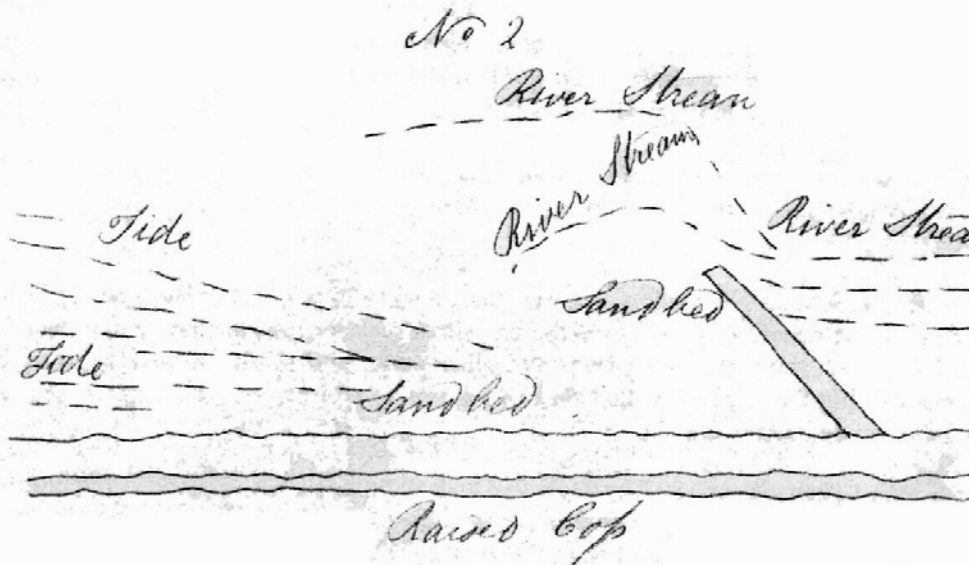


Fig 2 Sketch from 1837 pamphlet. Attributed to Col. Rawstorne. The call is depicted as the rectangular structure in the bottom right.
(LRO Ref CBP61/7. By courtesy of Preston City Council)

This did not influence either the shareholders or Stephenson and calling came to an end after more than 125 years. Its residual effects can be seen on the 1845 1 inch O.S. map (fig 3) which also shows the service tracks used for carrying repair materials.

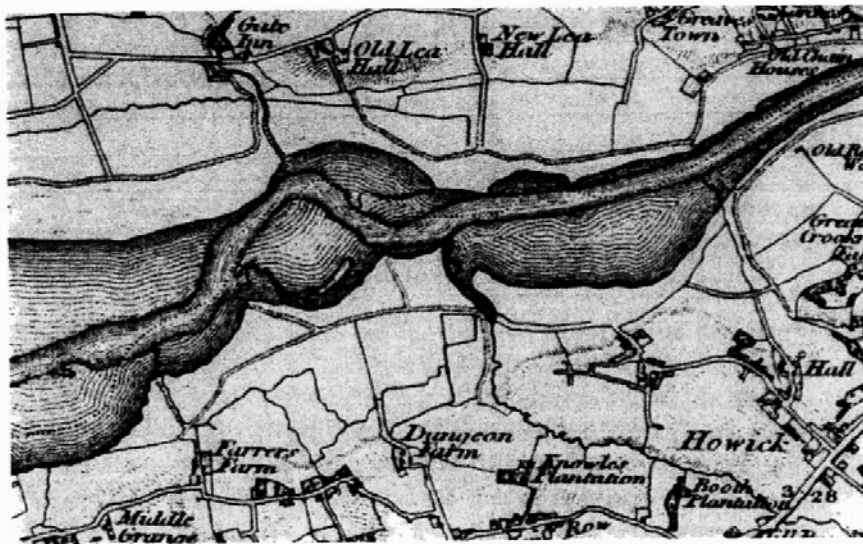


Fig. 3. 1" O.S. map of 1845. Showing residual calls in Hutton with service roads.

With the subsequent straightening of the channel all physical signs of the calls have now disappeared, although the memory of one has been retained. Observant readers will have noticed on the 1807 plan, a building on the north bank named "chain". This was the chain house, the terminus of an early chain operated ferry between Howick and Ashton (6). The name of the neighbouring call has survived as Chain Caul Way to the west of the present Docklands complex.

Although they may have produced no improvement in navigation, did calls have the effect claimed by Rawstorne in protecting and extending the grazing marsh?

In 1855 a court of arbitration was set up to ascertain the value of land in Hutton, reclaimed as a result of the various works (7). One of its tasks was to establish how much of the reclamation took place prior to 1838, i.e. by calling rather than by the training walls and dredging. This would determine the price paid by the Rawstone estate to the Ribble Navigation Co..

Various witnesses were called and gave very different views:- James Cuerden had worked on the calls at Lea and stated that :- "*The cauls had a great effect in causing the land to accumulate*"; whilst James Grundy, a land valuer, stated :- "*I consider the cauls the main cause of the reclamation of the land*". Edward Garlick, engineer, was of the opposite opinion "*....those [cauls] in Hutton have been of no service. On the contrary I believe them to have been prejudicial.*" William Jackson, land agent was equally dismissive: - "*....does not consider that the cauls put down by Col. Rawstorne have had any effect in reclaiming land....*"

It may be significant that the first two witnesses appeared for the Rawstorne estate and the last two for the Ribble Navigation Co. and the truth is probably somewhere between these extreme views. The court certainly found in favour of the calls. Against valuations of around £3000 for 89 acres the Rawstorne estate were ordered to pay only £1184, the court having "*.... made such an allowance for the worksprior to 1838*"

From a mid 19th century perspective the calls were probably remembered as somewhat antiquated and certainly ineffective in improving navigation compared with later methods. As an 18th century method of "preserving and repairing" the grazing marsh they were undoubtedly effective.

So, that's finally that then!! "Hutton Marsh Callings" read and fully understood.

Or is it??

Well not quite, whilst reading the accounts once again prior to writing this article the following were noticed:-

- Pd Edward Maudsley for hobing . 2 days.	16d
- Pd for leading wood from Elston and for sniging it up the hill to th' cart.	£2/6s
- Pd for gripping on the marsh.	19/2d

Ah well, back to the O.E.D - which serves to illustrate another fascination (or is it a frustration?) that for every question answered, more are raised.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The help of the staff of the Lancashire Record Office, especially in helping me through the maze of DDX 103, is greatly appreciated as is the kind permission of the County Archivist for the reproduction of Fig 2.

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DEREK WILKINS



THE WRITINGS OF ROBERT ROWE OF EUXTON

As I was searching through a box of old photographs and papers whilst researching my wife's family history, I came across an old dog-eared brown paper covered pamphlet entitled "Cracks from a Cobblers Seat" printed in Preston by D. Longworth.

Reading the first chapter it transpires that this short novel was set in the early 19th century and was written about a Blacksmith named Adam Strong from Euxton. The only problem was that it was written in very 'broad' dialect.

As the author's name did not appear anywhere (I can only assume it was on the missing cover), I was intrigued as to who had written this little book and Kenneth Hodkinson in his book "Euxton burgh – A Pictorial Record Of Bygone Days" came up with the answer. It appears that it was written by a local author named Robert Rowe about 100 years ago. I have attempted to find out more about Robert, but have drawn a blank.

So, to celebrate the centenary of its original publication I give you Chapter One, Oh and for people who find the dialect hard going I have also produced a 'translation'.

CHAPTER ONE

Living in a village is pleasant enough in summer time, particularly if it is beautifully situated, with smiling orchards, with trees laden with luscious fruits, and a myriad of wild flowers of every hue and shade, filling the air with rich perfume. All this is charming, and might give enjoyment to the various curmudgeons. But how great is the contrast of country life in winter, when everything looks cold and cheerless, when short days and long nights prevail - how dreary is the aspect to those accustomed to the lively sights of a busy town. Yet it does not appear so dull and dreary to village people, for when the labours of the day are concluded, they beguile the long dark nights in "camping" in each others houses, telling funny stories or "buzzes" as they are called, and having mutual larks, quite often involving serious risks – but this is considered glorious fun.

In the village of Euxton, Old Adam Strong's shoe maker's shop was the principal place for retailing gossip, and a general rendezvous of scandal, being a common meeting place for the idle and inquisitive, the namesake of our first parent being considered a great authority, or, as some said, an "owd fashioned brid." Paying a visit to the village after a long absence, I called upon Old Adam, who looked as hearty as ever, and greeted me with –

"Eeh! Is that yo? Heaw gooa yo on?"

"Oh, first rate," I replied. "How are you?"

"Neer better, bud wonct yunger, uz owd Billy Paget, th' Berber, olus ses."

"What, is old Billy living yet?"

"Aye, bod he wer welly freeten'd to deeoath tothery week sen," said Old Adam in a great fit of laughter.

"Eeh my, id wor a do, silly owd beggar!"

"How's that, Adam? What's been to do with old Billy?"

"Why, yo known th' owd crayer lives be hissel i'th nook just up Dawber Looan, un wod should th' owd cranky do one neet, bud come runnin' deawn th' looan in his shirt, shaatin, "morder, police," uz herd uz ever he cud.

Ev'rybody put ther eods eawt o'th 'windas, thinkin uz sumbry wur gettin' kilt, un theer owd Billy popt up, un sed uz his heawse wur full o' robbers, shootin o' his hens, uz he kept i'th back place. He'd only two, though, un one on uin wur blind.

Soo a lot on us geet drest, un wa o went together tort his heawse, some wi' pooakers, un some wi' big pows, un owed Billy crept behint like a draant rat, for he'd nowt on bud his shirt, un it ud bod a varra short tail, un he sed he'd jumpt eawt o'th back room winda un leet i'th rain tub, for he thowt uz they wur baan to blow his heyd off. When we geet theer we o stood herk'nin', nooan on us bein' bowd enuff to luck throot' winda, bud one kept creepin ut th' back o'th tother. One on um sed –

"Adam, won't id be th' best to ged a ladder un gooa in throo back winda?"

"tha may gooa in thysel, wedg'eod; does ta think aw'm goon" to be popt off?"

Just after that, owd Wilson, th' cunstable, coom up, un sed uz he'd gooa in if we'd o folla him; sooa we sed we wod, un we o agreed to stick howd o' one another for safety, thoose uz wur th' last shuvin' th' fost afoor um. Owd Wilson then brast th' door hoppen, un herkend a bit.

"Chaps," he sed, "aw con hear summut up th' stairs aw'l gooa un collar um."

"He'd no sooner getten up, thun he wur heerd to say "Wod are yo doin" hear?" Tother sed "Aw'm after yo." Un then ther sitch a row sterted, owd Wilson shaatin' for a leet, sayin he'd getten him deawn. Sooa owd Billy put his breeches on, un tuck a candle up stairs un popt it i'th chap's face. He'd no sooner sin who id wor, thun he sed to owd Wilson, -

"Aw'l go to hecky if it isn't Abram Todd, dorn't throttle him, for he corn't be a robber, he coom wi' us un, 's getten in ut th' front."

Sooa owd Wilson left lose, un Abram geet up, starin' like a pow cat, wi' hevin' his throoat squeezed sooa, un he says, –

"Aw say, next time as tha collars onybody, dorn't thee stick thi fingers i' ther throoats us ta dud mine, ur else tha'll hear uv a berryin".

"Neaw, lads, shut yer meawths, un let's see wheer they are," said owd Wilson.

"Aw herdly con shut mine, sin tha's throtlet mo sooa," said Abram.

Sooa they luckt o reawnd th' hoyle keepin' weel ut th' back o'th policemon, till they geet to th' back place, uz ust to be a weyvin shop, when o ut wonct owd Billy sung eawt, -

"Punch mo, chaps, punch mo; punch mo up un deawn. To think uz aw shud meck sitch a greight foo' o' mysel' un yo! Corned yo see wod id is chaps? Aw've bin meckin' some nettle beer, un aw've put too mitch berm in, un wod aw thowt wur guns gooin' off, wur these corks blowin eawt!"

"Aw cud like to punch booath thee un thad greight whacky wi' th' lung fingers," sed Abram. "An', owd lad, tha'll hev' to stan treeot fur o th' lot on us."

"Well, aw dorn'd mind yo hevin' a sooap o' thad nettle beer," said Billy.

"Beggar thi nettle beer! We've hed rayther to mitch o' that oready."

Sooa Billy tuck us o to th' aleheawse, un stood like a trump, un Abram geet fuddlet. When he coom into haar shop th' next mornin", he said –

"Eeh, chaps! Aw geet in a bonny pickle last neet after aw left yo."

"What's bin up wi' tha?"

"Why, yo known, when aw geet hooam o wur i' derkness, sooa aw led mo deawn upo' th' squab, un popt o'er asleep. Aw dunnot know what time id wor when aw wackunt, bud id wer still derk. When aw geet up aw tumblet o'er a stoo', un leet o' my sittin' deawn part in a big mug full o' fleawr un berm us th' wife ud put to sponge. Aw geet aat un groped fur summut to wipe mysel wi', un aw gi' mysel a gradely good wipin".

"Aw'd finisht just uz it wur cumin' dayleet, un o ut wonct aw fun id eawt uz aw'd bin wipin mysel wi' th' cleean clooas, uz wur on th' maiden. Eeh, dudn't aw ged a gradely tung-waggin' when th' owd woman geet up. Hoo sed -

"To think uz aw've to wesh oth' clooas ageeun throo thee. There's naver no rest for my booans i' this world." Sooa aw ses, -

"Aw wish ther wur some rest for thi jaw booans for tha'rt olus waggin um."

Old Adam gave a hearty laugh, and said –

"Well, thi breeches ul feel rayther stiff aw should say, if th' berm wur good they should rise. Bud whod does ta think them yung waistrels hes done?"

"Hooa duz ta meun? Them wheelreet lads? Enquired Adam.

"Aye; aw see a chap starin up ut mi sign this fore-noon un he begun a grinnin"; sooa aw ses –

"Owd mon, tha'd be a reet un to grin through a hosses collar."

"Aw may weel grin, un luck ut yore sign," he sed.

Sooa aw luckt, un they'd otered id, un med id read –

"A DAM'd STRONG SHOE MAKER"

It was now my time to leave, but Adam informed me he had thought of a good plan to serve his tormentors out, and the next time I came that way he would let me know how he went on.

CHAPTER 1

(TRANSLATION)

Living in a village is pleasant enough in summer time, particularly if it is beautifully situated, with smiling orchards, with trees laden with luscious fruits, and a myriad of wild flowers of every hue and shade, filling the air with rich perfume. All this is charming, and might give enjoyment to the various curmudgeons. But how great is the contrast of country life in winter, when everything looks cold and cheerless when short days and long nights prevail - how dreary is the aspect to those accustomed to the lively sights of a busy town. Yet it does not appear so dull and dreary to village people, for when the labours of the day are concluded, they beguile the long dark nights in "camping" in each others houses, telling funny stories or "buzzes" as they are called, and having mutual larks, quite often involving serious risks - but this is considered glorious fun.

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"Hey! Is that you? How are you going on?"

"Oh, first rate," I replied. "How are you?"

"Never better, but once younger, as old Billy Paget, the barber, always says."

"What, is old Billy living yet?"

"Yes, but he was really frightened to death the other week," said old Adam in a great fit of laughter.

"Oh my, it was a do, silly old beggar!"

"How's that, Adam? What's been to do with old Billy?"

"Why, you know the old creature lives by his self in the cul-de-sac just off Dawbers Lane, and what should the old cranky do one night, but come running down the lane in his shirt, shouting, "murder, police," as hard as ever he could. Everybody put their heads out of the windows, thinking as somebody was being killed, and there old Billy popped up, and said that his house was full of robbers, shooting all his hens, that he kept in the back yard. He'd only two, though, and one on them was blind.

So a few of us got dressed, and we all went together towards his house, some with pokers, and some with big poles, and old Billy crept behind like a drowned rat, for he'd nothing on but his shirt, and it had a very short tail, and he said that he had jumped out of the back room window and landed in the rain tub, for he thought as they were about to blow his head off. When we got there we all stood listening, none of us being brave enough to look through the window, but one kept creeping up the back of the other.

One of them said –

“Adam, would it not be a good idea to get a ladder and go in through the back window?”

“You can go in yourself, thickhead; do you think I am going to be killed off?”

Just after that, old Wilson, the policeman, come up, and said that he'd go in if we all would follow him; so we said we would, and we all agreed to keep hold of one another for safety, those who were the last pushing the first before them.

Old Wilson then charged the door open, and listened a bit.

“Chaps”, he said, “I can hear some thing up the stairs. I will go and catch him.”

“He had no sooner gone up the stairs, then he was heard to say “What are you doing here?” The other said “I'm after you.” And then, such a row started, old Wilson shouting for a light, saying he'd caught him. So old Billy put his pants on, and took a candle up stairs and put it in the chap's face. He'd no sooner seen who it was, then he said to old Wilson, -

“I'll go to the devil if it isn't Abram Todd, don't strangle him, for he cannot be a robber, he came with us and as got in at the front of the house.”

So old Wilson let go, and Abram got up, staring like a pole cat, with having his throat squeezed so, and he said, –

“I say, next time that you catch anybody, don't you stick your fingers in there throats as you did with mine, or else you'll hear of a funeral.

“Now, lads, shut you mouths, and let's see where they are,” said old Wilson.

“I hardly can close mine, since you strangled me so,” said Abram.

So they looked all around the house keeping well at the back of the policeman, till they got to the back room, as used to be a weaving shop, when all at once old Billy sung out, -

“Punch me, chaps, punch me; punch me up and down. To think, as I should make such a great fool of myself and you can you see what it is, chaps? I've been making some nettle beer, and I've put too much yeast in, and what I thought was guns going off, were the corks blowing out!”

“I should like to punch both you and that great policeman with the long fingers,” said Abram. “And, old lad, you will have to stand a round of drinks for all the lot of us.”

“Well, I don't mind you having a drink of that nettle beer,” said Billy.

“Forget the nettle beer! We've had rather to much of that already.”

So Billy took us all to the pub, and stood the bill like a gentleman, and Abram got drunk. When he come into the barbers shop the next morning, he said –

"Hey, chaps! I got in a bonny pickle last night after all of you left."

"What's been wrong with you?"

"Well, you know, when I got home all was in darkness, so I lay down upon the sofa, and fell asleep. I do not know what time it was when I woke up, but it was still dark. When I got up I fell over a stool, and landed on my backside in a big mug full of flour and yeast as the wife had put to rise. I got out and groped for something to wipe myself with, and I give myself a very good wiping".

"I'd finished just as it was coming daylight, and all at once I found out what I'd been wiping myself with, the clean clothes that were on the maiden. I didn't half get a very good telling off when the old woman got up. She said -

"To think as I've to wash all the clothes again through you. There's no rest for my bones in this world." So I said, -

"I wish there was some rest for your jaw bones for your always wagging them."

Old Adam gave a hearty laugh, and said -

"Well, your pants will feel rather stiff I should say; if the yeast was good they should rise. But what do you think those young rascals have done now?"

"Whom do you mean? Those wheelwright lads?" Enquired Adam.

"Yes; I see a chap staring up at my sign this morning and he began grinning; so I said

" Old man, you be a right one to grin through a horses collar."

"I may well grin, and look at your sign," he said.

So I looked, and they'd altered it, and made it read -

"A DAM'd STRONG SHOE MAKER"

It was now my time to leave, but Adam informed me he had thought of a good plan to sort his tormentors out, and the next time I came that way he would let me know how he went on.

IAN BARROW



WELL - FANCY THAT!

Some interesting 'historical' facts from the 1500's

Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May and still smelled pretty good. By June, however, some were starting to smell, so brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odour.

Hence the custom today of carrying a bouquet when getting married.

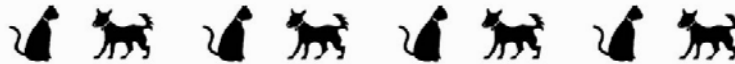


Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of nice clean water, then all the other sons and men, then the women, and finally the children – last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it.

Hence the saying "Don't throw the baby out with the bath water".

Houses had thatched roofs (thick straw, piled high) with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the dogs, cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in or on the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof.

Hence the saying "It's raining cats and dogs".



There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could really mess up your nice clean bed. Hence, a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection.

That's how canopy beds came into existence.

The floor was dirt. Only wealthy people had something other than dirt.

Hence the saying "dirt poor".

The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on the floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they kept adding more thresh until eventually, when the door was opened, it would all start slipping outside. To help stop this a piece of wood was placed in the entranceway.

Hence the saying "Stepping over the threshold".

In those days, they cooked in the kitchen in a big pot that always hung over the fire. Every morning they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They ate mostly vegetables and did not get much meat. They would eat the 'stew' for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes the 'stew' had food in it that had been there for quite a while.

*Hence the rhyme "Peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold,
Peas porridge in the pot nine days old".*

Sometimes they could obtain pork, which made them feel quite special. Sometimes when visitors came, they would hang up their bacon to show it off. It was a sign of wealth that a man could 'bring home the bacon'. They would cut off a little piece to share with guests, and would all sit around and "chew the fat".

Those who had money had plates made of pewter. Food with high acid content caused some of the lead to leach into the food, causing lead poisoning and death. This happened most often with tomatoes, so for the next few centuries tomatoes were considered poisonous.

Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf, the family got the middle and the guests got the top, or "upper crust".



Lead cups were used to drink ale or whisky. The combination would sometimes knock them out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead, and prepare them for burial. "Dead drunk". The person was then laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days, and the family would gather around and eat and drink, and wait to see if the person woke up.

Hence the custom of holding a "wake".

England is old and small and the local folks started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig up coffins and take the bones to a 'bone-house', and then re-use the grave. When re-opening these coffins, 1 out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside, and they realised they had sometimes been burying people alive. So they thought they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, pass it through the coffin and up through the ground, then tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard (the "graveyard shift") to listen for the bell.

Thus someone could be "saved by the bell" or was considered a "dead ringer".



Now, who said history was boring?
JOAN LANGFORD.

OBITUARIES

DEREK BRUNDRETT

Derek Brundrett was an active member of the Society for many years.

At lectures he assisted in maintaining and operating the sound system. He joined the committee in 1994 and hardly ever missed a meeting. He soon became a valuable member with his love and knowledge of local history and his great sense of humour.

Derek was a very practical man and he designed and constructed the society's display boards which are still in use. He was also responsible for the production of our lapel badges.

He could always be relied upon to attend planning meetings and to assist at various fairs and exhibitions the society attended. At the Craft and Leisure Fair he not only helped with the setting up and manning of the stand, but also gave lectures during the day.

The society has lost a dedicated, reliable and well-loved member and he will be very greatly missed.

Derek Brundrett 1945 – 2003.
Committee member 1994 – 2003.

MICHAEL PARK

PETER BARROW;

Authority on Vernacular Architecture

In October of last year all friends of Leyland were saddened to hear of the death of Peter Barrow. Peter had an impeccable Leyland pedigree: the son of one of William Sumner's pioneers at the Motor works he was born in Leyland in 1923 and attended St. Mary's Elementary School and Preston Catholic College. With the outbreak of war he served in the local Home Guard detachment before difficult war service in Italy. This formative experience left him with the colourful lifelong habit of terminating his conversations with a sunny, "Ciaow" even on the gloomiest of Lancashire days!

In civilian life Peter was a quantity surveyor, rising to the position of senior surveyor at the local firm Tweeds. This gave him ready access to many of the district's early timber-framed buildings, which were then disappearing at a rapid rate, particularly with the increased pace of development under the Central Lancashire New Town. Peter was a lifelong critic of this body which ironically gave him such scope to follow his great love. A long standing member of our Society, Peter was a prominent member of the committee in the mid-1970s serving as vice-chairman in 1974-5; the *Lailand Chronicle* gave him a useful outlet for his steady series of architectural studies which began to appear from January 1974.

It was around this time that Peter made his distinct contribution to the future of Leyland's history. With Newton Iddon holding a shaky ladder, he made his way through a 'brick curtain' and into the derelict Grammar School through an upper window. His detailed drawings of this Elizabethan structure would be very instrumental in the rescue of this building and its emergence as the town's museum. In terms of interest nothing could compare with a visit with Peter to such a structure; all concerns of personal danger were cast aside and if a falling brick should come close to ending one's career, well it had missed and what an interesting brick it was and good dating evidence for the chimney too!

Peter surveyed many such structures and his detailed drawings now provide a priceless study of a largely lost heritage. Particularly memorable group visits were made to Occleshaw House, Old Worden and Pickering's Farm. He was a close advisor during the restorations of many buildings including the Museum and the Worden Arts Centre. Yet Peter's antiquarian interests extended far across the historical landscape. One of his earliest projects was a study of the local patterns of soils, which he carefully related to the detailed eighteenth century maps contained in DDF 81. From this work he was able to develop an original model for the development of the town. All these efforts came to fruition, with the contributions of George Bolton and Elizabeth Shorrocks and others at the two local history conferences held at Worden in the late 1980s, and which formed the basis of the 1990 *History of Leyland*.

Peter Barrow 1923-2002:

Historian of the Year 1977, 1979, 1980
Elected Life Member of the Society 1998

WEW. DH.