

Issue 21

The Lostock Hall Magazine

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Lostock Hall Gas Works
Farington Moss

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Welcome to the 21st issue of The Lostock Hall Magazine. Our magazine is a collection of local history articles, photographs and memories relating to the area. Many thanks to all our contributors and readers. Our thanks to Penwortham Priory Academy who support us by printing and formatting the

magazine. Please support our local advertisers without them we could not produce our magazine. A copy of each issue will be kept in the Lancashire Records Office. Jackie Stuart has kindly allowed us to serialise her book entitled 'A Tardy Gate Girl'. More memory provoking articles by Tony Billington. A big thankyou to everyone who has sent in photos we will include them in the magazines as soon as we can.

I have recently found an article relating to the dedication and unveiling of the war memorial on Hope Terrace, which took place on the 20th December, 1924. Please see article. We had information from a reader who said that the unknown farm photo in last month's magazine was of Pickering's Farm at Four Lane Ends.

We are also collecting material for Preston Remembers and the South Ribble Remembrance Archive 1914-1918, which will include anything relating to World War One in our area. A photo, document, a memory, etc.

If you are able to support us by advertising in our very popular magazine, please do get in touch, without our advertisers we cannot produce the magazine, please support them whenever you can.

If you have any memories you would like to submit to the magazine for publication, please do contact me, or our roving reporter – Tony Billington, especially memories from our older residents, because once the memories are gone they are lost forever. We can call at your home or speak to you on the telephone if you wish us to write down your memories. Copies of the magazine will always be available at Lostock Hall Library on Watkin Lane. Contact me to have your own copy delivered each month or to receive it by email.

Front Cover image – Hope Terrace by The Lostock Hall Magazine

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Photographs from Lostock Hall Past



St Gerards Primary School Sports Day c. 1980's. on school field.
Courtesy of Jack Taylor



Farington Endowed School c. 1955. Courtesy of Pete Tomlinson.
Left to right back row – Pat Coyne (nee ?) Steve Mawdesley, Pete Tomlinson and
Ken Sumner. Front Row – Alan Mulley, Unknown.

FRY INN

18 WATKIN LANE LOSTOCK HALL

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PHOTOS FROM LOSTOCK HALL PAST

LOSTOCK HALL FC
1948



Lostock Hall FC 1978

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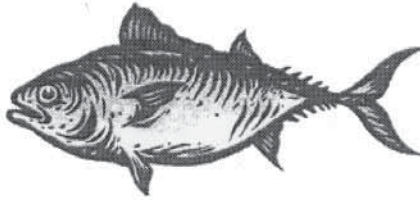
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LOSTOCK HALL FC 1978

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READERS COMMENTS AND REPLIES

Issue 20 was passed to me and I was very interested to see your article on Lostock Hall Library as I worked there until 1995, and was delighted to see the photograph of Mrs Little. She was one of the most regular readers we had and it was always a pleasure to serve her. I also spent some months there a few years earlier and I am sure your readers will remember Mr Eddie Southworth, a stalwart of the library and wonderful to work for. Also the secretary, Mrs Dorothy Blackwell, who was the support of us all. Lostock Hall library was a delightful place to work and I wish everyone who uses the library all the best. From Mrs Dorothy Kazer

A few comments on issue 20 - WW1 and the Fairclough Family.....This article was very interesting to me because Mary Fairclough married to Thomas Fairclough was my husbands maternal grandfathers youngest sister. He was Giles Rostron Durham and at some point I am sure they all resided in Lostock View and were all weavers .The same time that Thomas and Mary and family were living at 13 Lostock View her cousin Thomas Durham and his wife Ellen and their nine children were residing at 15 Lostock View and two of their sons William and Frederick were killed in action in France during WW1. I would love to hear from any remaining members of the Durham family who still live in this area. Wilky Street.....I lived at Mossfield Cottage, Moss Lane and when my father died aged 41yrs in 1951 Polly Parr the sister of Tom was the milk lady and she left us a pint of milk everyday without charge for a year....my mother never forgot that kindness. By the way does anyone remember `the pony man` ...he used to graze his pony on the plot of land next to our house.... Todd Hall....During the 1950`s my mother was a domestic working for the Kevill family at Todd Hall and the lady of the house was kind enough to let her bring my sister and myself with her after we had finished school...we became good friends with her daughter and spent many interesting hours exploring that `old building` My sister remembers putting her hand on to the wall behind the daughters bed and it moving and revealing a `hidy hole`happy times ! Annette Pearson nee Pitcher

Local historian, Joan Langford, is researching the men from the area who fell in the Great War. One of the men she has been looking for luckily turns out to have survived that war, but nevertheless his history is a bit different and interesting. She wondered if by including the information about him in Lostock Hall magazine, it might be a good way to find descendants and get his medals to them. 'Fred Blackburn - born c.1895. On the 1901 census he was living with his parents and grandparents at Braides Farm, Chain House Lane. By 1911 he was living with his widowed mother and an aunt at 'Mayfield' Lostock Hall. He enlisted in 1914 and became private 13208 with the 7th Battalion, Loyal North Lancashire Regiment. He embarked for France on 27th July 1915 and served with his battalion until he received a commission. He was commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant on the 12th September 1916. He transferred (or was attached to) the 2nd Battalion, Nigeria Regiment at some point and went out to Africa to serve with them. He may well have left the 'Loyals' before receiving his commission but the info is a little sketchy regarding this. From the Medal Rolls it seems that he was commissioned into the Loyals first, and was only 'attached' to the Nigeria Regiment. He relinquishes his commission on 29th June 1919. At the end of the war he seems to have emigrated to Australia - his medals (1914/15 Star; British War and Victory Medals) were sent in 1921 to the Bank of Adelaide, 105 Pitt Street, Sydney Australia, but returned to the Medal Office "undelivered" in 1928. He also qualified for the Africa General Service Medal bar NIGERIA 1918, but again the roll shows the medal was returned undelivered in 1927.'

Ian Wilde

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Billy Butlins

Photo taken at Billy Butlins 1965. A gang from Lostock Hall and a load of lads from Bamber Bridge went, Alan Middleton who now lives in Lostock Hall being one of them.

On the extreme left is Fred Parkinson, not really sure what happened to him, then Neil Hubbersty (Dick for short) who has just retired from the prison service, I believe, where he was Head of Finance. Mick Lithgow comes next, he still lives in t'Brig the last time I heard. Next to Mick is me, Tommy Miller (look at them turn-ups on my jeans. How cool were they!) Julie Heath, who sadly died some years ago is next to me.

Then comes Ernie Pilkington, an unbelievable tree climber and master fisherman. Ernie knew how to treat a girl – he used to take his girlfriend Diane (now his wife) fishing all night on Farington Lodges ! He knew how to save money. He's now retired and still fishing (without Diane!).

Linda Hanson (as was then) sits next to Tom Fishwick (her future husband). Linda left school at the tender age of 14 in the July as she had a job to go to. This she started when she turned 15 at Thomas Moss's Mill working 8 looms ! How many kids of 15 would you see doing that today? Well Done, Linda.

Future spouse Tom started work as a tackler at the same mill and finished his working days as a manager at Baxi. Tom is still a top bowler and plays for LHCC.

Last but not least in the group is John Preston, who sadly died in an accident some years ago. He was a fine all round sportsman although if he was out in the first over at cricket he would shoot off sulking with his bat and ball and that was the end of the game! We used a dustbin for the wickets. This belonged to Arthur Clitheroe who later made us some proper wickets out of wood which we could stand up in the street. He actually did this because the 'pitch' was down the side of his house and he'd got fed up of the ball banging against the side of his house all the time!

John Preston, nicknamed Lester, went on to play for PNE for a few years. His last game was at Croston where some idiot tuppued him in his cheekbone when he rose to head the ball.

John never played again after that.

There are lots more happy memories from those good old days. These are just a few of mine. Unfortunately, I can remember more about those halcyon days that I can about last week but feel a lot of magazine readers will echo my sentiments and do the same. Happy Days. Tommy Miller ('WIFF')



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FARINGTON MOSS - 1932

The Miracle of the Mosslands – How Lancashire has dealt with a desert – Battle that has been carried on by three generations - When the sea is forced to give up a little of its bed everybody hears about it. A great engineering feat is always worthy of notice. But when land is wrenched from the strangle-hold of the mossy bog there seems to be no word of condemnation to the hardy, determined men who started a battle that has had to be carried to completion by sons and the sons of sons. There is nothing really spectacular about the reclamation of mosslands. The process is so slow; but it is a magnificent achievement nevertheless. Today a great belt of mossland that extended from Farington westward to Hesketh Bank provides a goodly portion of the vegetable foods required by a county containing five million people. It has been won for cultivation literally inch by inch, and no better evidence of what has been a colossal struggle between Man and Nature can be found at Farington. Over fields now carrying hundreds of thousands of lettuces, cabbages, and other vegetables, great 'braids' of flowers, bounteous crops of stately wheat, nodding oats, and dancing barley, run roads that in places rise between six and eight feet above the level of the land under cultivation. Floating

Land. They indicate the many thousand of tons of turf that have been cut, square by square, to expose the soil that is now so fertile, the bounty of which represents untiring labours of men, women and children. There are still some who remember Farington Moss, when much of it remained to be 'taken in' to use the description of those who till the mosslands, and the story they have to relate is an interesting one. Talk with them and they will tell you of days when this great stretch of land was actually afloat; when men had to fasten to their feet huge wooden pattens to thwart the sucking grip of the bog and when horses brought to work the land had to be similarly equipped, though a specially constructed iron patten was fitted to the animals feet. They will recall the time when an indiscreetly made cut into the turf would bring tons of black water spouting and fountaining yards high into the air, so mighty was the pressure behind it; when the whole marsh rolled and heaved like a billowing sea, weird and awe-inspiring in its creation of unwanted sensations. They will point to the spire of Leyland Church or the steeple of Moss-lane Church, and tell you that when they first knew the Moss only the tops of those lofty landmarks were to be discerned. Now the land has sunk so deeply that almost every feature of those landmarks is discernable. The Desert. Talk too, they will of the thousands of pounds that lie invested underground, money that has carried away with the drains it bought the subterranean waters beneath the Moss, allowing the land to settle on to a solid foundation and enabling men and horses to force from its free and open soils treasures of far greater worth than precious metals – food for the people. They speak lightly of the great fight of attrition in which they participated, but its bigness is revealed by a small area of land which stands today on Farington Moss, a monument to the likeness



Old-time land winners—Mr. Samuel Bamber (left) and Mr. John Walmesley.
Photo: "The Lancashire Daily Post."

of these old land winners. That piece of land is well named. The Moss people call it 'The Desert'. It is a parcel of land that has been stripped of its turf but never 'taken in'. A sad looking place, where heather blooms in the companionship of miserably nurtured bog weeds, where fired gorse stalks stand starkly in their uselessness; and bracken sends its fronds high into the air as if impertinently asserting a victory over the plough and the drainpipe that have so altered this corner of England but for this spot of ugliness. A contrast. Those whose hearts are in the Moss declare that 'The Desert' is a disgrace to Farington Moss. It ought not to be so regarded, for its poverty and misery are tellers of great achievement. 'The Desert' too, serves purpose usefully, for it enables the present to look into the past and marvel at the wonder of it all; and it opens pages so long turned down that they were threatened by permanent sealage. Take a glance at the high road that rides atop the ribbon of uncut turf and springs under the feet in spite of its load of cinder. There is the picture of what might have been – barren wastage with not sufficient vegetable growth to grow a sheep to the acre. Look at the opposite side and note the magic of the transformation – neatly planted fields carrying the wealthiest of vegetable crops. A miracle has been performed – and not one whit the less miraculous because of the ages taken to effect it. The only men who can see nothing quite remarkable about the business I am sure, are the mossland cultivators themselves. Days full of the pleasantest memories are those associated with their boyhoods when the fight was at its keenest. Early in the mornings they were out with their cutters carting the turf in barrows to their drying quarters and their day ended with the light. They earned what in those days were considered to be good wages. Fine Contest. A boy could command two shillings per day while a man was paid but three shillings. The value of the boys lay in their willingness to run with their loads, and comparatively poor wages of the men due to their inability to do so. Only one holiday in the year was recognised amongst the boys, Whitsuntide, and to make provision for its demands on their pockets they extended their long working day and earned sixpence to eightpence a night for themselves by turning and mowing the turves. The rewards for months of hard labour were dissipated in a few short hours at the Pleasure Fair at Preston !

'It suited us alright' declared one old worthy, 'and we never had any regrets to pine over'. Oh! To command such content as that ! Most of Farington turf appears to have been consumed by Preston. It was hawked about the streets in turf carts, its original price being thirty pieces for one penny. But as it became more popular its value increased, and when the last of the turf was being taken out of Farington Moss, it was commanding a penny for twelve pieces, though some housewives with the sporting instinct, preferred to take a 'bratful' for twopence, and hope that the speculation would favour them. The turves provided the heat for laundry irons, also, and the smiths and wheelwrights in the country took huge quantities for hooping cart wheels and other kinds of heavy iron work. Today the wheelwright maintains his belief that there is nothing so effective for hooping as the turf with its clean and intense heat. Noah's Refuse. The old people of the turf land have not yet relegated all the legendry of the bogs into obscurity and disbelief, and there are still a few who will tell you that the mosslands are the last remnants of material evidence of the flood which carried the Ark of Noah. The mosslands, in subsection, are kindly. There is at least one holding of no more than 15 acres which commands the labour of five members of a family. Give three acres of this land to one of these skilled experts in the art of vegetable growing and he will not ask the assistance of a cow to make a living ! The turf is generous too, to those who tend it, for its men are big-framed, reachy, muscular and wholesomely masculine. The tough resistance of the Moss has yielded a harvest equally rich as that from the soils beneath it – a harvest of vigorous, robust manhood possessing that fine independence in character invariably associated with those who tend its land as its masters. H. S.

The Lancashire Daily Post July 14th 1932.

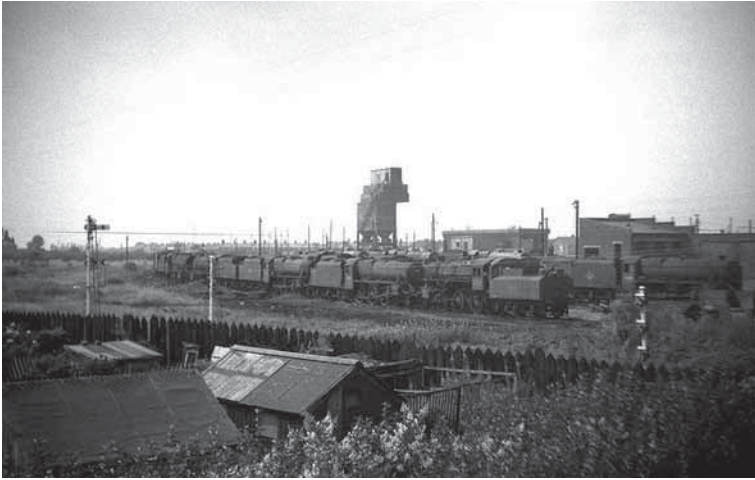
THE MAIL MUST GET THROUGH (AND DID IN THOSE DAYS)

In the mid-sixties, one Easter, I remember, I found myself in a 'Government Post'. For one week I became an 'Auxiliary Postman'. Pre PDO South at Collins Road, Bamber Bridge, the Post Office in Lostock Hall was then situated on Watkin Lane on the corner of Lindley Street. How I came to be getting up at some ungodly hour (before 6am!) I can only assume my mum must have had a word in someone's lughole! The 'sorting office' was in the backroom of the Post Office. Moy Watts was the (sub) Postmaster and amongst the postmen were blokes called Frank, Jimmy and Robin. To say the sorting arrangements were pretty basic would have been an understatement but it must have proved adequate in those days before Lostock Hall expanded beyond all recognition. There were sorting frames on the walls and mail on tables, chairs and on the floor. On my first morning at the 'sorting office' I was greeted with a huge mug of tea. A good start. Billy Craven, by now retired, had been our postman on Avondale Drive for years. I used to think what a great job he had as he always seemed to have time to chat to all and sundry. He even had time to spend a good half hour in our garden some days as we had a dog who'd let you through our front gate, but wouldn't let you out! 'Bob' was a black and white labrador/collie cross and he was a fearsome sight pinning poor old Billy against the side of our house! Our family GP, Doctor Donald, once took two hours to 'vacate' our house after visiting one day when there was nobody in! As I was only temporary, I didn't have a uniform but wore a dark blue and red band on my arm. The round or part round I was designated was based around Wateringpool Lane, St Cuthberts Rd, Mercer Rd, Lourdes Avenue and the emerging Marina Grove. If I remember correctly, Marina Grove was being built at the Tardy Gate end and Flag Lane end to eventually meet up in the middle. I know when I delivered mail in those days there were several gaps between the two ends. To think that just a year or two earlier the battles of the Little Big Horn, Balaclava, WW1 and WW2 and more had been re-enacted on this very site by we imaginative kids. It had been an adventure playground complete with ditches, pits, long grass, huge fallen trees etc. Even when the builders moved in it had still been a magnet for all the kids in the area. By then we'd even lost the large pit between Mercer Road and St Cuthberts Road where Andy Little, myself and several others used to play. We'd sit on the bank waiting for a huge black water beetle to come up for air, backside first. Whatever possessed us to bomb it with lumps of mud and clay till it hurriedly disappeared back to the bottom I'll never know. This is now a football pitch. What I do know was that GPO (General Post Office) those days was a better place to work under a Postmaster General (Anthony Wedgwood-Benn at one time) than now under a set of money grabbing fatcats where profit rather quality of service is the order of the day. Tony Billington

'BEWARE OF THE DOG' Bob in the garden
c.1950's



Photographs from Lostock Hall Past



**Lostock Hall Shed 1st August 1968 Courtesy of Loose Grip 99 (Flickr)
View over the allotments of the steam locomotive dump from the Watkin Lane near Bashalls Bridge. The nearest engine is an Ivatt 4 2-6-0. The coal hopper dominates the centre with the water tank to its right and the engine shed extreme right.**



**Bleasdale's Shop courtesy of Preston Digital Archive
Situated on the corner of Sephton Street and Watkin Lane.**

Photographs from Lostock Hall Past

Dick ?, Frank Price, Fred Yates and Lily Ramsbottom in Isle of Man, late 50s.

Frank was the barman in the Victoria Hotel for many years when Mrs Platt was the landlady. Lily had the chemist on the corner of Brownedge Road and Watkin Lane for a very long time. Courtesy of Gerry Abram.



Lostock Villa Presentation in Lostock Hall Labour Club c. 1970's

Alex Spark (centre) PNE guest of honour surrounded by team including Andy Heyes, Neil Pilkington, Mick Rawcliffe, Dave Littlefair, Paul Fearon, Graham Salisbury, Alan Napier, Dave Commins, Barry Pollard, Steve Singleton and Clement Greaves. Courtesy of Brian and Sheila Littlefair.

Fire at Lostock Hall Mill

Fire at Lostock Mill - Moss's Mill partially destroyed - Over five hundred workpeople out of employment – Preparation Machinery Wrecked - A destructive fire occurred at Moss's Cuerden Green Mill, Lostock Hall, early on Sunday morning. The alarm was received at Preston Fire Brigade Station at 3.34 am, and a body of men were at once despatched with No.2 Fire Engine. On arriving there they found that the Cloth Room, warehouse and yarn warehouse were on fire, but efforts were being made by persons on the spot to extinguish the flames. A good supply of water was obtained from the mill lodge, and the firemen succeeded in saving the engine house, boiler house and weaving shed, containing about 1350 looms. The main part of the building was, however, destroyed, but the damage, which is considerable, was said to be covered by insurance. The mill belonged to Mr Thos. Moss. Early as the hour was, the alarm, which quickly spread through the district, drew a large crowd of people from all around Lostock Hall and Farington to the scene of the conflagration, and again this morning the place has been visited by many hundreds of operatives and others. The preparation department, which was of considerable extent, is a complete ruin. The machinery was entirely wrecked, and lies about in twisted and fantastic fragments. Yet the portions of the building which have been reduced to such a condition were comparatively new, and comprised the taping, winding and warping rooms and the yarn warehouse. There were between 500 and 600 hands employed in the mill, and these ceased work, as is usual, at noon on Saturday. Two men were, however, left to effect some repairs at the taping room. They finished and left the mill about midnight, and they state that everything appeared to be perfectly safe when they left the premises. The origin of the conflagration, therefore, remains a mystery. It is said that the fire was first seen by some cleaners employed in a railway shed in the vicinity, and they raised the alarm. Mr Howarth, the manager of the mill, who lives close by, was aroused by a loud knocking at his door at about 3 30 o'clock and on learning the serious nature of the alarm he lost no time in summoning the Preston Fire Brigade. When Mr Howarth got to the mill he found to his great astonishment and dismay, that the whole of the preparation department, already described, was a raging furnace. The structure consisted of a ground floor and upper floor, and one part stood at right angles to the other. On the upper floor was all the machinery employed in the department, and as the flames consumed the flooring, the mechanism dropped through with a crash, curled and twisted out of all semblance of its original form. The Preston Fire Brigade arrived on the scene a few minutes before four o'clock. There was a plentiful supply of water and branches were quickly in play. The firemen succeeded in practically saving the weaving sheds which contained, as stated above, 1350 looms. The proprietor and manager of the mill express themselves greatly indebted to the Lostock Hall Spinning Company for the assistance rendered by the members of their fire brigade before the arrival of the engine from Preston. They are convinced that had it not been for that timely aid the destruction would have been still more disastrous. Mr Moss, who resides at Birkdale, arrived upon the scene about two o'clock on Sunday afternoon. The weaving sheds being saved it is expected that it will be possible to restart operations in the course of a few weeks. In the meantime the great majority of the operatives will be out of employment. It appears that the fire was discovered by Matthias Blackwell, a goods guard, of Cliffe Cottage, Walton-Le-Dale, who gave the alarm, and Fred Barnes, a goods inspector, of Lostock View, sent a telephonic message to Preston Fire Station. The Preston Brigade arrived at 4 10, and were engaged until 10 o'clock, when the fire was extinguished. The damage is estimated as about £10,000, and is covered by insurance. Three members of the county police were on duty during the night in charge of Sergeant Bunting.

More Moss Street Memories

A book I read recently stirred a few memories of my early childhood in Moss Street. Even though the recollections of Tommy Hopkins childhood in his son Billy's excellent novel 'Tommy's World' were set many years before mine there was still a lot of things which hadn't changed that much. Despite a near 60 year gap between Tommy's younger days and mine several similarities came to mind. His Mum and Dad and mine both 'scratted' to make ends meet. He played several games in the street that I did including hopscotch, football, cricket, hide and seek, cops and robbers, knock-a-door-run and the like. It was a lot safer in those days. There was very little traffic passing through and as nearly everyone left their front doors open there was little chance of being abducted by gypsies, the child-snatcher and worse. One day I did something silly but couldn't understand at the time what all the fuss was about. I got home from school and went out to play, only to find nobody to play with. I decided to go and watch the trains at Brownedge crossing. I ran up Brownedge Road, past Birchby's Garage, crossed Todd Lane South, and over the Red Bridge. Passing Irongate Farm I arrived at the crossing gates and waited for a train to pass. After what seemed an eternity, a Fairburn tank went by on its way to East Lancs with a passenger train. I then set off home and instead of a 'Welcome Home' I was given a slap on the legs, a right telling off and sent to bed by my less than happy Mum. As a parent many years later I experienced a couple of similar instances which made me realise my folly. In the summer, almost everybody sat out on their freshly donkey-stoned steps and the street was a hive of gossip and activity. A bloke called Green (Joe?) used to come round with his horse and cart selling almost anything (Tommy Ball on wheels!) food, hardware, paraffin, firewood etc. The horse was colossal and had hooves like buckets. It's blinkers were as big as my Beano annual!

I recently went for walk down Memory Lane (well, Moss Lane actually!) and found little evidence of my childhood. The welding sheds (Seeds) and railway houses are still there facing a now boarded up council school and the two cottages once occupied by the Sweetmore and Pitcher families. The Scout Hut and houses now occupy our once 'beloved' railway field on the right whilst the same cottages still remain on the left. Down Wilkinson Street, passing Marilyn and Maureen Avenues which occupy the old allotments and Tom Parr's scrapyard and the old school kitchens (now Dance Centre). The old garages remain which housed the school-meal vans but are now sadly boarded up. Next to these is the newest addition to Moss Street, the Guide Hut, which wasn't there when I was a kid. I decided to wander down the backs between the last house in the street (once Mrs Foys) and the allotments. The backs no longer existed! The end house had extended its garden/yard to the old orchard fence. I turned back and walked up to the top of the street passing our old house No. 3. I turned into the backs at that end and found No. 1 had also extended the rear of their property so the backs of my childhood had now disappeared without a trace. So, onto No. 3 Moss Street, where I spent my first five years of life, it was rented as my Mum used to drag me down Coote Lane to the Clayton sisters who were the landlords. We had a front room (parlour?) but lived mostly in the back room. In there the centrepiece was an old fashioned fire place (range, fender, grate etc..) It had an oven but we had a large gas-oven in the kitchen next to the meat-safe (pre-fridges) so that one was never used. The clothes maiden was one of those rack-like contraptions operated by a rope which you hoisted to the ceiling. As my Mum was out at work, my Dad usually put me to bed. Before this, however, was an almost nightly ritual where we would eat mock-turtle soup and listen to the 'Archers', 'Paul Temple' and 'Journey into Space' (with Jet Morgan and Lemmie) on the large wireless near the backyard window. There was no inside toilet so it was a trek down the backyard to the lav. The whitewashed walls and small paraffin lamp did not make it any warmer or cosier.

The lamp however did stop the toilet from freezing up in the winter. Strips of newspaper on a nail were the forerunner of today's 'softer than soft' tissue ! What seemed like a long trudge down the yard for a No 1 or No 2 would take even longer in todays Moss Street with their extended rears ! When I was really little I used to have my leg pulled when I was told that the small boy on the Fairy soap running and wearing a nappy, was me dashing down the yard to the toilet. The sad bit is I believed it! All this came to an end when I was five and we 'flit' across the council field to 36 Avondale Drive. It had a bathroom and an inside toilet, 4 lawns, wash-house, coal-shed etc. Pure luxury ! It was the start of a new life, new friends and new memories. Tony Billington.

Footnote : - In 'Tommy's World' there is a very amusing description of a baby. 'An alimentary tract with a loud squawk at one end and no respectability at the other !'

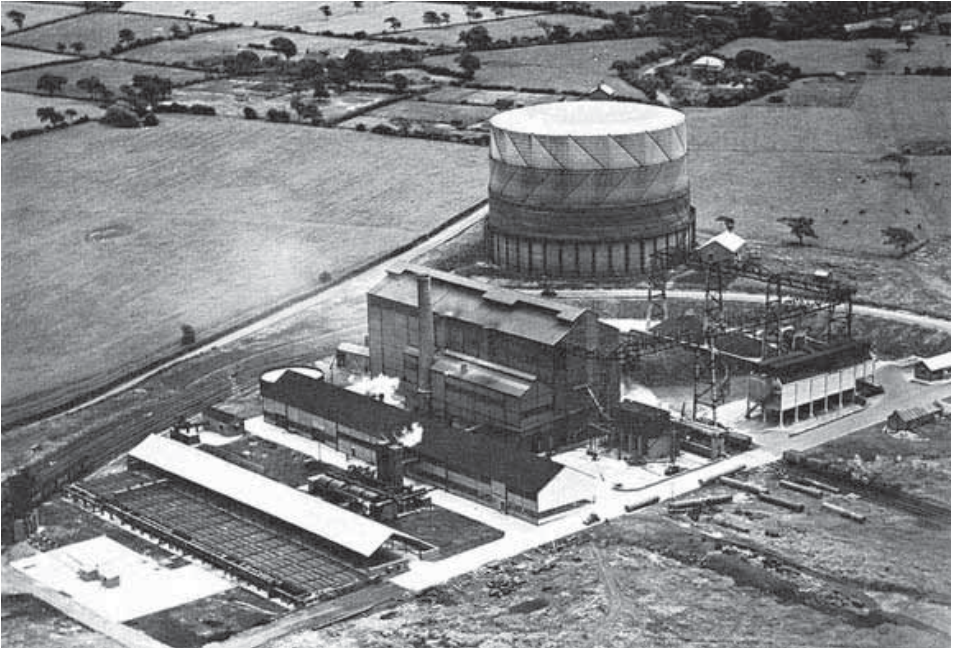
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Lostock Hall War Memorial Unveiling Ceremony and Dedication

There was a large attendance on Saturday afternoon on the occasion of the unveiling of the Lostock Hall and district war memorial by Colonel CJ Trimble CB CMG DI. Amongst those present at the ceremony were Mr W Lonsdale, Farington, Mr D Jones (chairman) and Messrs W Hodson and E Sanderson (joint secretaries of the local war memorial committee) and local clergy. The Farington St Pauls troop of Girl Guides were also present. Col Trimble in unveiling the memorial paid tribute to the men of Lostock Hall who gallantly made the supreme sacrifice for their country. After the ceremony the memorial was dedicated by the Rev W Worthington, after which the 'Last Post' was sounded by local ex-Service men. An impressive two minute silence followed, and afterwards the names of the fallen soldiers were read by Mr T Newsham. Col Trimble was thanked on the motion of Mr W Lonsdale, supported by the Rev W Shepperd and Dr S Sharples. The Farington Mill band played for the hymns. During the singing of 'Abide with me' wreaths were placed at the foot of the memorial by the relatives and friends of the fallen. There were also wreaths from Messrs Thomas Moss and Sons, the Lostock Hall Spinning Co. Ltd., the local ROAB lodges and the local Conservative Association. The Benediction was pronounced by the Rev T Huntington, after which the National Anthem was sung by all present. The memorial is a figure of 'Peace' mounted on a pedestal of granite, and it stands 15 ft 6 in. high and occupies a prominent position at the crossroads of Lostock Hall, Tardy Gate and Farington. Lancashire Daily Post December 22nd 1924



LOSTOCK HALL GAS WORKS



Lostock Hall Gas Works 1932, aerial image courtesy of The Lancashire Evening Post

Lostock Hall Gas - Demand for Gas

Preston Lecturer on Lostock Hall Works Output

The design and construction of the Lostock Hall Works of the Preston Gas Company were described by Mr S Tagg, the engineer, before the members of the Astronomical and Physical section of Preston Scientific Society last night. Mr Tagg said it was not often that the engineer was called upon to design and construct an entirely new works of any magnitude, but as the demand for gas in 1924 was increasing and had continued to increase there was no alternative to the acquisition of a new site. The works were designed to produce 1000 million cubic feet of gas from 60,000 tons of coal per year and the by products included 33,000 tons of coke, 8,000 tons of ammoniacal liquor and 5,000 tons of tar. During the winter months 2,000 tons of coal were used each week, and as that quantity had to be handled during the ordinary work of 47 hours, the capacity of the coal breaking and conveying plant must not be less than 70 tons per hour. The total cost of the completed Lostock Hall scheme was just under 300,000. It was interesting to note that the plant had proved so successful in operation that the economies effected in manufacture exceeded the interest charges on the capital expenditure.

Photographs from Lostock Hall Past



LOOKING
BACK

Preston area commuters and Lostock Hall residents in particular should have little trouble recognising this street scene, even though the photograph was taken more than half a century ago. It shows Tardy Gate, circa 1948, and was kindly sent by Walton-le-Dale reader Mrs Reynolds.

Tardy Gate c.1948 Sent in to the Lancashire Evening Post by Mrs Reynolds, courtesy of Tony Billington

**Ladies from St Gerards c,1950's.
Courtesy of Tony Billington
Bessie Billington,
Mary Naylor,
Bessie Bamford,
Frances Crook,
Maggie Crook,
Gertie Rogerson
and Celia Baron
(in wheelchair)**



Woodcock Hall and The Woodcock Family

One of the chief landowning families in the area was the Woodcock family of Woodcock Hall, Cuerden Green.

The family can be traced to the early part of the 13th century when Roger de Kuerden released to John and Gilbert Woodcock, common in Cuerden for all cattle belonging to them.

In the early part of the 17th century a three storey house, described by Dr Kuerden, the historian, as a 'fair built house' was built near the River Lostock, in fields alongside what is now the main road from Lostock Hall to Leyland. At one time it was known as 'Crow Trees Farm' but later the name was changed to Woodcock Hall.

Here, in 1603, the Venerable John Woodcock was born. He became a student of St Omer's and in 1629 proceeded to the English College in Rome. His father was a schismatic, his mother a devout catholic.

In 1630 he joined the English Franciscans at Donay and was sent to England for a time. On a later mission he was arrested soon after arriving in Lancashire and was barbarously executed in Lancaster on August 7th, 1646, for his priesthood. (His name in religion was Martin of St Felix).

He was arrested early in 1644, and kept in prison for two years. Two secular priests (Edward Bamber and Thomas Whittaker) were executed with him. On the day of the execution he and his companions were led out in the usual way. Father Woodcock was the first to mount the ladder. After he said some words on the Catholic and Roman faith he was cast off, but by some accident, or through the carelessness of the executioner, the rope broke and he fell to the ground. At the sheriff's order he mounted the ladder again, and, after being thus hanged a second time, he was cut down and butchered alive. His head was preserved in the cloisters of St Bonaventure's Donay, until the French Revolution. The Franciscan nuns at Taunton possessed an arm bone.

Woodcock Hall remained standing until the 1950's when it was pulled down and a modern farmhouse built in its place.

Taken from 'A History of Lostock Hall & Tardy Gate' by Jackie Stuart.

***John Woodcock was among the 85 martyrs of England and Wales beautified by Pope John Paul II in 1987.**



Photographs from Lostock Hall Past

Harry Parker, Emily
with Mr and Mrs
Hitchen and Baby
George c. 1945.
Courtesy of Mr and
Mrs Bollenberg.



Thomas Moss Ladies Hockey Team April 1954
Playing at Longton. Back row – Florence Hardwick, Mary ?, Mary
Strickland, Jean Wilson, Clara Kirkham, Nellie Wignall, Olive Green and
Margaret Parr. Olive's brother Bob and Dog.
Courtesy of Margaret Parr

A TARDY GATE GIRL by Jackie Stuart

In January 1986 Jacqueline started school at Lostock Hall County Primary School. Ever since she had been two years old she had had breathing problems. Time and time again both Derek and I had asked the doctor if she had asthma. Repeatedly he said that she hadn't and would grow out of it. It wasn't until she started in the Junior Department of the school that asthma was diagnosed. We had changed doctors by then, because we were fed up of being fobbed off. Once she received medication and it was being kept under control she discovered that she was quite good at sports. I was really pleased at this because Helen, Stuart and Alison had all been good too. They were all good at running, team games and gymnastics. I felt really proud of them all. I can't quite remember the exact year when we had a really bad snow fall. My mother had to stay with us for ten days. Derek and I went to check her house out before she went home. We found a couple of burst pipes which obviously had to be repaired. I was concerned about the coldness of her house and suggested that my mother should consider moving to sheltered accommodation. She wasn't very keen at all. I did understand her reluctance because there was over forty years of memories in that house. She did eventually agree. Then she broke her kneecap. Derek, my brother and I took her to hospital. She had her leg put in a plaster cast and was given a pair of crutches. We had to wait for hours for an ambulance to take her home. She needed to go to the toilet so I went with her to help her. On the way out I noticed some toilet paper on the bottom of one of the crutches, so I took it off. We were on our way back to the waiting room when she said 'Ee! That was funny getting toilet paper stuck to me crutch'. I stopped in my tracks and said 'MOTHER!!!! Don't say that'. She suddenly realised what she had said and we both burst out laughing. My brother and Derek saw us and asked what we were laughing at, when I told them we were all laughing.

The waiting room of A and E department does not normally ring with laughter but we just could not stop ourselves. We just dare not look at one another. One would start and then the others would follow. It was such a relief when the ambulance came to take her home. Helen gained her City and Guild diploma in confectionery. Sadly things had turned out very bad between us and I threw her out. It was the hardest thing I have ever had to do in my life. Eventually it turned out to be the best. It is certainly not something I would recommend anyone else to do but the circumstances leading up to it became unbearable. Within months we were back on speaking terms and she was about to come back home. My mother had been offered a place in sheltered accommodation down Croston Road. On January 17th, 1987, Helen and I were moving some of her furniture to her new home. The weather was extremely cold that day and I was having trouble with the starter motor on the car. It was nearly time to pick Alison and Jacqueline up from school but my car would not start. My brother was at the house too so I asked him to pick the children up for me. He did then helped me start the car. When we arrived home Steve and Lynne, from next door, were stood on the doorstep of my house. I had picked up their daughter, Lisa, along with Stuart on the way home and was just about to apologise for being late. They stopped me and said 'Look at your window!' There was a massive icicle running from the windowsill to the ground. I went inside and found the entire house flooded. Ceilings had dropped down and every piece of furniture and clothing was ruined. The severe cold weather had burst a pipe in the attic. Apparently a neighbour had seen water pouring from the window at 9 o'clock in the morning but did nothing about it. I rang Derek and asked him to come home. We

were homeless. The council suggested we went into Bed and Breakfast accommodation. That was out of the question. We had four children for God's sake. How the hell can you manage in a B and B. We were in a mad panic. We didn't know what to do or where to turn. We had to contact the insurance company and wait for the assessor to arrive. Steve and Lynn made tea for all six of us as well as their own large family. Steve was a builder and said he would help us put new ceilings up and redecorate. The assessor arrived and told us to put our plans on hold. With it being an insurance claim we could get in contractors to do the work for us and it would be much quicker than doing it ourselves. We weren't thinking straight at the time but in a situation like that your brain doesn't work properly anyway. We had to retrieve some clothes from the house so Helen, Stuart and Alison and I went in with bin liners to get whatever we could.

I was in my bedroom when part of the ceiling fell in. Derek and my brother were in the attic surveying the damage when one of them put their foot through the ceiling. They didn't know I was underneath them until I shouted out that they had just wet me through. Eventually Derek rang his mother to tell her what had happened. She told him to get us down to her house. She could only manage to take Derek, myself, Alison and Jacqueline. Stuart had to stay with some friends of ours, and Helen went to my mother's. The following day the builder arrived with some industrial blowers. The house had to be dried out as soon as possible and it was the builder who helped us getting our brains working again. He suggested that we go into each room and write down every single thing that had been in that room. This was a really good suggestion helped both Derek and I to get our head round things. It was seven weeks before we were able to get back home. Helen had to move to my nephew Andrew's house when my mother moved and then eventually went to her dad's. Derek and I had slept on the floor all that time. Luckily for us we were insured sufficiently but only just. We made sure that both the contents and the buildings insurance was increased after that. The following year Stuart left school and went into the RAF for a few weeks. It didn't work out for him so he left and went to Runshaw College to take a B Tec Diploma. Helen moved into a flat in Penwortham and then into a house in Kent Street, Preston. When Alison left school she went to stay with Helen with my blessing to keep her company.

In April 1989 my mother became ill. She couldn't walk properly which was very unusual. For the past two years she had walked from Croston Road to our house every Sunday. She had been to the Senior Citizen's Club on Lourdes Avenue on a Wednesday afternoon and Alison saw her on her way home from school and told me that she could not walk properly. I rang my mother to see if she was alright. She wasn't, so I insisted she go and see a doctor. She went to see a specialist on the 4th July. On Friday the 14th July the doctor told me she had cancer. I was supposed to tell her the day after but I just could not do it. My brother rang me on the Sunday from my mother's to say that he had told her and asked me to go down. When I arrived my mother wanted to discuss her funeral arrangements with me and the disposal of her possessions. It was the most weird conversation in our lives. I agreed to carry out everything she wanted, then she said 'Put the kettle on, and lets have a piece of cake !'. She just sounded like Worzel Gummidge. We both burst out laughing but it was mixed with tears. It was more like hysteria than real laughter. On a later visit in September she said she would like to go away for a rest. I asked her if she would like to go into St Catherine's Hospice for a while, until she got back on her feet.

More next month

Photographs from Lostock Hall Past

Sport Aid Lostock Hall High School
1986 ? Courtesy of Tony Billington
(from Lancashire Evening Post) Do
you know who they are ?



St James Field Day 1926.
One of the ladies is Mrs
Mary Heyes (nee Black)
courtesy of Margaret Heyes



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