

Issue 11
November 2013

The Lostock Hall Magazine

Lostock Hall Spinning Company
The Farington Bombing
Memories of Bonfire Nights

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Welcome to the November (12th) issue of The Lostock Hall Magazine, which also covers Tardy Gate and nearby parts of Farington. It is a collection of local history articles relating to the area. We have now been going for twelve months and I would like to thank everyone who has advertised with us to make its production possible. Also special thanks to all our contributors and readers.

Our thanks to Penwortham Priory Academy who support us by printing and formatting the 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'. The Watson family have kindly allowed us to publish their eulogy about their mum, Mrs Watson, who sadly died last month. David Riding has done an article for us relating to his father's family home being bombed in Farington in 1940. Bonfire memories from Ray Cartwright and Brian Whittle and myself, and also memories from Mrs Betty Moorhouse (nee Gent).

Appeal for information - I was born in Lostock Hall in 1948 and lived in Mossfield Cottage next to the Council School in Avondale Drive. My sister and I were particularly interested in the picture of the Home Guard because our father was a member of the Home Guard (2nd World War). My father died when I was 3 years old and I have recently been trying to put together a Family History.....His name was Vincent Pitcher and he worked for Thomas Moss and Sons Ltd. He was a member of the Knights of St Columba and I believe he won several trophy`s for dancing at the old Conservative Club. If any of your readers has any information regarding my father I would love to hear from them. (Annette Pearson...01772 335386)

Please contact me by phone, letter or email, if you have any memories you would like to submit to the magazine for publication. Memories from our old residents are particularly sought after because once the memories are gone they are lost forever.

We are able to produce this magazine by the support of the advertisers, who you will find amongst our pages – please do support them and tell them you saw them in The Lostock Hall Magazine. We appreciate their support because without them we would be unable to produce it.

Have a look on Flickr at the Lostock Hall group of photographs, please upload any you would like to share. 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.

Next year we will be looking for information relating to memories and photographs of any residents family members during the First World War. Where soldiers from Lostock Hall and area served ? Where the women of the family may have worked during those years, etc,.

Front Cover image – First World War Memorial (from the Methodist Church) Brownedge Road, Lostock Hall, - by The Lostock Hall Magazine

Regards Heather Crook

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Old Photographs from Lostock Hall



Queen Elizabeth Coronation Celebrations, Browndge Road, Lostock Hall, 1953, taken in the back garden of one of the detached houses between Graham Avenue and the start of the terraced houses. Do you know anyone ?

Image courtesy and copyright of The Lancashire Evening Post



Lostock Hall Carnival, 12th June, 1955. Mayoress of Preston Mrs Evelyn Gray. Does anyone know who the little girl is ?

Images courtesy and copyright of The Lancashire Evening Post

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Articles from Lostock Hall Past

A YOUTH DROWNED AT FARINGTON – On Tuesday morning a fatal accident occurred at the **Naptha Works**, resulting in the death of a youth, nineteen years of age, named **Thomas Green**, son of Mr Thomas Green, farmer, Penwortham. It appeared that deceased was employed as a cart driver at the works, and a few minutes past seven o'clock he was sat in a wooden shed eating his breakfast. About four yards from his was a tank, 18 foot in depth and twenty feet in diameter, containing about 20,000 gallons of oil. The lid was open at the time, as the foreman, **James Hayes**, and a few other men had taken the pump out of the tank. They carried it a short distance, when they heard something fall into the tank, and it was found to be deceased, part of his head being exposed, though he immediately afterwards sank out of sight. The body was recovered with grappling irons in about an hour and a half afterwards, but life was extinct.
Preston Chronicle Jan 2 1869

Tardy Gate Inn - The accident which occurred last week to **Mr James Iddon**, the landlord of **The Tardy Gate Inn**, was fortunately no nearly so serious as had been reported. At the time the accident occurred Mr Iddon was using an old-fashioned flint gun, and the charge entered his arm, leaving a large wound. He is progressing favourably.
Preston Guardian Jan 30th 1892

KILLED ON THE RAILWAY – On Monday, Mr Gilbertson, coroner, held an inquest at the Preston Infirmary on the body of **John Henry Almond**, aged 59, labourer, of White Stakes, near Preston. On Thursday night last, after having three or four pints of ale he left **The Tardy Gate Inn** in the company with **John Nielson**, platelayer, who stated that he at once left Almond to go home by himself. On Friday morning Almond was found insensible on the North Union railway his head towards the embankment and his feet on the rails. **James Iddon**, of The Tardy Gate Inn said Neilson was drunk when he went into his house, and he would not serve him with any beer, but when Almond left he 'was not what you might call drunk'. It is supposed that the deceased was knocked down by a train when going home on the line. Verdict – 'Accidently Killed'.
Preston Chronicle Wednesday February 25th 1885

Mad Dog at Large On Sunday, a large mottled coloured sheep dog was seen going out of town by way of Penwortham bridge by **William Snalem** who lives in Penwortham, which showed signs of madness. On Monday it worried two pigs at Browndedge, and bit a dog and cat at **Mr Higham's, Lostock Hall Farm**. It was next seen to force its way through some wire netting at a farmhouse in **Lostock Hall-lane**, where a dog was fastened up. A lad threw a stone at it and frightened it away. Trotting down **Cuerden School Lane**, it passed several children playing in the lane, but fortunately took no notice of them. Entering **Mr Wareing's farmyard** it attacked in a furious manner a dog which was chained up, then gave chase to a cat which, however, managed to escape..... After a great deal of difficulty the dog was eventually secured and destroyed but not before it had managed to bite a polic man on the finger.
Preston Chronicle July 9 1881

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FARINGTON RAILWAY STATION

During the war years 1940/45 Mrs Betty Forrey
Worked as a porter at Farington Railway Station.

On mornings from 5.15 am to 2.15 pm or
Afternoons 2.15pm to 11.15 pm and also
Alternate Sundays 9.15 am to 6.15 pm.

On the four platforms at Farington as many
As 25 trains would stop in the morning and thirty more

During the afternoon and evening.
The last train was at 11.15 pm taking workers
To the Royal Ordnance Factory at Euxton.

The fare to Preston was 6d return. To Leyland
3 ½ d and to leave a bike at the station was
6d per week (6d converted is 2 ½ pence)

Many duties Betty included taking out
Parcels on her bicycle, letting racing pigeons out
To fly back home, and waving out the trains
With a flag during the day and a lamp at night.

In the blackout passengers would shout
'Weez Betty wid't Ramp'

Air raid wardens would come on duty at night,
As trains loaded with ammunition and high
Explosive bombs were often held up at the
Signals and vulnerable to enemy aircraft
- which did bomb the area of Farington.

Sometimes two trains arrived at the same time
But the Station Master, Mr Smith of Croston
Road would say – 'You've only one pair of legs lass',
So Betty could only wave one out at a time.

Fast trains would thunder through at night,
But never disturbed the mouse sitting on the
Kettle handle, keeping Betty company, as she sat
By the stove knitting socks for her small son Brian.

Betty says her life was never boring as passengers
Would chatter waiting for trains to go to work
Or to go shopping in Preston or on Tuesdays to Chorley Market.

By **Mrs Betty Forrey – Born 1911**

Kindly supplied by Mrs Edna Stringer, Farington.

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Bonfire Nights

Bonfire Night throughout the Forties (War Years) in Tardy Gate took place on what was known as the big backs. It was a large unfilled dirt track area that all the local children played their games on such as Hide & seek, Relievo, Kick the ball & run, Tig and Duck stones, The games we played until well in the dark were endless, this was at the bottom of Parker St and Meadow St, now swallowed up with the Hope Terrace Car Park. "Exciting times".

We started collecting wood about a month before dragging fallen trees from miles away, usually the Farington Lodges. We scavenged everywhere its surprising how many mattresses seemed to be thrown out. As the days went on and the pile got bigger we had to stand guard well into dark as there were raids from other bonfires in the area, which I have to say we were also guilty of. To our dismay after slaving for a month, I never know why but on the 5th of November our bonfire was always lit by a Mr Bollenburgh. He was a Belgian refugee, his family lived in a row of three storied terraced houses Albert Terrace, close to the big backs. The Village Surgery now stands where this row of houses used to be. Fireworks were always on a kind of ration and only certain shops, usually in Preston or Leyland had them. They were not usually in packs but sold as penny bangers, two pence rockets, two pence pack of sparklers. And you were only allowed a small amount. But money was scarce anyway. We always had a Guy Fawkes made up of straw, usually featuring an image of Hitler rather than Guy. The days after were usually spent clearing the area so we were then back to playing our games. Ho Happy days. Ray Cartwright

In our part of Lostock Hall we would collect wood from Black Wood near Hunt's Farm. On the nights before the 5th we would have to 'guard' our bonfire.

On bonfire night when our own Bonfire was dying down we would go round the different bonfires. We would have treacle toffee, parched peas and jacket potatoes.

From Lenthal's Newsagents we would buy 1d bangers, roman candles and Catherine wheels.

How did Catherine Wheels get their name ? Brian Whittle



During my childhood in the late 50's early 60's, I lived at 229 Brownedge Road, long since demolished to make way for the new roundabout. Every Bonfire Night we would make a 'guy' out of old clothes and stuff it with newspapers. During the last week of October we would put him in our old pushchair or sometimes tie him to an chair and collect 'penny for the guy' from people passing or on their way home from work. It wasn't a very busy place for pedestrians but we usually collected enough to buy a small box of fireworks. Just before Bonfire Night my Dad would take us to Gill's grocers shop on Brownedge Road, which was next door to Robinson's butchers near Four Lane Ends. There we could buy boxes of Standard fireworks, or choose from the loose ones they sold, they always had what seemed to us kids a good selection. You could buy rockets, of all sizes, roman candles, flip flaps, which flipped about on the floor when you set them off, golden rain, silver fountains, Catherine wheels and bangers, along with packets of sparklers. Right at the bottom of our garden was a space that we always used for the bonfire. It was a circle of cinders all year round. Behind it was our little shed which was called 'Hut 29' after Bootsie and Snudge's in The Army Game. We collected branches and twigs from down Green Lane, a little road that led to the railway crossing. We would go door to door asking for any old wood or furniture that the neighbours wanted to get rid of. Once we burnt an old piano, and the strings were there for months in the cinders. Dad always lit the fire, usually with the help of some paraffin. Once it had got going we would watch him light the fireworks and hold our sparklers, often getting our fingers slightly burnt by holding the wrong ends in the dark. Mum made us some sticky, crunchy treacle toffee and we put potatoes in the fire to 'cook'. They tasted awful, even with butter and salt on, they were never cooked properly, warm but almost raw, but we enjoyed them. Before going to school in the morning we would always go and check the embers, which were sometimes still glowing and try to get the fire going again. On the way to school we would often find spent rockets on the footpaths and the air smelt all smoky from the previous nights celebrations. 'Remember, Remember the Fifth of November, Gun Powder Treason and Plot, I see no reason why Gunpowder Treason, should ever be forgot.'

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Eileen Mary Watson
27th April 1923 – 24th October 2013

Our Mum ... told us that if anyone read a eulogy at her funeral she would come back and haunt us. But if anyone deserves a eulogy, 'a speech or piece of writing that praises somebody', it is undoubtedly her. We weren't a family that professed our love for each other every day, but we didn't just love her, we needed her and sought refuge in her; her personal strength and the strength of her Faith were a mystery to us – she could silence our tumult with a word. We wondered how she could remain calm when our worlds fell apart, but her inner certainty held us safe from harm.



Mum's life was dedicated to the service of others, first as a nurse and midwife and then as a wife and mother of ten. She thanked the Lord for her blessings, but had more than her share of tragedy, first when Simon had his motorbike accident in 1970 and then when our Dad died ten years later, leaving her with a house full of dependent children and a building firm to run. She never faltered. And she could never be too busy. With Simon needing 24 hour care she took on more work, a school friend of Jim's came to live with us for 2 years, and friends and cousins made our house their second home; we frequently had every bed and settee occupied by sleeping bodies after a night at the Lodestar. And how she fed us ! Dad used to tell her he needed to diet and would then inform her that one of the cake tins was empty (we had 8).

Mum and Dad had one brief holiday, on the Isle of Rhum, in the late 70's – the first time they had been away together since their honeymoon. We heard that there was just one phone on the island and no cars (Dad was a famous workaholic and being an undertaker meant he was always on call); we were trusted to hold the fort for 5 days.

They had a wonderful time, staying at Kinloch Castle when it was run by the National Trust as a country house hotel, before its decline. It was the calm before the storm. There were no more holidays; Dad became suddenly ill in 1980 and died 5 months later of a brain tumour, New Years Day morning – just so we couldn't forget.

Simon outlived Dad by 20 years, dying in 2000 shortly after Jim's wedding; he was 48 and Mum had tended to his needs every hour of every day for 30 years.

Losing him seemed as great a tragedy as his accident in 1970, but Mum, as always, gave her sorrow to the Lord. And a new stage of her life began. From 2001 to 2009 Mum and Jane went away every Easter and Christmas, to the Holy Land, New Zealand, Australia, Switzerland, Rome, Fatima, Venice, Florence, Madeira, Prague and more. Durrants Hotel, next door to St James Church Marylebone, became Mum's London 'address', she would get up early and go to Mass next door before the restaurant opened for breakfast.

In 2009 there were 3 holidays, Durrants at Easter, with Jim and family, a penthouse suite at The Midland Hotel, Morecambe, with Sarah's girls, and Whitby for the August Bank Holiday.

But Mum's heart was becoming more erratic and Christmas saw her on a cardiac ward at Leeds General, having a state-of-the-art pacemaker fitted. She had excellent care from the cardiology team in Leeds, where the specialists treated her like royalty and, for the next 4 years, life consisted of good days and not-so-good days, hospital appointments and the odd emergency. Her circulation was badly affected and, only recently, it became more difficult to make her comfortable. We celebrated Mum's 90th birthday in April; Tony came home from New Zealand and Lucy from Australia – it was a surprisingly beautiful day of unremitting sunshine; Mum's 18 gorgeous grandchildren, brimming with life and promise – she was so proud of them.

We couldn't be more proud of her, or more indebted to her, and none of us could possibly leave a legacy as great as hers.

Reproduced by kind permission of The Watson Family



Mrs B L Moorhouse (nee Gent)

Thankyou for sending me the September issue of the Lostock Hall magazine.

As you will observe I found this edition very interesting, mainly because of the article written by Connie Summer 100 years old ! This year I had my 81st birthday. Now 135 Browndge Road was where I was born in 1932. My Mother and Father, Mr and Mrs Gent, had a grocers shop there. When I was 7 months old my Mother left my Father and took me back to the family home, 111 Watkin Lane, where her Father and two maiden sisters lived. Their name was Franks and Louisa the teacher named in Connie's article, was the nursery school teacher. I started in nursery school at the grand age of three years and stayed in the school until I was 11 years old. Then I attended a wellknown private school founded by Miss Robinson and Miss Rounds, also mentioned in the article, Woodlands School in Ribbleton. When I finished my education there I went to train to be an infant teacher. History repeated itself. I would like Connie to see my letter, she will find it interesting I am sure. I am enclosing a photo of myself with Miss Franks (my Aunt Lou) and another of photo of Miss Franks, plus a photo of my birth home.

Betty Moorhouse, (nee Gent) Thornton - Cleveleys.



Miss Franks



Miss Franks with Betty



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The Farington Bombing

Prompted by reading Ray Cartwright's Reminiscences in Issue 8 of the magazine, which made reference to the bombing of the Riding family home during World War 2, I contacted the editor to check whether she would be interested in my writing an article giving some more information on the incident.

I am the grandson of Roland and Ellen Riding and the eldest son of their child William who survived the bombing. Ray Cartwright is correct when he recalls that there were no fatalities and my grandparents together with their four children at the time all survived. Today, only one remains alive – my Uncle Fred, who lives in Lytham and who was the most seriously injured. My uncle Stan, with whom my nana was seven months pregnant at the time of the bombing, is also still alive, living in Leyland.

I remember asking my dad many years ago why the Germans would bomb their family home in a semi rural location and he indicated that the German pilot had been on a bombing mission over Liverpool and, having worked at Leyland Motors before the war, had saved a bomb with the aim of hitting the factory. Unfortunately for the family, in those days there was a railway station in Farington and the bomber mistakenly identified Farington station as Leyland station and released the bomb on the family home intended for Leyland Motors, which was situated relative to Leyland station as the family home was to Farington station.

My nana vividly recalls the incident in a moving handwritten note as follows, which is also a great witness to her strong Christian faith:-

'On the 9th Oct 1940 my husband and myself and my family were all sitting so happily round the fire...all at once we heard a plane but before we remembered anything else we were all thrown down flat..we seemed to pass out for a few minutes. Father is up the first...he found two of the boys and our daughter...then I heard him say 'Where are you, mum'then he found me...then he said 'Oh dear, I thought I was the only one left but says there is still one more...then the youngest boy shouted out 'Oh daddy it hurts'...he was buried under a very old fireplace 300 years old... great big massive stones...we did get him out, we were very lucky and as I the mother was 7 months it really gave me a shake. I could not understand why we should get it as we took a full pew at St Paul's every Sunday morning but God did stay with us and I shall never forget as I had the most loving husband and father anyone could have. The most important thing was we were moving that week and we had all packed up. We had 16 pictures all cleaned ready to pack...it was so funny that they were all smashed to bits – except one (that was The Lord will Provide) – and He did. There were friends coming from everywhere with food and clothes....that is something I will never forget and I shall always believe in the Lord Jesus whatever comes'

After the destruction of their home, the family moved as planned to Balcarres Road in Leyland.



Mr. and Mrs. R. G. Riding and their four children who had remarkable escapes during an air raid last night. In the centre, with his arm in a sling, is Fred erick, the youngest son, who was buried under the fireplace.—Photo: "The Lancashire Daily Post."

When compiling this article, I did consult my uncle Fred and he interestingly added the following recollection of which I was unaware:- 'Very shortly after being at Balcarres Road a German bomber flew extremely low over the Leyland Motor Works and our back garden adjoining the works. It was driven off by an ack ack gun sited by our fence only a few yards from our back door. I vividly remember it sounding like someone hammering on it. Dad went out to see what was going on just as it flew past. He had done that at the cottage several times and had he done so on October 9th he could have put his life in danger as the roof collapsed on to where he stood. It was said that this plane dropped it's bomb on Ward St causing great damage and loss of life.'

From Balcarres Road, my grandparents subsequently owned a grocery store in Osborne Street, Preston before moving back to Leyland to run another grocery store in Canberra Road. My granddad died of a heart attack in October 1968, the day before his birthday and his planned retirement from the shop. My nana lived until 1979. Three of their children who survived the incident have died as follows - William (my dad) in 1997, my Auntie Irene in 2009 and my Uncle Brian in 2010. Four of my cousins are still living locally in the Leyland/Preston area, three live on the Fylde, one in Stafford and one in North Yorkshire with my younger brother living in Solihull. Having been brought up in Leyland, I still live locally on Walton Park and attend the United Benefice of St James' Church, Lostock Hall and St Paul's, Farington Moss, the Riding family's church at the time of the incident. Maybe this article will jog the memories of long established residents of the Lostock Hall/Farington Moss area who will now be in their 80's.

David Riding

Here is an excerpt from the Lancashire Evening Post, which did an article on the bombing in the 90's.

'Fred recalls living as a boy in School Lane Cottage, Farington, when his home was wrecked by a German bomber, on the night of October 9, 1940, a few days prior to the Lostock Hall raid.

Fred, who was seven, was injured in the attack on his home, but the rest of the family escaped unhurt. He remembers sitting with his parents, Roland and Betty Riding, and two brothers, Bill, 12, Brian, 11, and sister Irene, 16. 'I was reading on the rug with Bill when the bomb dropped without any warning. The fireplace and chimney collapsed inwards and the bedrooms were squashed' Fred explained. Although the electric light was still on, the family were unable to see for choking dust and soot. Burning cinders and a boiling kettle on the fire narrowly missed young Fred who was trapped when the fireplace fell. His father groped about the ruins by

touch to trace his family and Fred was pulled out with a badly injured arm. Neighbours rushed to rescue the family. All their new furniture was wrecked, but the wall clock remained intact hanging on its nail. It now has pride of place in Fred's hallway.

..... Our new home was in Balcarres Road, was almost surrounded by the factory and their grounds were crammed with Army vehicles. Beside our hedge was an anti-aircraft gun and my mother used to supply the soldiers with hot drinks.'



Lostock Hall Spinning Company

Amidst the strife and contention which prevail at the present moment between the manufacturers and cotton operatives, it is gratifying to know that they have little or no influence upon the former in deterring them from maintaining and even augmenting the means of carrying on the staple trade of the great county of Lancashire. Another large mill has been erected at Lostock Hall near Preston, the engines of which were started on Saturday under the most favourable circumstances and in the presence of a large number of gentlemen interested in the welfare of the cotton trade. The erection of the present mill is due to co-operative enterprise, of which so much has been said of late, and in this particular instance Preston and Bolton have joined hands to see what they can, by united effort, effect in that branch which has so often filled the coffers of energetic men, and caused them to pass by the proud names of 'cotton lords'. Some two years ago, Mr Flitcroft, of Lostock House, near Preston, seeing the propriety of starting a mill of limited liability, conceived the notion of starting a new cotton mill in the locality where he resided. He at once communicated with a few of his friends, including Messrs. Woods and Hampton, Mr Fish and Mr Burrow, of Preston, and Councillor Simpson and Mr Bardsley, of Bolton, and they, with others, succeeded in floating the Lostock Hall Spinning Company, Limited, the gentlemen named being elected the first directors. The company was started with a nominal capital of £70,000. with an arrangement that not less than £500 should be held by one shareholder, and there are now about 60 shareholders, representing capital amounting to £62,000. Once floated the operations of the company were commenced without delay, and the result has been the erection and the starting of the mill that will bear comparison in its every detail with any establishment of the kind in Lancashire. With the capital subscribed it is intended to carry on the undertaking for the present – at least - we are informed that the directors do not propose to issue any more shares until the mill is entirely fitted with machinery and in full working order.

The building itself may now be said to be practically completed, and when the designs, which include a few simple adornments, are fully carried out, it will be, so far as outward appearance goes, a very handsome structure. It is four storeys high, with good cellar accommodation, and is fireproof throughout. One external defect has yet to be remedied, and that we understand, is being provided for. On the top of the staircase there is a cast-iron cistern, of dimensions extending the whole of the staircase, which at present detracts somewhat from the otherwise fine appearance of the building. Round this, as we are informed, there is to be placed a stone cornice, of design corresponding with the general architecture of the mill, and when this is completed the defect that is now noticeable will be entirely removed. Internally the arrangements are everything that could be desired. The carding-room measures 142 feet by 120 feet inside dimensions, and in addition there is a preparation shed 180 feet long by average 22 feet wide. The warehouse and scutching room are each 42 feet wide, and corresponding in other dimensions with the rest of the mill. The engine-house is 56 feet by 24 feet, and the boiler-house is made for four boilers, with Green's economiser. The first spinning-room corresponds in size with the carding room, and over the scutching-room and warehouse are the cotton and the mixing-rooms. The two top spinning rooms are 186 feet long by 121 feet wide. The mill is calculated to hold about 55,000 spindles, to spin Bolton counts, and it is anticipated when all is completed, the cost, including the freehold of ten acres, will not exceed 28s. per spindle. The company, we should state,

have already built a number of cottages for their work people, and others will be built as the work of fitting up the mill is proceeded with. Mr Henry Stead, of Bolton, was the architect, and the contractors were – for brickwork, Mr John Maitland, of Preston, and stonework, Messrs. Cooper and Tullis, of Preston. When fitting up is completed, the mill will contain two openers and two scutchers, eighty carding engines, sixteen drawing frames of two heads and four deliveries each, supplied with a patent electric stop motion; eight slubbing frames, of 76 spindles each; and 28 jack frames, of 188 spindles each, with 25 pairs of mules, 13 pairs twist and 12 pairs weft, 1228 spindles per wheel. The other contractors have been – for the mules, Messrs. Dobson and Barlow, of Bolton, scutchers and carders, Messrs. Platt Bros. and Co., of Oldham, drawing frames and fly frames, Messrs. Howard and Bullough, of Accrington, and the mill gearing and shafting is supplied by Mr Clayton, of Preston.

The whole of the machinery selected is of the most approved description, and now that things have got fairly started, the mill will be filled as quickly as possible. It may, however, be fairly stated that the establishment is at present in good working order, and that practical operations – the actual spinning of cotton – is being carried on there to a pretty considerable extent. The boilers, which are by Messrs. J.C. Stevenson and Son, of Preston, are made exceptionally strong, to work at a pressure of 90lb to the square inch, riveted in all the seams, and their measurements are 27 ft by 7ft. The engines are by Messrs. Clayton, Goodfellow and Co., of Blackburn, and so far as their has been opportunity for testing they are eminently creditable to that firm. They are a pair of horizontals on the compound principle, the high pressure cylinder being 29 in., and the low pressure 48 in. diameter, 5 ft 6 in stroke, to run 40 strokes per minute, and they can be worked, as we understand, with great economy up to 500 indicated horse-power. The spiral segment wheel weighs near thirty tons, and attached to the governor is a patent 'knock off motion' which proves a valuable regulator. When the engines were run in public on Saturday afternoon, this new method was admired on all hands, and specially by those practically acquainted with its importance.

Of the machinery, only a comparatively small portion has yet been laid down, but the samples in every department are worthy of the eminent makers by whom they were supplied. Saturday afternoon being the day appointed for the shareholders meeting, it was decided as the arrangements were so far completed, to take advantage of the occasion for starting the engines, and a portion of the machinery.

When all were assembled the engines were started amidst great applause and they were afterwards 'christened' by Mrs Flitcroft, and duly toasted by the guests. The high pressure cylinder was named 'Preston' and the low-pressure one 'Bolton' indicating that the two large manufacturing towns were principally concerned in the welfare of the undertaking. The visitors having duly inspected and admired the engines, were conducted through the mill, and had an opportunity of seeing the machinery at work. About twenty carding-engines were at work, and a number of frames, and on the latter the bobbins were shown in preparation for the mules, in all the different stages of the department. In one of the spinning-rooms there was at work a single line of mule carriages, 1,228 spindles, spinning cops of 81 counts, which were very highly spoken of by manufacturers who were present.

'Success to the Lostock Hall Spinning Company'

Preston Chronicle January 27th 1877

A Tardy Gate Girl

It was wonderful in Germany, except for the day when we went to the Blue Grotto Caves. This is where the same fear came over me that I had experienced in the underground tube station in London. I was claustrophobic but did not yet know it. The entrance to the caves with its stalagmites and stalactites closed in all around me and I panicked. I knew that I had to carry on as there were others behind me. In the centre is a massive cavern with a cafeteria, which wasn't too bad, but we were still underground. The way out was by a boat. I remember focusing on a small pin prick of light, which grew larger and larger until we were in the open air. I promised myself I would never go into caves again after that.

At long last the results came through for the U.L.C.I. examinations. I had taken seven subjects and had managed to pass five of them. The two I didn't pass were Geography and History. I never liked any of these subjects anyway. My boyfriend did not pass all his exams and I was blamed for it by his parents. I didn't accept this as being my fault at all and argued that if you didn't know the subject sufficiently enough you should not sit the exam. He was a grammar school pupil and had been at his school much longer than I had been at mine, so he should have been better prepared. His parents agreed with me in the end and said I was not to blame. I was on a high at the time as I was the one in our house to have a Certificate of Education. Nobody else had one, not even my brother. I know that I was considered to be stupid. I even thought so myself, but not anymore – certainly not anymore. It had taken 16 years to get to this point and at long last I started to believe in myself. How could I have let myself be put down like that, but I had, hadn't I? That wasn't the end of it because I allowed it to happen again later on in my life. To complete my education I went to night school to take a further two U.L.C.I. exams in English and Typing and passed them both with credit, then passed an R.S.A. (Royal Society of Arts) exam in typing. Three years of a different type of schooling changed my entire life and made this possible. I started my first job as a clerk/typist in 1960 at Addison's Wine Lodge in Preston on a wage of £3.00 per week. Part of my job was to answer the telephone. With not having used the telephone very much, I was very nervous and my voice was too flat and broad. My boss informed me to lighten my tone and use an upward lilt with it, thus my telephone voice was cultivated. This was to become a reason for laughter later on in my life, when comments like 'Oh, she's using her telephone voice' were made. Addison's was associated with Yates Wine Lodge and had branches situated all over the north west. All deliveries of wines, spirits and bottled beers were made from the Preston branch. I had to check that all the orders from the other branches were correct from distribution point and corresponded at the destination point. This at times varied considerably and the managers would ring up to say that they had not received certain items. I was totally unaware at the time that I had unwittingly revealed fraudulent practices going on. These apparently were put right by the managing directors. I remember feeling terrible that some people had lost their jobs and I thought that it was my fault. I really did not like the situation at all. One of the managers put my mind at rest when he explained that the fraudulent practices had been going on for some time, and that the only people to blame were the fraudsters themselves. This helped to ease my feeling of guilt but it certainly did not erase it. It was while I was working at Addison's that my boyfriend's mother told me that Thomas Moss & Sons, a cotton mill for whom she worked, were holding trials for players in their ladies hockey team. She knew that I had played hockey several years before, so she put

my name forward. I went to the trials, but I did not tell them that I had not played for four years. Apparently they thought I was a natural player and was chosen for the reserves. Within weeks of the season I was a permanent player in the first team. At the home games my dad would come and watch. He would stand on the sidelines and shout words of encouragement. Well I think they were words of encouragement. He would say 'Shape your bloody self, you're acting wooden'. It used to amuse me that he was there. I remember thinking that it was normally a dad watching his son play football, not a dad watching his daughter play hockey. The only away game he would come to was at the Leyland Motors ground. With him working there he was interested in whether we beat his works team. Sometimes we did and sometimes we didn't. He was very supportive in his own way, but he would never say if I played well. One Saturday, on my return from a match, my mum and dad were hovering around the tea table, obviously ill at ease. I remember asking them what the matter was. The both started to speak at the same time about there being a skeleton in the cupboard they thought I should know about. It turned out to be the matter of my mother's illegitimacy. They were visibly terrified of telling me and of my reaction. I just sat there and smiled at them both and told them that I already knew. I didn't tell them how I knew I just couldn't, it would have hurt them both so much. Obviously they did ask me how I knew. I just told them that it was their own fault because they had never mentioned my granddad at all, and that fact alone had made me wonder. I also told them that it made no difference to me, and the circumstances of my mother's birth didn't stop her from being my mum. They were so relieved by my reaction that they started to laugh. They actually believed my reason and admitted that they had been at fault. I was glad that they believed me but felt so sorry for them at the same time. To think that they had been so scared to tell me such a personal thing, which obviously meant so much to them. I decided that as they had told me their big secret that I had better tell them mine. I revealed to my dad the reason why he could not repair the mangle when it went wrong. He said that he thought I had done something, but wasn't sure what. With having confessed our secrets to each other we all ended up laughing. I carried on working for Addison's for two years. It was while I was there that I met my first gay person, or queer as they were then referred to. I had no idea what people meant by 'queer', he seemed perfectly normal to me. He did wear make up, but it was very subtle. I asked my boyfriend what 'queer' actually meant. He did explain it to me, but I refused to believe what he said. In fact I thought that it was a load of rubbish. Things like that just did not happen. Oh how naïve could I be? It was several years later when I realised that he had actually told me the truth. My brother and his family had moved to Queensway and had had another son, Andrew. Young Rowland had died and they were expecting another baby. The new baby was a girl called Tracey. I stayed at my brother's house to look after them until Pat came home. In 1962 I started a new job at Thomas Moss & Sons in the office, so I had ended up in a mill after all. I met up with one of the Mercer Road gang, Bernard McGarry. He worked at the mill too. He used to drive the works mini-bus and was our driver for the hockey matches. He would run us all over the place for the away matches. In one match I was hit in the mouth with a hockey stick. My teeth came through my bottom lip and Bernard administered first aid. When I dislocated my big toe in another match, he would pick me up from home, drive me to work and drive me back again at night. We became good friends and had a mutual respect for one another. The bigotry we had grown up with disappeared. Time and again our paths would cross over the coming years.

By Jackie Stuart more next month

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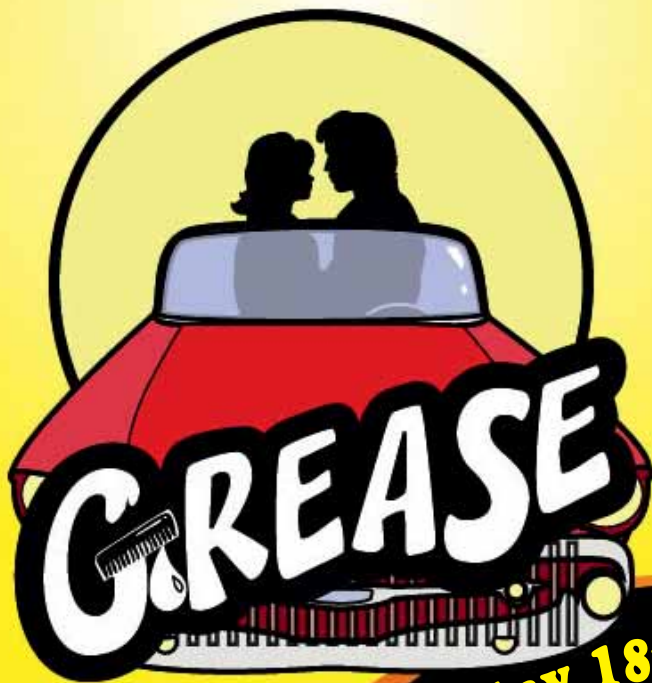
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