

The Preston Magazine



Issue 4

Guild Hall
Thomas Swindlehurst
Torpedo Boat Trial

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Welcome

Welcome to our 4th edition of The Preston Magazine which we hope is being enjoyed, please do let us know. We intend to produce our free magazine monthly, which will contain lesser known history articles relating to Preston.

A big thankyou for our advertisers, without them we could not produce this magazine. Please support them whenever you can.

Our thanks to Priory Sports and Technology College for their help and support in the production of our magazine. A link on their website's community pages allows you to read all issues online, as well as our sister magazine, The Penwortham Magazine. www.priory.lancs.sch.uk you can also access The Preston Magazine via www.blogpreston.co.uk

Many thanks to our guest writers, Steve Halliwell, Peter Vickers, Paul D. Swarbrick and Robert Gregson, and this month Keith Atkinson. Should you require a copy each month please contact us.

We are looking for images and memories relating to Preston, please send them to us.

The Preston flag seen on the front of the magazine was designed by Philip Tibbets, copyright has been waived to allow it to be used by anyone. Take a look at the Preston groups on Flickr, there are thousands of images, old and new.

Front Cover Image courtesy of David Douglas.

Regards

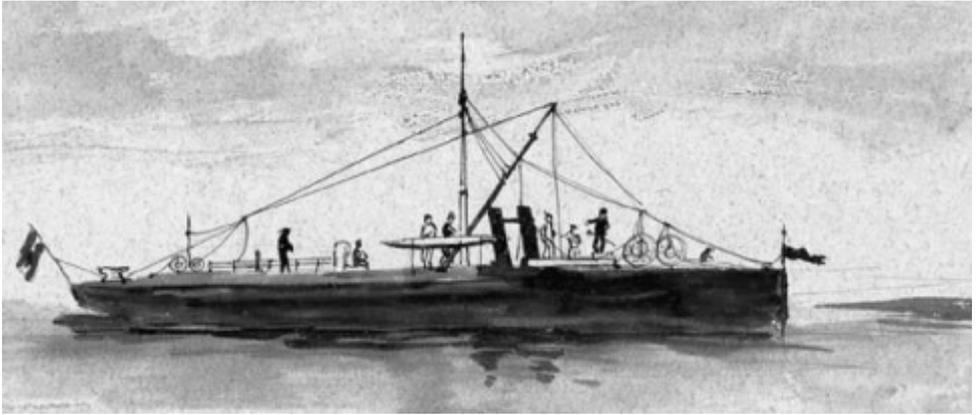
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Contact Details - Heather 07733 321 911
121 Broad Oak Lane, Penwortham, Preston, PR1 0XA
Email theprestonmagazine@gmail.com

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Trial Trip of Torpedo Boat on the Ribble



The trial trip, under Admiralty regulations, of a torpedo boat built by Mr Richard Smith, shipbuilder, The Marsh, Preston, took place on Saturday on the River Ribble. The boat has been built for her Majesty's Government and is intended for Tirhoot, India, her special mission being coast defence. She is one of seven contracted for. The weather was exceedingly rough and the tide was very high when the trial took place, but the conditions were complied with in a most satisfactory manner, the indicated horse power of the engines being 170, and the boat attaining the speed of 15 statute miles on a draught of 2ft 6in. The length of the boat overall is 62 ft, beam 12 ft, mean depth amidships 4 ft, draught 2ft 6 in. The crew will consist of 10 men, and the boat carries three tons of coal. The Torpedo boat is built of the best quality of steel, one-eighth inch in thickness, galvanised, the total weight of the hull is five tons. The engines are high pressure, with stroke of 8 in. by 9 in. on each screw, the boiler is of the locomotive type of large capacity, maintaining steam to enable the engines to indicate 170 horse power. The total weight of the boat equipped in working order with coals and crew onboard and steam up is only 22 tons. The largest class of torpedo boats is 120 feet long and weighs 30 tons. It is a twin screw boat, the torpedo being shot from a spar fixed on the bow. The boat will be elegantly fitted up in India. The fore part being utilised for the officers and the rear for the crew. Mr Smith sends out the drawings with the boat, the decorating and finishing of which is done abroad to prevent damage in transit. The characteristics of the boat is enormous power with the lightest draught and greatest speed. This Torpedo boat, which is christened 'No. 112' is the first ever to be built in Preston, and is quite an epoch in the history of local shipbuilding. Before leaving this yard we noticed three 'stern wheelers', a new description of steamers, duplicates, in fact, of the Nile boats, and intended for the Brazils. Mr Smith has also just concluded a contract for four large steamers for the Italian Government to ply on the Tiber.

Preston Chronicle September 19 1885

The competition was keen between manufacturers and nations to claim the fastest and deadliest torpedo boats. Glittering statistics played well in the press, but the boats seldom provided such impressive performance long beyond their trials. The technology was bounding forward at such speed that a record-breaking TB of 1887 would be obsolete and all but ready for the junk heap by 1893.

Preston Digital Archive

Annual Appeal

Our initial goal of collecting 8000 images before the commencement of Preston Guild 2012 has been met, but we need your help to expand the collection even more. So, cap in hand, like Oliver Twist, we humbly ask for more.

We know you must have musty old albums, biscuits tins and the odd sock drawer full of interesting items of Preston and the surrounding areas past. So how can you submit them to us

Read on !

1. If you have the ability to scan them to your computer, you can send them to our email address as attachments (300 dpi. Photo quality please) to prestondigitalarchive@hotmail.com
2. For the technically among us you can mail material to our local address. We will make copies and return them to you (at our cost) Our mailing address is as follows
Preston Digital Archive, PO Box 1316, Preston PR1 0RT.
Please remember to include a return address.
3. For heavier/bulky items such as postcard collection etc. one of our local volunteers may be able to pick up and collect or scan on site. Please let us know your preference. (Call us on 07733 321911)

So what are we looking for, obviously photographs form the core of our collection, images of commercial or industrial activity, lost streets and buildings, social activity and gatherings etc. We love to receive post cards, especially RP-PPC (Real Photo Picture Post Cards) Ephemera covers a broad spectrum of items and would include such items as theatre programmes, invitations, magazine articles, old advertisements and newspaper cuttings, also old church magazines.

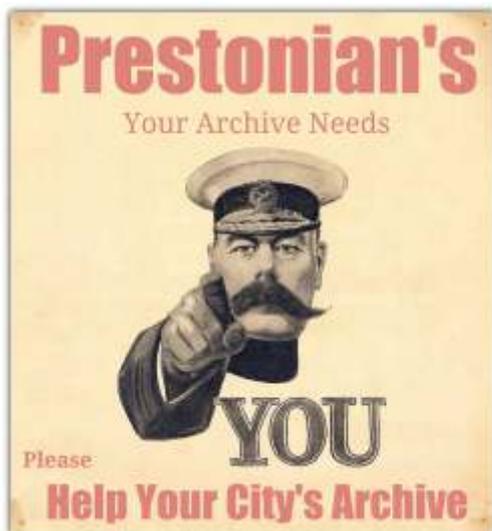
At present the upper date range is 1990. We also try and confine the general geographical area to Preston, Penwortham, Fulwood, Grimsargh, Walton le Dale, Bamber Bridge and Lostock Hall.

Finally we welcome any suggestions you might have for improving our archive. You can see our archive on Flickr, to date we have received over 3,000,000 views, with an average daily count of +8000.

Thankyou for your interest and hopefully support.

Also a big thankyou to all Preston Digital Archive viewers.

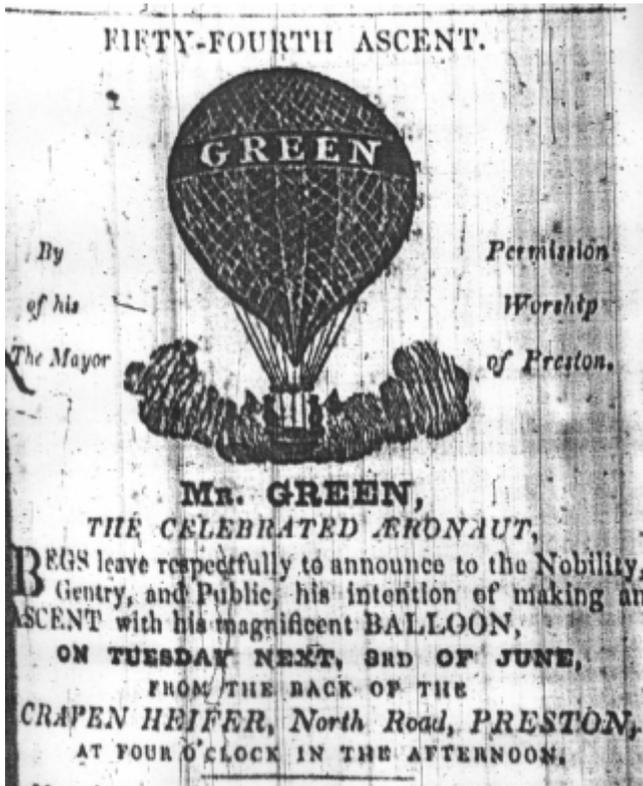
Regards from Barney
Preston Digital Archive



Up Up and Away

At the first proclamation of the Guild in 2012 the people gathered on the Flag Market witnessed a splendid spectacle of a lady gymnast twisting and twirling in her harness as the tethered balloon from which she was suspended was guided around the square. That the balloon could carry such a load was seemingly taken for granted by the onlookers, but this was not the case back in the 19th Century when such flight was to be marvelled at. In June 1773 Montgolifer's hot air balloon took to the air in France and so began the possibility of man flying. After a great deal of experimenting with hot air and hydrogen filled envelopes it was in November the same year that the first manned flight took place, at the time regarded as startling as man landing on the moon was in the 20th Century.

In Britain, Charles Green made the first flight in a balloon filled with coal gas on 19th July 1821. *Whittle's History of Preston* stated that there was a balloon ascent at the Guild of 1822



FIFTY-FOURTH ASCENT.

By of his The Mayor

Permission Worship of Preston.

MR. GREEN,
THE CELEBRATED AERONAUT,
BEGS leave respectfully to announce to the Nobility,
Gentry, and Public, his intention of making an
ASCENT with his magnificent BALLOON,
ON TUESDAY NEXT, 3RD OF JUNE,
FROM THE BACK OF THE
CRAPEN HEIFER, North Road, PRESTON,
AT FOUR O'CLOCK IN THE AFTERNOON.

but it isn't known if this was a flight with a passenger, man or beast. It was reported as early as May 1825 that Mr Green was seeking permission of the Mayor of Preston to launch his balloon in the town and *The Preston Chronicle* in June 1882 asserts that this launch took place. The first detected report of Mr Green in Preston is in 1828 when he was to make his 54th flight from the back of the Craven Heifer public house at the top of North Road. "In spite of the wet weather Mr Green, accompanied by Mr Richard Pemberton, joiner of this town, launched his balloon, but no sooner up than he began to prepare for the decent; and accordingly made a safe landing in about ten minutes, a little beyond the Race Ground, and about two and a half miles from

which the balloon started. Both men were completely drenched in rain." In accounts of the flight nothing is said about the plight of the "living animal" that was to be discharged by parachute. In July 1831 the students on the National Schools of Walton and Preston numbering some 4,000 children were assembled on The Marsh to witness the ascent of two, fortunately, unmanned balloons provided by members of the *Institute for the Diffusion of Knowledge*. The first balloon launched about 3.30pm drifted on a strong breeze in the direction of Longton and disappeared from sight in about ten minutes. The second one ascended in a similar manner but after about the same amount of time appeared to be hit by

lightning and came down in flames. Later the same year, when the children were again gathered at Chadwick's Orchard to celebrate the coronation of William IV, the ornate balloon measuring 40 feet in diameter failed take off as the material was damaged. In October 1867 at the celebrations to mark the opening of the New Town Hall, and Avenham, Miller and Moor Parks in Preston an audience of 80,000 gathered at Moor Park for the launching of the Mr Coxwell's balloon. Contemporary reports tell us that; "For a considerable distance, nothing but a solid mass could be seen. The ground where the balloon was to be inflated had been enclosed by posts and cords and the pressure of this large number of people against the cords caused the police, and a number of soldiers, no little difficulty in preventing a breakdown on the enclosure by the mob." The police restored the enclosure and the filling of the balloon



Mr Henry Coxwell

then commenced with gas supplied from the Gas Company's main in Barrack Road. The operation of filling the balloon with 18,000 feet of gas took from twelve until about half past four, during which time the crowd broke into the enclosure and Mr Henry Coxwell the police and soldiers struggled and wrestled to contain the crowd. Shortly after this occurrence a number of sandbags that had held the balloon to *terra firma*, were taken away and Mr Coxwell began his ascent. "The ascension was very gradual and steady, and as the aeronaut widened the distance between himself and the immense populace below, the cheering on the

part of the multitude was loud and continuous, which Mr Coxwell acknowledged by waving his hat. The balloon travelled in a S.S.E. direction, and its flight was quite of a rapid character....After travelling some distance the balloon was noticed to veer round to another direction and a cry was raised that the balloon was returning, when a bucolic-looking youth exclaimed "*Eh! Aye, he's comin back ageean ; he's forgotten summat*", the lad no doubt having suddenly bethought himself of having seen about the ground an anchor or two, a number of sand bags, and other things used in connection with the balloon. The balloon however was soon lost to view. It is understood that Mr Coxwell alighted at West Houghton, three miles beyond Chorley. (To be continued)

A Visit to the Preston Stone Yard

A correspondent of The Manchester Examiner and Times (Mr E Waugh, Lancashire Poet) thus describes a visit he paid to a place where the Preston out-door paupers break stones :- The Stone Yard is close by the Preston and Lancaster canal. Here there are from 170 to 180, principally young men, employed in breaking, weighing and wheeling stone for road mending. The stones are of a hard kind of blue boulder, gathered from the land between Lancaster and Kendal. The 'Labour Master' told me that there were thousands of tons of these boulders between Lancaster and Kendal. A great deal of them are brought from a place called 'Tewbit Field' about seven miles on 't'other side o' Lancaster'. At the Stone Yard it is all piece work, and the men can come and go as they like. As one of the Guardians told me 'They can oather sit an' break 'em, or kneel an' break 'em, or lie deawn to it, if they'n a mind.' The men can choose whether they will fill three tons of the broken stone, and wheel it to the central heap, for 1s., or break one tone for 1s., The persons employed here are mostly 'lads an'leet-timber't chaps; the stronger men are sent to work on Preston Moor. There are great varieties of health and strength amongst them. 'Beside' as the Labour Master said, 'yo'd hardly believe what a difference there is I'th wark o' two men worchin' at the same heap sometimes. There's a great deal i'th breaker neaw; some on 'ems more artful than others. They finden out that they can break 'em as fast again at after they'n gotten to th'wick i'th inside. I have known an odd un or two here that could break four ton a day, an' many that couldn't break one; but then, you know, th' men can only do accordin' to their ability. There is these differences, and there always will be'. As we stood talking together, one of my friends said that he wished 'Radical Jack' had been there. The latter gentleman is one of the guardians of the poor, and Superintendent of the Stone Yard. The men are naturally jealous of misrepresentation, and, the other day, as 'Radical Jack' was describing the working of the yard to a gentleman who had come to look at the scene, some of the men overheard his words, and, misconceiving their meaning, gathered around the superintendent, clamourously protesting against what he had been saying. 'He's lying !' said one, 'Look at these honds !' cried another, 'We'n they ever be fit to go to th' factory wi' again?' Others turned up the soles of their battered shoon to show their cut and stockingless feet. They were pacified at last; but, after the superintendent had gone away, some of the men said much and more, that, 'if ever he towd ony moor lies abeawt 'em, they'd fling him into th'cut.' The 'Labour Master' told me there was a large wood shed for the men to shelter in when rain came on. As we were conversing one of my friends exclaimed, 'He's here now !' 'Who's here !' 'Radical Jack'. The superintendent was coming down the road. He told me some interesting things, which I will return to on another occasion. But our time was up. We had other places to see. As we came away, three old Irishwomen, leaned against the wall at the corner of the yard, watching the men at work inside. One of them was saying 'Thim guardians is the awfulest set o' min in the world ! A man had better be transported than come under 'em, An' this they'll try you, an' try you, as if you were goin' to be hanged'. The poor old soul had evidently only a narrow view of the necessities and difficulties which beset the labours of the Board of Guardians at a time like this. On our way back to town one of my friends told me he had met a sexton the day before, and had asked him how trade was with him. The sexton replied that it was 'Varra bad – nowt doin' hardly' 'Well, hows that ? asked the other, 'Well,thae sees' answered the sexton 'Poverty seldom dees. Taeres far moor kilt wi'o'er-heytin' an' o'er drinkin' not there is wi' bein' pinched'.

Preston Chronicle June 11th 1862

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Part Four in the Series

of Pub Historian **Steve Halliwell's**

stroll around the city.

<http://pubsinpreston.blogspot.com>

The "LAMB and PACKET" Friargate.

The last building on Friargate as you're leaving the city centre, are to be found the premises that are the subject of this month's story. Few people, even long-time residents of Preston are unaware that in times gone by, the '**Lamb and Packet**' stood about fifteen feet further forwards, in the centre, in fact, of the current street. In 1876, with a need to widen that part of Friargate, the original inn of the same name, was demolished and reconstructed by the Corporation.

Despite the reconstruction, the inn stood close to one of the least salubrious parts of the borough. Kendal Street, on whose corner it stands, was, prior to 1900 called Canal Street, stretching, as you might imagine to the North End stretch of the Preston – Kendal Canal. It is interesting to note that around 1890, on Corporation Street close to Canal Street, was the **North End Hotel**, the name being traceable to the canal, rather than the local football team! The building still exists.

In the 1800's, the whole of the area from Hope Street, through the Canal Street complex, to Fylde Road, an area now occupied by two huge roundabouts, and the main building of the University, was once occupied by tiny, low-class slum houses, occupied during the second half of the century predominantly by Irish immigrant mill-workers. Those residents were served by a number of equally low-class beer-houses run, very often, by Irish people. It was not a good place to live, with numerous accounts of violence, very often attributable directly to drink and drunkenness.

Yet in spite of all that, and disregarding the inevitable exception, the **Lamb and Packet** would seem to have driven a course which avoided the worst of the trouble that existed around it. That that was the case, was undoubtedly a reflection on the management of the establishment, which has its origins at a date prior to 1818. During the life of the first building, the upper windows were often used by local and national politicians to air their views to the masses gathering below in the street.

Today, entering the pub from Friargate, you are immediately struck by the openness and overall cleanliness of the place. It's close proximity to the University dictates that a large proportion of its trade will come from that quarter, but it is by no means exclusive to them.

It is a favourite meeting place for members of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, and the Lamb and Packet can be relied on for a goodly selection of hand-pumped ales to be in stock. Indeed, CAMRA have selected the **Lamb and Packet** as their '**Pub of the Season, 2012.**' It also has a reputation for its pub-food, which is served all day.

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Preston Guild Special: The Guild Hall Lancaster Road.

by [Paul D. Swarbrick](#)



As the Preston Guild is now upon us I have been recollecting what was built on the area on which the Preston Guild Hall, which was completed in 1972, now stands.

I am certain that many readers will well remember this area, and there will be some younger people who will have very little idea of what was there prior to the construction of the Guild Hall. Essentially the three main roadways that surround the Guild Hall, Lancaster Road, Lord Street and Tithebarn Street, have been in existence for many years and the site on which it is built was the home for a few narrow passageways and various business premises.

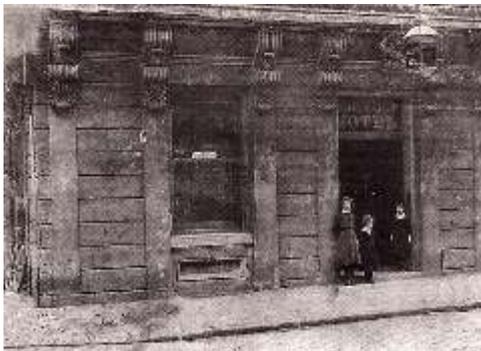


Our first photograph in Image 1 is of a part of the east side of Lancaster Road. All the buildings seen here, up to and including the Ribble Motor Services office, were swept away to make way for the new Guild Hall. The Ribble Motor Services office can be seen between a narrow passageway known as Wards End, on the left side of the offices; and to the right side there was Kenyons pastry and confectioners shop, and adjacent to Kenyons, is a building which still remains to this day,

which is the Stanley Arms. When the Guild Hall was built a narrow road between

the Guild Hall and the Stanley Arms was constructed and was then named Wards End in commemoration of the ancient passageway that was.

On the left side of the old Wards End there was The Guild Boot Repairing Company Ltd., Boot Repairers followed by The Tea Bar, a much loved place of refreshment by Prestonians around that time. Moving to the far left side of the block, on the corner of Lancaster Road and Lord Street, as illustrated in Image 2, there was a tall building which, in the early 1900's was partly occupied by the Roebuck Inn as shown in Image 3. Image 2 also shows the old Derby Arms public house.



Wards End was a very convenient 'short cut' for Prestonians, and in everyday use to gain access to the Ribble Bus Station. Whilst walking along this quaint ancient place people would pass various business premises, one being, the Golden Lion public house just on the left side as you entered Wards End from Lancaster Road as can be seen in Image 4, and in Image 5, viewing from the east side of Wards End, you can get a better perspective of the location by the view in the background of Lancaster Road and of the Harris Museum & Library.



Up to the late 1960's, Lord Street remained much the same for many years, apart from the construction of the Ribble Bus Station around 1927. The photograph from 1912 in Image 6 shows a westerly view from the junction of Tithebarn Street and Lord Street. The buildings to the left side of the premises of T.C. Holden Ltd, which is just left of centre, were swept away to build the Ribble Bus Station as can be seen in

Image 7. It is interesting to note that the 1912 image of Lord Street shows, in the distance, an easterly view of Lancaster Road and the buildings that existed then prior to the 1930's construction of the Municipal Buildings or Town Hall as it is now known.



In the late 1960's plans had been drawn up by architects Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall and partners to construct a new Guild Hall for Preston and the site chosen was that of the old Ribble Bus Station and all the existing buildings, roads and alleyways in that block area. The New Bus Station was already in operation and therefore it was all go ahead to start work. The Ribble Bus Station was the first item on the agenda to be demolished, and so it was. The photograph in Image 8 shows a view of that area following the Bus Station demolition.



Shortly after the demolition of the Bus Station the remaining part of the site was swept away very quickly and work commenced on the foundations of the new Preston Guild Hall as can be seen in Image.

Preston Guild Hall is an octagonal building designed for the 2000 seater concert hall and was officially opened on May 11th 1973 after many trials and tribulations concerning builders strikes and the like. It appears to be one of those 'love it or loathe it' type of buildings and in its past has had various nicknames such as 'the Preston Pomegranate' and 'the Terrible Toadstool'. However, Prestonians seem to have warmed to it somewhat over the years and it is still looked upon as the main entertainment venue in Preston even though it does appear that the halcyon days of this establishment have passed.



This article showcases photos from the brilliant Preston Digital Archive which is an online archive of images of Preston's past.

ODE TO PRESTON DOCKERS

Oh, gracious span of wind and water,
You gave me life and asked no quarter,
You likened me to an ant in labour
Every cargo being my saviour.

Giant cranes with necks of steel,
Dipping their heads into the keel.
Timber, pulp, and sacks of clay,
Surrendering up to the light of day.
Men with hooks and spades, and slings,
With pads on their shoulders to hide the stings.

Ships from Russia, ships from France,
On the great water they did dance,
Sometimes four abreast, and waiting,
Their painted hulls on the quayside grating.
Capstans turning, ropes all straining,
Not a man acting, not a man feigning.
Every mans mind on the job in hand,
Wasn't it hard, but wasn't it grand.
This was a toil that no man hated,
Even the worst was sometimes feted.
Tides may come and tides may go,
We work in rain and wind and snow.

What is it that holds us year after year,
It must be each other that keeps us here,
Mates together through the thick and thin,
Friend of the Dane, and pal of the Finn,
Where are they now those salts of the earth,
Serious men, and men of mirth.
Always ready, able, and willing,
To give you if need be their very last shilling.

Alas, the dock it is no more,
The seamans mission has closed its door,
What a sad end to the life we knew,
The stud, the black cabin and the coal tip crew.

Maybe the new will bloom, we'll see,
But ghosts of dockers will haunt your Quay.

Le Envoi

By Kenneth Baines
Ex Docker

Thomas Swindlehurst – “King of the Reformed Drunkards.”

Preston is well known as being the place where the Temperance Movement took off in Britain in the 19th Century, and as the birthplace of Teetotalism.

When historians mention this, it is generally only Joseph Livesey who gets mentioned. Livesey certainly had the finances and the literary skills to promote the movement in the printed media, but he never took sole credit for its foundation.

Today, few people will have heard of the name Thomas Swindlehurst yet, as the following article will show, he was a significant co-worker with Livesey and enjoyed great fame amongst Temperance groups for 30 years.

Thomas Swindlehurst was born on 29th January 1785 at Slaidburn in the Forest of Bowland. He was the son of a poor Blacksmith and from the age of six until he was twelve he worked 11-hour night shifts in the cotton mills of Lancashire.



*Oil Painting of Thomas Swindlehurst
now displayed in the Harris Museum*

He married in 1808 and soon after moved to Preston where he apprenticed to Mr Frank Sleddon, a Preston machinist. He had started his own business by 1815 as a Roller Maker for the cotton mills, and was later renowned as a Master Roller maker. He was a very successful businessman, sometimes as sole owner, sometimes with a business partner, but by the year 1830 he risked losing everything, including his own life, when he allowed his addiction to drink to take over.

Only just in time, the Temperance Pledge was explained to him by one of his creditors, John Finch of Liverpool, (later to become his business partner), and Thomas became the very first person in Preston to sign the Temperance Pledge. By signing the Pledge he agreed to abstain from spirits and to drink beer in moderation, limited to an average of three glasses a day. But Thomas found that it was easy to make a “good fuddle”, as he called it, while still keeping to his quota, by saving up his allowance and binge drinking instead. He realised what was happening and one day suddenly made a pledge to God that he would abstain totally from alcohol for a whole year. Later, realising what a good effect this had on his life, Thomas said, “I shall keep it as long as I live, for I am quite sure, from my own experience that nothing short of total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks can either reform drunkards, or prevent moderate drinkers from becoming drunkards.” Thomas became a total abstainer on Shrove Tuesday, 1832 and he never again drank alcohol for the rest of his life. Thomas Swindlehurst must surely be the first recorded person to advocate that an alcoholic must abstain totally if they are not to fall back into drink dependence. This total abstinence was later to be known as “Teetotalism”, a name created by his friend, and Temperance co-worker, Richard (“Dicky”) Turner.

In 1836 Thomas was publicly crowned at a mock-coronation staged by the Society members as the **“King of the Reformed Drunkards”**, a name he had been called informally for some time before. From thereon in he was jocularly referred to as “His Majesty”; he even signed his letters from the Society as “Thomas Rex”. Not only did Preston give marked evidence of its respect and loyalty to Thomas and his “Royal” title, but other towns also recognised him under this title and a special version of “God Save the King” was sung at Temperance events throughout the land in his honour.

In 1837, at one of the largest and most enthusiastic meetings ever held in the theatre in Preston, Thomas was presented with a gold medal, bearing the following inscription: “Presented to Thomas Swindlehurst by his numerous friends in Preston, as a token of respect for his indefatigable services in promoting the cause of total abstinence from all intoxicating liquors.”

When Thomas' son spoke about this event, several decades later, his words are as true today as they were then, “The present generation have no idea of the life and fire of those classic times. The

occasion was the recognition of my father's position as a leader in the temperance reformation – of his extraordinary zeal, his unwearied and disinterested labours, his dauntless courage, his indefatigable and widespread services, his great success, his matchless championship in the cause – for he was in these respects a giant in those days. I think that justice has yet to be done to him."

His contributions extended beyond the Temperance Movement and he found time also for other types of public service. He was a member of the Board of Guardians (who administered Poor Law and the Workhouses) and in 1835 he was returned to the Council Chamber by the electors in St Peter's Ward of Preston, to serve for three years.

Thomas went on to become one of the Temperance Movement's greatest advocates. He died in poverty on 27th June 1861, aged 76, having spent his wealth, this time not by drinking alcohol, but in travelling many thousands of miles in Britain, distributing leaflets and giving speeches on the evils of alcohol and how Teetotalism was the only way to reform. Thousands of Prestonians lined the route to the cemetery on the day of his funeral, and his headstone justifies his place in history:

"An abstainer from intoxicating liquors for some time prior to the formation of the Preston Temperance Society. He was one of the first, (if not the first) of the "Preston Men" to publically advocate teetotalism as the only true principle of sobriety, and for 30 years in all parts of the United Kingdom, he devoted his time, talents and means to spread the Temperance cause"



Thomas Swindlehurst proudly rides a white horse at the head of the Preston Temperance Procession.

We live in a world that is very different to the one Thomas Swindlehurst lived in, and yet the principles that he stood for are eerily as relevant today, where the easy availability of cheap alcohol and binge drinking, even amongst the very young, are major health and social issues.

All of the places in Preston that were associated with Thomas in those exciting times have disappeared; his homes, his factories and his meeting places have all been cleared away by later developments. Modern historians have all but forgotten how important his contribution was and no memorial stands in his honour. However, more than a century after Thomas' son's words, there may just be the first sign of justice being done to his memory. A Portrait of Thomas, that once proudly hung on the wall of Preston's Temperance Hall, has recently been restored, and after decades in storage, is now beautifully displayed in the new "Discover Preston" exhibition at the Harris Museum and Art Gallery. When you next visit the museum please look out for him and give the honour that is due to a Preston man who, in the words of the Victorian historian Winskill, "*devoted more time to the gratuitous service than we had any right to expect.*"

By: Keith Atkinson – Gt, Gt, Gt, Gt Grandson of Thomas Swindlehurst.

keith.d.atkinson@googlemail.com

A Preston Lad – Part 3

By Arthur Eric Crook



I have no real recollection of my first night in this place I had no wish to be. I fell asleep exhausted with the day's event, bewildered by my new surroundings, and more than a bit scared of all these kids who were strangers to me. Miss Hall filled me with dread, before bed she had given a speech to me covering the rules of the Home, which had gone over my head completely, and explained to me very heartlessly that I was a product of the devil, born in the gutter of

sin. I didn't really understand what she was saying but with her daily reminders I very soon came to realise what she meant.

Early next morning I was shook by one of the other boys and told to get up. It was not quite six o' clock but I was shown how to perform the daily jobs, which had to be done meticulously before breakfast. Every single morning. We were to make our beds, making sure there were no creases in the turned down part of the top sheet. The younger boys had not, or did not stir themselves till seven o'clock. We older boys after bedmaking went downstairs and commenced work. The fireplace scaled. The good part of the cinders picked out, and used when the paper and firewood had been laid. Ashes were emptied and the whole of the Lancashire Range black leaded. The steel parts including the poker and tongs emery papered. The fire was lit, everywhere dusted and the floor mopped on your hands and knees with cold water. The long passage that ran from the front to the back door polished, using Ronuk and a big heavy iron polisher with bristles in the base. The other half was scrubbed. All doors and door frames dusted, every single handle, door knob, latch, taps, which were made of brass and had to be polished. Stairs had rubber treads and had to be scrubbed, the sides polished. The porch at the back door had to be cleaned and the floor tiles scrubbed. Five lavatories outside, bowls to be cleaned and



floors washed and donkey stoned, the same with the stones round the cellar grating. The outside steps that led to the cellar washed and stoned. The same applied to the step and three flags at the outside gate. And so, back to the kitchen. The youngest of the older lads had to tend the cooking of the porridge. Iron pans were in use those days, very heavy. Once it had come to the boil, constant stirring was required to stop it from sticking to the bottom of the pan. As it thickened you let it simmer and it formed bubbles which burst, the resultant splash left red burn marks on the back of your hand, but you had to keep stirring. Next the table laid for twelve hungry lads. We had a bowl of porridge sweetened with syrup, followed by bread and dripping, six days a week. One Sundays we had a boiled egg, small kids half an egg. After breakfast and lengthy prayers, offered in thanks, including 'Almighty and most Merciful Father, We have erred and strayed ...' (I still know all the words) then washing up and everything put away. By the way, Miss Hall had egg and bacon, fried bread etc. every single day. As a treat she saved all the bacon fat in a pot marmalade jar, when it was full she gave it us on our bread instead of dripping. It was lovely, with little, burnt, black, gritty bits in it. Smashing stuff. After seven years of porridge and dripping, I still like it. You can't render fat down to make dripping anymore, today's meat has no fat on it. Now and again, as a treat, I have a fried butty, though not often. After washing up, the stove had to be blackleaded, then down to the cellar to get washed for school, after we cleaned six wash basins and thirteen taps. By this time the water had started to get warm. In winter the cellar was illuminated by a single batwick burner. All this work had to be carried out by about six boys, if we didn't get through our quota, or it was not to the correct standard. No breakfast.

After ablutions upstairs to show our mentor our hands and bend over to display the cleanliness of our necks. A last duty to be performed before leaving for school, everyone had to sit on the toilet till a motion had been produced. On my first morning, I did so and pulled the chain, to a scream from one of the others crying 'Eric, you have t'show her what you do, never get rid of it till she's seen it !' For the next few days I suffered from fear induced constipation, try as I might I could not produce waste for someone else to look at. This was soon remedied with large doses of Castor Oil shoved down my throat. In due time nature responded (and for the next sixty years at 8.30. am Nature called).

Then off to school. I loved school, no Miss Hall. Home for dinner, twelve till two, when nearly all the jobs were repeated again, but no dusting, or outside work. After tea it all happened again ! By the way, during the exhortation from the table after breakfast, the collect had to be read. It was a mini Church service.

More next month





“The Countryman and his Ass”

or

“The Donkey Wot Wouldn’t Go”

Taken from the *Preston Guardian*

Saturday 19th February 1859

By Preston Pub Historian, Steve Halliwell

<http://pubsinpreston.blogspot.co.uk>

At 9 o’clock on Thursday morning, along with some two hundred amused spectators, we were witness to that disposition of dogged stupidity which is so characteristic of the much-abused animal, the ass.

A countryman and his Neddy were quietly wending their way past our Town Hall, when, from some unaccountable reason, the latter, forgetting, we suppose, that his father was an ass, took it into his head to disregard the repeated “gee-ups” of his master, and suddenly come to a standstill, a veritable donkey “wot wouldn’t go.” As the beast’s stupidity caused an obstruction in the thoroughfare, some three or four policemen determined to remove him by main force; but no, Edward proved the strongest donkey of the lot, and setting their united efforts at defiance, quietly laid himself down in the middle of the street.

The crowd were convulsed with laughter to see the poor animal pulled, tugged, and cuffed in vain by the police in black gloves, and numerous were the droll remarks ventured by the bystanders. One facetious buck – a Manchester blade, we believe, was of the opinion that the animal had studied “The Rights of Man,” and was labouring under the impression that, like some other asses who get into the hands of the police, he ought to be carried.

This certainly appeared a feasible idea, for assuredly the donkey appeared anything but desirous of walking himself. Kicks, blows, curses, loud and deep, were expended in vain, - Neddy wouldn’t stir; till at length a ruddy-faced landlord, firm in the belief that knowledge is power, stepped up and suggested that Edward should be eased of his gears. This had the desired effect, for, with a little assistance from behind, Neddy once more stood erect, and having aimed a well-directed blow with his hind feet at Detective Beckett’s bread-basket, provoked by a sudden twist of his tail, he walked quietly into the **Old Legs of Man** yard, having caused an obstruction in the street for upwards of half-an-hour. But Neddy’s vagaries, however, did not end here: as we have stated, he was got into the yard; but the next difficulty was, how to get him out again.

Whether he had tasted some of Mr. Anderton’s strong grains, or found congenial companionship in that locality, we are unable to say; but certain it is, that it was one o’clock in the afternoon before the stubborn brute could be induced, either by foul or fair means, to take the road to his own stable at Walton-le-dale.

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The East Lancashire Railways

By Bob Gregson

Liverpool, Ormskirk and Preston section

The B & PR was amalgamated with the East Lancashire Railway (ELR) on August 3rd, 1846, and some two months later, the Liverpool, Ormskirk and Preston Railway (LO&PR) was absorbed into the same company. Work commenced on the line with the time-honored cutting of the firs sold at Maghull on March 16, 1947.

The company appointed Joseph Locke and John Edward Errington as engineers for the main route and a third engineer, Sturges Meek, was engaged to take charge of the works in the Liverpool area. The contractors were Mckenzie, Brassy and Stephenson who tendered at a cost of £200,000, with an estimated completion date of July 1, 1848. The twenty four and a quarter mile long route ran from Walton Junction on the Liverpool & Bury Railway to Penwortham, and connected with the Blackburn line at Lostock Hall. On completion of the line, stations were built at Midge Hall, Croston, Rufford, Burscough, Ormskirk (where a clause in the act required a branch to Skelmersdale) Aughton Park, Town Green, Maghull and Aintree.

A branch line was later opened to serve Wright and Cottam's brick works at Croston, which had a Foster's patent brick kiln capable of burning 100,000 bricks weekly. The 12 acre site also had a tram-road with steam driven winding gear and 28 private railway wagons. Difficulties were met at Rufford, where successive attempts to build an embankment were thwarted due to the soft, boggy ground; and with time and funds running out, a 400 yard long timber trestle had to be constructed upon piles, which had to be driven down to a depth of 40 feet before hard ground could be reached. Similar but less serious problems occurred at Croston, but more deep piling was required for a timber viaduct across the River Douglas.

The line was officially opened on Monday April 2, 1849, following the approval of Captain Wynne R.E., a government inspector, who had passed it over the day before. There was no public celebration of the event, the unpleasant position of the company with the lessees of the North Union rendering any festive demonstration inadvisable, if indeed advisable in any circumstances.

The ongoing feud between the two companies sparked off a competition in ticket prices: On Thursday last, the fares were only sixpence each, third class to Liverpool, ninepence second class and one shilling first. On Thursday night, the NU people tired of this game raised their fares to one shilling and sixpence, two shillings and sixpence and three shillings and sixpence. The ELR yet takes passengers at one shilling, on shilling and sixpence and two shillings. The reduction of fares naturally caused great numbers of persons to travel to Liverpool yesterday.

For many years the 4.40 Liverpool Exchange to Blackpool and Skipton stopped at Midge Hall, where the rear Skipton portion, comprising of old non-corridor stock, was detached. With the Blackpool train out of the way, a Lostock Hall engine, which had been waiting in the goods loop, coupled-up to the rear portion and took the train on to Skipton, by way of Blackpool and Great Harwood-Padiham loop. It has been noted that this 64 mile route must have been one of the longest trips in the country using non-corridor vehicles.

Next time The Bamber Bridge and Preston Extension

Taken from 'The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway around Preston'



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