

The Preston Magazine



Issue 14

October 2013

Preston Soldier's Diary

Preston's Motorway

The Regatta Inn

Thos. Yates JEWELLER

PROPRIETOR: FRED K. RHODES

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- Monday 7 October 2013 *Fishergate, Step by Step*
Speaker: Stephen Sartin
- Monday 4 November 2013 *The River Ribble as a Frontier*
Speaker: Dr Malcolm Greenhalgh
- Monday 2 December 2013 *Echos through Time – A Preston
Postcard Collection*
Speaker: Linda Barton
- Monday 6 January 2014 *Swillbrook, Syke and Swansey Gutter
Discovering Preston's Hidden Watercourses*
Speaker: Dr Alan Crosby
- Monday 3 February 2014 *Horrockses of Preston: the Greatest Name
in Cotton*
Speaker: Dr David Hunt
- Monday 3 March 2014 *'Titanic Talks'*
Speaker: Nigel Hampson
- Monday 7 April 2014 *The Lancaster Canal: Wigan to Kendal
and its Historical Impact on Preston*
Speaker: David Slater
- Monday 12 May 2014 Annual General Meeting followed by
The Films of Will Onda
Speaker: Emma Heslewood

The meetings are held in St John (The Minster),
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Visitors and new members are very welcome

Members £10 annual subscription.

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For further information contact our Secretary, Karen Doyle
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Welcome

Welcome to the 14th issue of The Preston Magazine our free monthly magazine containing snippets of lesser-known history articles relating to Preston.

A big thankyou to our advertisers, without them we could not produce this magazine. Please support them whenever you can. If you would like to support us by advertising with us, please do contact us.

Our thanks to Penwortham Priory Academy 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 magazines, The Penwortham Magazine and The Lostock Hall Magazine. www.priory.lancs.sch.uk you can also access The Preston Magazine via www.blogpreston.co.uk

This month's guest writers are Christine Eland, Allan Fazacherley, Peter Vickers, Steve Halliwell, David Huggonson and also the 4th part of Mr John Davies memories of working at Marsden's in Preston during the 1940's. Our ongoing serial 'A Preston Lad' by Arthur Eric Crook (1917-1997). The last episode of The Harris Orphanage by Miss Andy Anderton.

Should you require a copy each month, please contact us. We can also email you a pdf version of the magazine.

Ian Rigby, historian for Preston North End is appealing for any information from relatives of PNE former players relating to research of the club's history. Please contact Ian at ianrigby351@btinternet.com or 01772 700966.

If you would like to submit any memories, information or photographs please get in touch.

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. **Preston Digital Archive** is looking for old photos of Preston and surrounding area, please get in touch at the number below if you would like to contribute.

A copy of each issue of all the magazines is kept at Lancashire Records Office.

Front Cover Image – Thos. Yates, Jewellers, Market Place, Preston – the oldest building in the city centre.

The Preston Magazine will be on Preston FM's Chat City programme every month on a Tuesday at around 10 30.

Regards Heather Crook

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Thomas Yates Jewellers - 33 Market Place, Preston

Within the last hundred years, developments around the Flag Market have settled down. The Harris, the Cenotaph, the Post Office building and of course 33 Market Place remain basically the same.

The shop at 33 Market Place is a Jewellers, and the owner has taken the time and trouble to try to keep the façade of the shop looking as authentic as possible from its early years in the 16th century.

The half timbered building placed on the west side of the Flag Market, reputedly the oldest shop in Preston, today is the premises of Thomas Yates Jewellers, which is also one of the oldest businesses in Preston being established in 1840.

The building is a Grade II listed building, which means that the shop premises are of special interest, which warrants every effort being made to preserve it.

The shop was dated between 1580 and 1600, this date was decided by looking at the timber beams in the frame for the roof. These beams are numbered because in the 16th and 17th centuries, a local bye law was imposed, stating that no framing of any buildings could occur in the street. So the builder would construct the frame in the workshop, number each beam and then take the frame apart. They would then go to the site of the building and reconstruct the frame quickly on the site and not on the street.

33 Market Place started its life as a Town Mansion (comprising of three premises, later numbered 33,34,35). It was occupied by the town's surgeon, Dr Wortton. After he left the property it was split into 3 properties, as it remains to this day.

33 Market Place then took on a life of its own, becoming a site for different shopkeepers. After Dr Wortton left the property it became a Straw Hat Manufacturers, owned by Alice Clayton. Through time it has been a Painters and Glaziers, Fruiterers, Drapers, Grocers, Coffee and Wine dealers, Engravers and Copper Plate Printers, Basket and Skip manufacturers, a Chemists (owned by Cornelius Satterthwaite) a Fish, Fowl and Poultry merchant. In 1862 it became John Crook Hamilton's Linen and Wool Drapers who also occupied number 34 Market Street. The properties remained with him for the next 60 years. Throughout this time he progressed with fashion and his shop developed into a General drapers, Silk Mercers and Dress and Mantle Makers.

In 1917 he shared his property with James Busby Photographers. In this same year he also obtained his first telephone, the number being 482 (not like our 6 figure numbers today).

In 1926, 33 Market Place became Richard Turner Tobacconists, specialising in tobaccos, cigars, cigarette manufacturing and fancy goods. It remained a tobacconist for 51 years changing owners to Costello's in 1944, when it specialised in confectionery as well as its usual tobaccos. He only kept the shop for 4 years and in 1948 it was owned by Theckstons and remained so until 1977 although changing its name to Finlays. Old Prestonians will remember the sign outside, which was an old fashioned sailor with a long clay pipe.

In 1977 it became a Jewellers owned by John Bell of Southport. He remained in the property 6 years and in 1983 the premises became Thomas Yates Jewellers, which was owned by David Rhodes. In 2009 the present owner Charles Rhodes became owner. How it survived from 1580 nobody knows but it is a little gem of a shop in our City Centre.

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Article from Preston Past

Broadgate - Accident – On Tuesday last, a horse belonging to **Robert Slater**, carter of this town, owing to the frost, fell near the Broadgate weighing machine, at the bottom of Fishergate, and broke one of its legs. The animal was put to death immediately.

Preston Chronicle February 15th 1845

An Indecent Fellow – a gingerbread vendor, named **Henry Slater**, was charged at the police court on Monday, with exhibiting indecent photographs, which he named 'the three graces' in Avenham Park, on Sunday. The charge being proved, the prisoner was committed to the House of Correction for twenty one days.

Preston Chronicle July 7th 1866

Dreadful stabbing case at Preston - On Monday at the Preston Police Court, **James Carr** was charged with stabbing **Joshua Gant**. On Saturday morning last, at half past twelve, the two men were in a lodging house on Lancaster-road, where they were staying, when a third man named Parker came in, and they began a rough game called 'bull-fight' which consists of the parties slapping each others faces. When Carr had received a slap or two he exclaimed 'I'll show you, Hamlet,' and suddenly stabbed Gant in the right eye with a clasp knife with which he had been eating his supper. The injured man was taken to the infirmary, where he now lies in a precarious condition. Prisoner was remanded.

Preston Chronicle November 16th 1872.

Mr Franklin - Lecture – On Wednesday evening last, a lecture on the subject of Astronomy, was delivered in the Wesleyan School room, Fox-street, to about three hundred of the children, of the three Wesleyan Sunday Schools by **Mr Franklin**. The lecturer adapted his subject to the minds of the children, who seemed much pleased with the proceedings.

Preston Chronicle February 9th 1850

The Cabmen's Rest – It will be gratifying to many to learn that the 'agitation' and subscriptions for a cabmen's rest for Preston have resulted in a neat and desirable wooden structure being erected at the corner of Lancaster-road. The 'Rest' is a light, airy, comfortable structure in pitch pine, filled with seats, fireplace, cooking apparatus, boxes for coats, washing convenience &c., and has been constructed by **Mr Bamber, builder**. **Mr Newton Livesey** has been the treasurer to this fund, and the sum of seventy pounds has been found sufficient to provide what has so long been needed for the cabmen, who for hours sometimes have had to stand shelterless in the streets, exposed to every inclemency of the weather. The present shelter will comfortably accommodate 18 men and will prove a boon to which they are indebted to a few generous people. It would have been far better had the shelter been afforded earlier, during the late boisterous weather; but as some opposition was manifested to the movement, this has been impossible, and it is in a great measure to **Mr Joseph Livesey** that the cabmen have to be thankful that the 'rest is provided for them even now.

Preston Chronicle March 25th 1876

Dick Dickinson, of New Street, was the public whipper for Preston about the year 1750.

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Britain's First Motorway : A Childhood Memory

By Christine

When I look back to my childhood I remember the sun seemed to shine all day every day during the school holidays and at weekends. Not sure if this is true but to me it seemed like it did. I do remember however that my playground was taken from me at a very early age.

The house I lived in was opposite vast fields with only a quiet, practically car free road, between. In the fields there was a stream, large magnificent trees, bushes, cows and two very lovely horses called Bambi and Pippin. My sister used to ride these two horses when she could persuade my mum to give her the pennies she needed. Bambi was a big brown stallion and Pippin was a cute, small, black horse.

I on the other hand preferred walking through the long grass and lying in the warm sunshine with my favourite doll, looking up and making pictures out of the clouds. I preferred my dolls to friends as I could be in charge of all my games. I used to make them beds in the long grass and have endless picnics with them.

I remember the cows sometimes escaping from the field and coming into our garden and rooting in the dustbins. One morning, we were woken very early with a very high pitched sound of a cow mooing. We jumped out of bed and ran to the window and saw that one of the cows had its head stuck in the gatepost.

We didn't live on a farm or anything magical like that, just an ordinary house, in an ordinary street. Well at least I thought it was ordinary until I went to school and had it pointed out to me that my house was made of tin; and I came from 'tin town!'.

The houses were known as prefabricated or prefabs. They were built just after the war to help with the housing shortage. They were built on the outskirts of Preston which is why we lived opposite this vast never ending garden.

When I looked out of my bedroom window I could see miles of trees and fields and cows grazing in the long grass. I often felt like my playground called to me to go out into the warm summer sun.

Then one morning it happened. It probably didn't happen as sudden as I remember but then I am writing this story from a childhood memory. I looked out of my bedroom window and there was a big wooden fence the full length of the road blocking out my lovely view. The fence seemed to send a message "KEEP OUT!" - "YOU CAN NO LONGER PLAY IN THIS AREA!" Behind the fence there were big giant diggers, digging big holes in Bambi and Pippin's meadow. Bambi and Pippin were nowhere to be seen, the cows no longer grazed and the lovely long grass was being turned into mud.

There was an endless stream of lorries taking away our playground. They were piled high with big chunks of mud. It seemed to rain every day; it was as if the lorries were taking away the sunshine, my childhood, and my freedom.

I also remember our once quiet street was now full of hustle and bustle, lorries and diggers, noise and danger, and mud everywhere. We could no longer play street games like skipping, rounder's, or chasing and many a football lay idle in the gutter.

Our once peaceful neighbourhood was turned into a building site; as construction of the Preston By-Pass, Britain's first motorway, now known as the M6, had begun...

I realise now it may have been trivial in comparison to the fact that people were losing their homes and their livelihoods but as an 8 year old child I felt like I was losing my universe.

The 8.3 mile long Preston By-pass became the longest and busiest motorway in the United Kingdom now known as the M6. This new concept on Britain's roads did not pass without teething problems.

The Preston By-pass, Britain's first motorway was opened to traffic on the 5th December 1958 by the Prime Minister Mr Harold MacMillan. To mark the occasion a granite plinth was placed at the

Samsbury interchange. The By-pass later became the M6 motorway, the longest and busiest motorway in the United Kingdom.

The proposed plans were revealed in 1953 and work started in 1956. It was suggested that, to help illustrate the proposals a large model should be constructed to accompany the drawings. Some members of staff kindly agreed to build the model in their own time in order that the design programme should not be delayed. The model proved to be invaluable in explaining the scheme at public meetings which were held throughout the area.

The By-pass was built to alleviate the huge tailbacks occurring at the time through Preston. The A6 through Preston was the main route for the northbound traffic to Blackpool, the Lake District and Glasgow. Although at the time there were not many cars on the road there was an increase of coaches and Lorries with very slow acceleration. Huge tail backs often occurred especially at peak times and particularly during the famous Blackpool illuminations.

The By-pass was 8.3 miles long. It stretched from Bamber Bridge (now J29) to Broughton (now J32) from the south to the north of Preston running around the east side. Surprisingly only one farmhouse and three other dwellings were demolished. The cost was just under £3m and was an experiment for all other British motorways. It was referred to at the time, as a 'guinea pig'. The original contractor's time limit of 2 years was extended 5 months due to the continual rain fall in 1955/56.

The road, consisting of only two lanes in each direction included a central reservation that was constructed wide enough to enable extra lanes to be added later. In the central reservation a hedge was planted to help reduce the dazzle from the oncoming traffic headlights at night.

Due to the increased traffic flow extra lanes were added only 8 years after it opened in 1966; this was achieved by using part of the central reservation as planned. The hedges were eliminated; they were described as unsuitable to use as a barrier as they grew too fast. They were replaced by a safety barrier to prevent any vehicles that had lost control, crossing over to the opposite carriageway. The original construction of the By-pass was designed to have a 70mph speed limit but when it first opened there was no speed limit.

After only one year of opening in January 1959 the carriageway became affected and damaged by frost. This occurred as a result of the water from the exceptionally wet weather during construction and an extremely rapid thaw when the temperature rose from 8°F to 43°F within a thirty six hour period.

Initially, as a temporary measure, in December 1965 the 70mph National Speed Limit was introduced on Britain's non-restricted roads and motorways. The reason given for the speed limit was that foggy weather had caused a series of serious accidents. However many believed that it was due to car manufacturers testing their latest vehicles on the M1 at speeds of up to 180 mph.

The National Speed Limit was made permanent in 1967 which led to a 20% reduction in casualties. There was little resistance: this could be due to the fact that at that time the average speed limit for a family car could only just exceed 70 mph.

In 1960 the second phase, the Lancaster by-pass was completed, and in 1962 saw the conclusion of the Stafford by-pass. By 1965 the Stafford to Preston, and Preston to Lancaster motorway was complete.

The full route was completed by 1971 and the Preston By-pass / M6 motorway now runs from Junction 19 of the M1 and terminates at Gretna Junction 45.

The Preston-By pass has now grown to a continuous motorway length of 230 miles (370 km). Today motorways have come a long way from the Preston By-pass with many of them now having 4 lanes, street lights, speed cameras and service stations.

Memories of the Lancashire Evening Post

I enjoyed reading the article by Paul Schofield in issue 5 about Cheapside's Castle Hotel facing the Flag Market. I have pointed out the 'stone spar' to many people at the entrance to it, Home Bargains ? That was the way in for the lorries delivering reels to the Evening Post. I often marvelled at the drivers skill.

So the first aisle in the shop, was where my 'run up' as we played cricket at lunch time on what must have been the narrowest cricket pitch ever !

I count the spur as being one of the three things left from the old LEP. The spur is one, the next is on a door jam further up Cheapside. It's a door that was the side entrance to the Post, what we called the 'Tripe Shop Lobby'. There is the remains of a security key pad that was installed by me and fellow sparkie, Alan Webster.

The third is about 20 yards down Fishergate facing Boots. It is an iron grid set on the edge of the pavement, which was removed in more traffic free days, on a Monday morning, and a lorry dropped off a huge pile of coke. Two of the lads would spade the coke down and 2 or 3 others would barrow it down passages to feed Joe O'Brien's coke heating boilers. There was much space down there for these were the cellars of two pubs. The Grey Horse and Seven Stars and The Borough Tavern. Up to the 70's the pub signs were still at 127 Fishergate. The Grey Horse sign was the entrance to the Press Room, and the Borough Tavern one was at the head of the Works Managers stairs. I believe they were eventually donated to the Harris.

Allan Fazacherley



The Borough Tavern sign is on display at the Harris Museum and Art Gallery
www.harrismuseumandartgallery.gov.uk



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Joshua's War

A Preston Soldier's Diary Of Action In The Trenches of WW1

This is the Diary of **Sgt. Joshua Kelsall**, Rifle Brigade, of Preston, Lancs, recording his experiences in France between August 1914 and February 1915.

Sgt. Joshua Kelsall's stained, canvas-covered diary of his experiences in war-torn France between 7th August 1914 and 3rd February 1915 lay undiscovered until November 1993 when it came to light among the miscellaneous effects of his son Roland who had recently died. Roland's widow gave the diary to her sister in law Mrs Freda Howarth (my cousin) who, after a casual glance at the tattered cover and the faded pencilled jottings, thought she had at last found her father's legendary old recipe book of herbal remedies which she had heard about, but which had vanished years ago. Closer examination of the more legible entries showed it to be something very different and rather puzzling until she realised it was a diary of her father's experiences in the trenches of WW1 recorded long before she was born. Knowing of my interest in any Kelsall records and the Kelsall's family history, Freda thoughtfully wrote to me with news of her discovery and kindly lent me the diary on my offer to transcribe it into a more readable form. After some initial research on WW1, I became aware the old diary was a doubly remarkable find. In the first place, according to war historians, well-observed written accounts of the First World War experiences by working class soldiers are relatively rare. Also, the diary did not appear to be written in retrospect, but day by day and in parts, even hour by hour between lulls in bombardments or after being temporarily relieved from front line action. Joshua was no raw recruit. My uncle had first enlisted in 1902 and saw service in Egypt between 1903 and 1905 after which he was a reservist. He was thus a trained, experienced infantryman (and a 31 year old family man) when recalled to the colours on the 5th August 1914. A few days later he was in France. His jottings reveal a measure of contempt rather than hatred for the enemy but, like most front-line soldiers, he was glad of the respite provided by the truce of Christmas 1914 which he vividly recorded. It wasn't the gunshot wound to the chest that permanently damaged his health, but the long periods spent in flooded trenches during the bitter winter of 1914-15. He contracted severe bronchitis (he called it a chill) for which he was first invalided to 'Blighty' and which dogged him for the rest of his life contributing to his death in 1936 at the age of 54.



George Adamson

The Diary

7th August : Arrived here on Wednesday had tremendous welcome by the inhabitants. After an hours rest we marched full pack to Harfleur Camp a Base about 7 miles, the last mile being up a long hill under a sweltering sun. Mighty glad the boys were of a halt. Find the French pretty decent people. We wanted for nothing on the march – drink, fruit, cigarettes.

On Thursday we went to the town of Harfleur sightseeing. Noticed particularly the really beautiful Catholic church, the portico in having some splendid carving. An old lady, an innkeeper, treated me as if I were her own son.

Arrived at Havre for embarkation to God knows where. We French have arrived from Lille Germans. They say it is part of the plan. Hope of There also arrived three Battalions of Belgian are bound for Antwerp terrible time they had

around Leige.

What impressed us most was their quiet confidence that they would win before many more weeks had run. They had a very poor opinion of the French soldiers. Talking to one of the Belgian artillery, a Glasgow man, I was give to understand that Namur was sold by a Belgian Staff Officer who was shot for his treachery. It took the Germans ½ hour to take Namur and not as the papers in England have been leading us to believe. Whether this is true time will tell. This exile was given the opinion when war broke out of returning to Scotland, but he took up arms for Belguim instead, a right stamp of British

Keep coming across French reservists who have left good positions in England to defend country and think a lot of the British Tommy.

I have not been much impressed with the military bearing of the French soldiers as I have seen them on the march. They seem to lack all the enthusiasm or pride in themselves.

They seem to slouch along anyhow, not in balance of step or any bearing of trained men.

Our three year system has turned out better and fitter reserves than the French ever possessed. They at least can march and shoot. Find that their pay ranges from ½ d to 4d per day for Privates and 1s 2d for a Sergeant with no tobacco ration as we had been led to believe. They were called up a month ago and have not as yet received any pay. Probably accounts for their evident weakness on the march.

I see very little of the 'Camaraderie' that is supposed to characterise the French conscripts. Find that the 'monied' form a clique by themselves and have whatever they can buy among themselves without a thought for their poorer chums. I have seen this myself and have the opinions of a few of the 'sans sou' Brigade that this is so.

The Battalions that arrived from Lille seemed ravenously hungry. They ate everything that we could possibly spare. They treat our 'hard tack' biscuits as a luxury. I have one of their as a souvenir. It has all the appearances of standing a lot of knocking about.

Friday 4th Sept: Left Havre for God knows where. Two days sail and we find ourselves waiting along with other troopships our turn to go in dock at St Nazaire. Boatloads of wounded bound for Nantes have just passed. They raised a faint cheer among them.

Monday Sept. 7th: Still waiting for suitable tide to enable us to land. Can see the shore lined with British troops about to bathe. They would require it if they had been voyagers on this filthy old tub SS Welshman. Another week of this and half of us will be down with fever. The deck on which we sleep (or pray for it) was covered two feet deep with horse manure, quite ripe, which we managed to remove after several vomits. The cavalry being heartily pr...ed for the while. Am afraid very few will receive their kits intact, as one and all seem to have been sampled by the native dockers at Havre, or more likely by the men returning from the front. They seem to be pretty well rigged now mind. They came from the front looking like scarecrows.

Tuesday 8th September: Disembarked at St. Nazaire after being four days penned up like so many bullocks. In the sheds found 20 German officers and 74 men prisoners of war bound for England by all accounts. One of the officers, a Cambridge man, surrendered with 20 of his men to our troops. He swore that if he had been in the same predicament against the French troops he would have preferred suicide to surrender. When these fellows ask the French for anything, they expect the usual nudge with the butt end of a rifle or a blow. But one cannot blame the French if half the tales from the front are true.

Sept 12th: 6 Base, 6 Division, St Nazaire. Passed the last five days by fatigues and route marches. Our camp is close to the shore. Find the country round about very fine.

Wayside shrines are numerous here. Presume the people must be very wicked, so many reminders required. The grape vine seems to be the most cultivated plant around here.

'By kind permission of Mrs Freda Howarth and LRO, Bow Lane, Preston. Ref: DDX2084/1'

Patriotic Preston: Tribunal Special. By David Huggonson

Welcome to this new edition of Patriotic Preston. I rushed last month's but I thought I would continue the theme as I thought I would start a mini series of Tribunal extracts. The images themselves are part of a wider collection on my blog and have been done with the permission of Briefing Media Ltd. I have been for some time attempting to photograph the reporting of the local tribunal cases by The Preston Guardian. The aim would then to place them online for easier access for the general public and other historians. There are several months online so far but using the original hardcopy newspapers has presented a challenge – as you will see from the torn sheets and missing words. I hope to continue by utilising the newspaper reels.

This edition, alongside the next two, will see teasers from the wider reporting of The Preston Guardian. Last month I gave a brief history of Preston's Tribunals so see last month's Preston Magazine for a bit more information. I usually share on Twitter links to the online version of the Preston Magazine or simply look at the past issues which I always place on the blog. Look under the 'Patriotic Preston: A Series' page. Alternative sources includes Harry Cartmell's For Remembrance, Geo Toulmin and Sons, 1919. A copy is held in the reference library and I believe I may know of a copy still for sale if anyone is interested. It

might also be worth pointing out that I believe the reporting of The Preston Guardian holds a very large importance, especially with the centenary next year. The cases detail how the war would eventually affect local businesses and the lives of individual Prestonians. Note that extract below is perhaps part of the first detailed report by The Preston Guardian into the local tribunals. I hope you enjoy the read as there is plenty more to come!

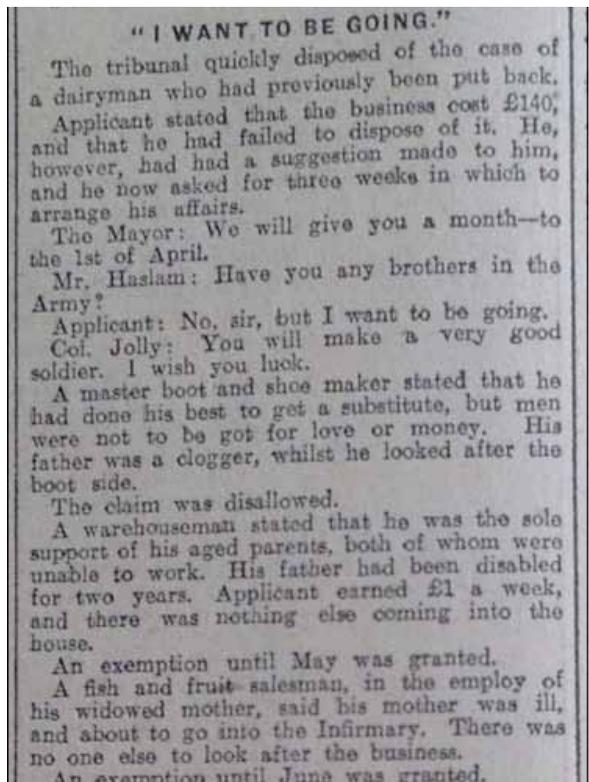
Until next month, David.

Twitter: @DavidHuggonson

Facebook: Preston's Great War
<https://www.facebook.com/PrestonsGreatWar?fref=ts>

Website:

preston1914.wordpress.com



Source: The Preston Guardian, March 4th 1916. Courtesy to Briefing Media Ltd and the Harris Library (part of the Lancashire County Council).



The "Regatta Inn"

The Regatta Inn

Fishergate Hill / Strand Road

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

A glance with pub historian Steve Halliwell at one of Preston's most flood-prone inns. Standing just sixty feet from the Ribble banks.

THE WEATHER.—The old year made its departure amidst "a sullen train of vapours, clouds, and storms;" and the new year was ushered in with boisterous and stormy weather. Previous to yesterday, which was of a frosty and brighter character, there has been, during the whole week, a continuance of heavy rain, of rough and tempest-driving gales; and, on new year's day, successive showers of snow and hail fell. In consequence of the great quantity of rain on Monday, and during the night of that day, the Ribble swelled to a considerable height; and the high tide on Tuesday caused it to overflow to such an extent, that the bordering marshes, the grounds under Avenham, and the Holme, were deeply submerged in water. The road from Penwortham Bridge to the Regatta Tavern was rendered impassable, and the New Quay was completely overflowed. The tide, driven by a south-west wind, rose from fifteen to sixteen feet high. No damage, however, was caused; as the owners of property near the river had taken the precaution to secure it.

Preston Chronicle 3rd January 1846

VIOLENT STORM

A storm, almost unparalleled in violence swept over the country. Penwortham Holme was one unbroken sheet of water. All the gardens behind the Ribbleside Inn experienced a general submersion and nothing but a few desolate hedgerows indicated that there had ever been any terra firma in the locality.

The road past Ribble Place was completely covered in water, and "waves" positively flowed past the Regatta Inn and along Strand Road. The tramway there was out of sight, and the gardens behind to the bottom of Stanley Terrace were partially deluged.....

Preston Chronicle 25th October 1862

FLOODS OF NOVEMBER 1866

.....Mr. Winder of the Regatta Inn endeavoured to prevent, by every contrivance in his power, the water gaining admittance to his house, but by last evening the water had increased to the height of the window-sill of the lower storey, and it may, therefore, be safely surmised that the water entered his house after all.

Preston Chronicle 17th November 1866

CAPTURE OF A 'SEA DEVIL' IN THE RIBBLE

Fishermen, fishing in the Ribble off Naze Point drew out of the river a fine "SEA DEVIL". On landing this denizen of the deep, a fine codfish 8lb weight was found in its mouth.

It was conveyed to Mr. Winder's Regatta Inn, where its length was found to be over 4 feet. Its jaw was 15 inches long and 9 inches broad.

It is generally called the "Sea Devil" or "Wide Gab".

Preston Chronicle 24th September 1870

Now known to be an Angler Fish, *Melanocetus* sp.

MORE GALES

Owing to the westerly gale which prevailed on Monday, there was an extraordinary high tide at Preston; the river overflowed its banks and inundated the low-lying land.

Small boats were sailing about the Regatta Inn. In fact, a small cargo of shell-fish were unloaded in the inn yard.

The salt-water was two or three feet deep round the Regatta Inn, and the doorways had to be protected by timber and clay.

Preston Chronicle 6th February 1892

WHEN THE MOVING PICTURES CAME TO PRESTON

The recent "Cinema around the Corner" screenings on the flag market prompted a recollection of the very first "living picture" presentations in Preston that occurred in 1887, in almost the same location. The report in *The Preston Guardian* of June 1911 claimed that it was in 1896 that, Preston born, George Green introduced the first travelling cinematograph to the town but the contemporary reports in *The Preston Guardian* make no mention of this new phenomenon at the Whitsuntide Fair of 1896. Even though, from the tone of the reports, the *Preston Guardian* representative was clearly critical of the Whitsuntide Fairground it would be reasonable to expect them to comment on the arrival of this new form of entertainment. It is stated elsewhere that Mr Green did not obtain the machine until the autumn of 1896 and so he could not have used it at Whitsuntide that year. Mr George Green, a prominent fairground operator, visited London in the autumn of 1896 and purchased a "theatrograph" from Robert W. Paul. Over the Christmas period he exhibited films at *The Carnival* building in London but according to the National Fairground Archive, "it did not appear on the fairground until 1898". Mr Green owned *The Farmers' Arms* at the bottom of Preston's covered market but he had a manager to run it on his behalf. The cellar of *The Farmers'* was used by members of the Green Family to test out the new equipment.

From the tone of the report in the *Guardian* it would appear that the reporter who made comments on *The Fair* in 1896 again wrote about the Whitsuntide Fair in 1897. It was perhaps their lack of enthusiasm for the fairground scene as a whole that prompted the caustic comment that: - "Our old friend the Phantascope has changed its title, but the "Bogiescope" furnishes the same thrilling dramas. What's in a name? Be it phantascope or bogiescope, there's always "Little Jim", "The Mistletoe Bough", "The Haunted House" and every other imaginable piece wherein goblins, spectres or angels can be conveniently introduced".



A scene from "The Mistletoe Bough - Gothic Horror

The reporter would appear to have done better if they had investigated thoroughly for the change of name from "Phantascope" to "Bogiescope" as this was very significant. Alf Williams was a showman born in Kent who began travelling the Lancashire circuit after marrying an actress from Manchester. He began touring a ghost

show in the 1890s and he billed his show as "Williams's Great Ghost Show". In early summer 1897 he began exhibiting "Living Pictures" and renamed his show the "Bogiescope". The date of the Preston Whitsuntide Fair, early June, coincides with the suggestion that Williams started exhibiting his "Bogiescope" in early summer 1897 and it would seem reasonable to presume that the "Bogiescope" made one of its earliest appearances at the Preston Whitsuntide Fair of 1897.

However, Alfred Williams wasn't the only person that included this latest novelty in his presentation for in the *Preston Herald* of the 12th June 1897 there is a description of a truly shocking phenomena for -

"Here, under the very shadow of Preston's stupendous Harris Free Library, may be seen a gaily-painted temple, bearing on the one side a placard to the effect that along with the ordinary routine of the show a speciality had been added in the form of a "lady who would take a bath," which she proceeds to take in the orthodox fashion in full view of the audience by means of the cinematograph."

The report does not indicate who the owner of this booth was but from the two reports it can be seen that the initial cinematic experiences offered to the people of Preston were the horror film and a measure of titivation for the gentlemen. The first Theatrical presentation of "Living Pictures" was several weeks later in July at the Prince's Theatre. The show was headed by "The Steens" a couple who presented acts that mainly consisted of magic and mystification; a suitable vehicle for this



latest scientific wonder that was able to present a moving image of the celebration of The Queen's Jubilee in London. We must remember though that it was on the fairground in June 1897 that the cinema came to Preston.

PRINCE'S THEATRE, TITHEBARN-STREET,
PRESTON.
MONDAY, JULY 19th, FOR SIX NIGHTS.
TREMENDOUS SUCCESS, and LAST SIX NIGHTS
of The Marvellous STEENS and famous Company. See
their great Steenomatographs, with the Queen's Royal
Jubilee Procession, as seen in London; also the Greco-
Turkish War, in full action. See the great APOLLO,
the Strongest Man in the World. This is the greatest
and most expensive Company ever seen in Preston.
See Day Bill.

Pete Vickers

Work Experience in Preston 1940's at Marsden's in Church Street

DOMESTIC RADIO SERVICING

I believe that the radio service department of all shops was considered to be a necessary evil. They made little or no profit but were essential if sales were to be maintained so the managers were reluctant to spend money on them. Marsden's employed two service engineers, as they called them, plus two boys who spent most of their time as general shop assistants. Nevertheless, the senior engineer did help me and allowed me to assist him in repairs. I was not capable at that stage of diagnosing faults but he taught me how to solder and replace components. He also taught me to align (tune) the circuits, but most of the work for me consisted of cleaning and polishing the mainly wooden cabinets. This was quite a procedure. First they had to be cleaned with Simoniz cleaner, and then polished with Simoniz wax. I also learnt to French polish where there were severe marks. I dreaded sets from chip shops. There was a particularly bad one in Skeffington Road with the set installed in the lounge behind the shop. The curtains were always drawn and the light switched on. Dirty clothing including under garments were strewn around the room and all the electrical equipment, radio, iron, etc., was operating from a three-way adaptor plugged into the light socket. The set took a day to clean as not only the cabinet but the internal chassis was encased in a layer of foul smelling fat, I'm glad they never offered me any chips or a cup of tea !

Cups of tea were often on offer and from time to time a slice of home made cake – not many people bought cake then even if it was available. I remember, during the war going to one house in London Road to repair a huge Marconi radiogram, the sort where I had to remove the heavy chassis, loudspeaker and turntable even to get it in the taxi. Whilst I was struggling I heard cups rattling in the kitchen and expected the lady of the house returning with tea. She did return with a cup but said 'I've browt thee a cup o' composition, it saves t'tay'. Horrible orange coloured stuff that tasted foul and what I didn't realise was that it was a laxative. I spent most of the afternoon sitting on the toilet; and it was Thursday, half day closing too !

Another regular customer lived in a very large house close to Avenham Park and I always deliberately knocked at the front door to be told 'The tradesman's entrance is round the back'. Needless to say there was no tea and cake there. At the other extreme I used to repair several sets at Kirkland Hall, which at that time was owned by the Misses Baron. The routine was always the same. I knocked at the thick oak-studded door to be welcomed by a maid who led me via a thickly-carpeted passage to a lounge. 'Now sit there and Miss Baron will be with you shortly.' Within a few minutes one of the Misses Baron would appear with a silver tray bearing tea, scones and home-made jam in a jar which stood in a silver holder. 'Now you must eat all that up and then look at the set in the dining room. When you have finished go round to the gardener and tell him I've sent you.' When I saw the gardener there was always a carrier bag of whatever fruit or produce was in season. Tips were not uncommon, often from people who today I would think couldn't afford it. Anything from tuppence to sixpence. The Belgians, of whom there were many refugees in Preston, were the best tippers. I once received two shillings. Many of them were fishermen and worked out of Fleetwood; all had a picture of King Leopold over the mantelpiece.

A special horsemeat shop opened in Church Street for them.

While repairing one radiogram I removed the back to find the cabinet stuffed with 2lb bags of sugar. Oh, the look on the woman's face when she realised what I had found. 'Er, would you like a bag?' Hoarding food was a serious offence. Naturally during a time of rationing I didn't refuse but when I removed the sugar the fault in the set was apparent, a mouse had chewed through the mains supply cable and was suspended, shrivelled up, between the cable and the chassis.

At one house in Queen Street an old woman was in bed in the front downstairs room. This was not unusual but in this case a small boy was sitting on a prone dog! He was in front of the fire chopping up orange boxes and throwing pieces on the fire. Beatin' t'fire, they called it. Boys dragging wooden orange boxes from the market at closing time was a common sight. How there came to be so many orange boxes in wartime, I don't know!

One Whit Saturday afternoon I sold a quality portable set to a lady. The price was 16gns – a lot of prices were quoted in guineas then. She paid me in sixpences! Strictly speaking it was illegal for that amount to be offered in coins of that denomination but you don't turn down a sale, do you? Then it was 'Can you deliver it this afternoon?' 'Where to, madam?' 'The flea circus on the fair' 'Certainly, madam, with pleasure, madam' I was not offered a complimentary ticket but the sixpenny tip bought me a bowl of peas at the parched pea tent.

In one house at the bottom of Old Cock Yard where two really good-looking young ladies lived I had to move a packet of condoms from the set before I could work on it. It made a change from the more usual dentures. I was not offered payment in kind although I have heard of some service engineers who claim to have experienced it. In 1948 the trade was decreasing and those of us who had been in the services returned and there was talk of laying one of us off. My pay at the time was £4 15 shillings so, needing more money to get married I moved on and with the most amazing luck wartime Royal Navy experience led me into a job in mobile communications which lasted me for life. After leaving Marsden's I joined the Lancashire Constabulary by chance at the time when delivery of their first commercially-built frequency modulated equipment for use in cars. Lancashire Police had been in the forefront of mobile communications since 1928. When my wartime experience was noticed I started work in their wireless workshops to install these sets and stayed for thirty six years.

In 1952, two years into my marriage and hard up for cash, I was recruited by George Seymour, a local radio and television dealer who had also been at Marsden's to work part-time. At first I repaired television sets, which were delivered and collected in a shed down the garden. When this became known I was never free. Neighbours would turn up at all hours of the day and night. 'My television had gone off and we want to watch so and so. Can you come?'

When the first Independent Television channel opened a repetitive job was the fitting of Band 111 tuners to receive this channel. This involved drilling a large hole in the side of the cabinet – they were mostly wooden in those days – and wiring in the tuner behind it.

By John Davies

Next month a new series from John '**Raised in Ribbleton**' recalling his early years.

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A Preston Lad by Arthur Eric Crook (1917 – 1997)

One morning a new intake came to the orphanage, a boy about nine who answered to the name of **Walter Guylar**. He said 'Is there a lad here called Eric Crook'. I said 'Yes, me'. To which he replied 'Well, I'm your step-brother, we both have the same mother'. **Janet Crook** was married to a Mr Guylar and this was their son. There was stunned silence. Miss Hall's face was a picture, as was mine, and all the rest of the kids. It seemed both his mother and father were ill so Walter had been sent to Ivy Bank for a few weeks till they were well again, and fit to look after him. **Duggie Huxley** summed him up by saying 'He skens' and he did seem to be slightly cross-eyed. He wouldn't leave me alone and followed me incessantly. I thought – his mum must have known where I was all these years and had never come to see me or make herself known. I never questioned him about her or where he lived. I didn't want to know because according to **Miss Hall** she was a wicked woman, a slut from round the back of the old Church, Library Street, a slum in those days. How she knew is beyond me. It turned out she lived in Robin Street, Ribbleton way. Anyway I made a reasonable fuss of Walter and put things right at school and saw that he was not teased too much. After a few weeks his parents came and took him home. A week or two after I was coming out of school and there was Walter running towards me saying 'I've fetched me Mum to see you'. There on the corner of New Hall Lane and St Marys Street stood, who to me looked a tallish woman, blue coat on with a fox fur round her neck and a velour hat with a turned up brim, decent shoes on. Walter was reasonably presentable. I stopped in my tracks, took one hard look at her and thought 'This wicked, awful woman has come for me.' I was scared stiff. I bolted straight past her, and ran like Old Nick himself was after me, and did not stop running till I reached the safe harbour of the orphanage. To me that was home and I was grateful to be there. I never told Miss Hall about this encounter, a case of least said, soonest mended. I thought that night in bed 'There's some funny things happen to me'. I was fast becoming a mixed up kid. Still mixed up kids can be resilient, theres always something round the corner to take your mind off yourself and rekindle your interest and there was a new interest for everyone in Preston. Came the speedway – motor cycle track racing. The track was at the Grasshoppers Rugby ground, situated at the top of Brockholes Brow, opposite the Royal Cross School for the Deaf. The rugby ground was in the centre and the dirt track on the outer perimeter. The riders were stars like **Joe Abbot** styled '**The Cock of the North**', **Ham Burrell**, **Broadside Burton**, **Tommy Price**, who I think got killed whilst racing there, **Frank Varey** and the **Chiswell brothers**. They raced on Saturday nights, but practised on Thursday evenings and you could go and watch them for nothing. Therefore, every Thursday evening we all trotted up New Hall Lane and watched our idols belting round the track, throwing up a cascade of cinders in their wake. When the Whit fair was on at Preston, you could see them having a go on the 'Wall of Death'. Occasionally they would pander to our whims and sign their autographs. I got two of Ham Burrell and traded one for eightpence off **Billie Shaw**. I don't where he got the money from cos they were not well off. You could hear the roar of the bikes in bed. We had to leave before practice had finished as we had to be in bed for eight o'clock. All the side of the Home was a biggish grass area with a swing in the middle and on the evenings we could not go out we ran round the area brum-brum-brumming it and sliding at the four corners in imitation of a skid. Sadly the speedway did not create enough interest money-wise, and after a few seasons the speedway track closed. We kept going for a few weeks per chance practice night might still be on but all was quiet so we carried on to the Halfpenny Bridge to skim stones across the river.



Preston Speedway Team courtesy of John Skinner'

Life in the Harris Orphanage in the early 20th century

My grandfather died whilst we were still in the orphanage. A copy of his obituary taken from the Preston Guardian or Lancashire Evening Post is below :- (1916)

DEATH OF MR DAVID METCALFE, PRESTON

The death occurred this morning at 14 Wren Street, Preston, where he recently removed from 66 Aqueduct Street, of Mr David Metcalfe in his 73rd year. By his death the Labour movement and trade unionist cause has lost an old and stalwart supporter, and the deserving poor a big-hearted friend. He was one of the original founders of the Preston Trades and Labour Council, and was Vice-Chairman and Treasurer at the time of his death. Since 1905 he had represented Moor Brook ward in the Labour interest on the Preston Board of Guardians, where his practical knowledge and common sense made his service of great value. He was Chairman of the General Purpose Committee until its abolition by the new institutional order of 1913. He was also a member of the Ribchester Building and Visiting Committees, and to the work of relief, such was his concern for the poor, he devoted close personal attention. Mr Metcalfe was a superannuated member of the A.S.E. was Secretary of one of the branches of the engineering trade, and had been prominently identified with the Labour Representation movement.

Our Great Uncle **Charles Jackson** (Dentist) also died whilst we were in the orphanage (around 1911) he was a bachelor.

Our very dear Grandmother lived for quite a few years after Grandfather and died at the age of 86. Not only did we lose a Grandmother but a very dear friend.

Miss Andy Anderton

THE CHURCH

The Church was set out in a similar way to others. The Girl's choir stalls to the left, and the Boys choir stalls to the right of the Altar. The Pulpit in front of the Girls choir stalls. The Reader's Chair alongside the Boys choir stalls. On a slightly lower level was the Lectern. Below the Pulpit and to the left hand side on the Church was the Organ. Children's chairs were on the left hand side of the Nave, girls in front, boys behind. On the right hand side of the Nave, were chairs for staff and visitors. Most of the Church furnishings and fittings were bequests from various people, and were in exquisite good taste. The stained glass windows, the Lectern, the Holy Bible and Prayer books and electric fittings etc., have left a very beautiful memory for me. The sermons by the Governor and the music played by Miss Catterall have left in me an inner and abiding peace. As a tribute to **Miss Catterall** who did so much for us, some of her favourite hymn is quoted below :

Saviour, again to thy dear name we raise
With one accord our parting hymn of praise;
We stand to bless thee ere our worship cease;
Then, lowly kneeling, wait thy word of peace.

Grant us thy peace, Lord through the coming night;
Turn thou for us its darkness into light;
From harm and danger keep thy children free,
For dark and light are both alike to thee.

Grant us thy peace throughout our earthly life,
Our balm in sorrow, and our stay in strife;
Then when our voice shall bid our conflict cease,
Call us, O Lord, to thine eternal peace.

TO THE OPERATIVE COTTON SPINNERS Of Preston and District FELLOW WORKMEN AND FRIENDS

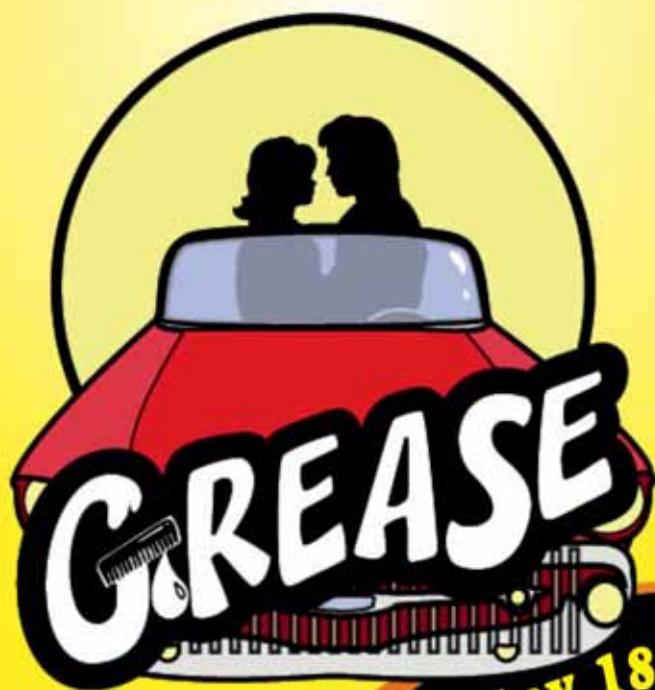
Taking a respective view of the life of a cotton factory lad of 1821, short of seven years of age, starting work before six o'clock in the morning; trotting on through the long day till nearly eight o'clock at night, and the same time on Saturday nights, with little time allowed for meals. A rope hung up in every wheel house, for what purpose we will leave you to judge. Rovings coming off nearly twice every day. There was a roving Billy in every room, so that roving was close at hand, creelers fetched up all the doffin cans and took sets down and had to be very quick back or that rope hanging on the steam pipe was used without mercy. All this time and labour for 2s. 1d. a week. To be known as a trades unionist at that day was to be out-law. A black ticket was sent round, thus every avenue was blocked and every door shut against the applicant for labour. These were the days of tyranny and oppression. If any one left off work without giving notice according to the rules of the mill was liable to be summoned before a bench of magistrates, and that bench had a discretionary power to give the poor factory operative from one to three months imprisonment with hard labour; but thanks to our forefathers – the pioneers of our Association – such cruel one-sided laws have long since been swept away. The contract now is a civil one. The employer can only sue the operative for leaving without notice in a Civil Court of Law, and operatives can sue his employers for compensation for wrongful discharge. In those good old days as we have often read or heard spoken of many a time and oft, were days of little better than serfdom compared with the days of Queen Victoria's Jubilee. In the old days as we can remember in the good old times it was from work to bed and from bed to work, at the rate of 72 hours per week, and public-houses kept open till nine and ten o'clock on Sunday forenoons. There was a great strike or lock-out in 1824, when a knobstick was shot but afterwards recovered. This knobstick took a pair of mules whilst the spinners were out on strike. Robert Latus was transported for life. It was always said that Latus was innocent, and another man well-known at that day fired the shot. Latus became a great landowner and well to do by good and honest perseverance. He won a name for himself of high standing amongst society in the country to which he had been transported. Poor Bob Latus, we saw him leave the town in a coach leg-locked. It was a sorry sight to see a young fellow-townsmen dragged away from his native town and the native cot where he was born, and never, never more to look on his native land again.

Here let us draw the veil upon poor Bob and pass on to 1826, a memorable year for depression in the trade and short time. Short time was continued from midsummer of 1826 to the 1st April, 1827. It was a hazy, droughty, dry and hot summer, provisions were very very dear and scarce. This remarkable year was characterised by mobs going from town to town breaking up power looms that had and were being introduced in many mills in various parts of the country, which threatened the destruction to hand loom weaving throughout the whole country. Eventually the power looms succeeded beyond expectation in producing superior cloths of every description, both of plain and fancy cloths for home consumption as well as for exportation.

THOMAS BANKS, Spinners Institute, Preston, April, 1894. To be Continued.
Submitted by Mr Denis Watson

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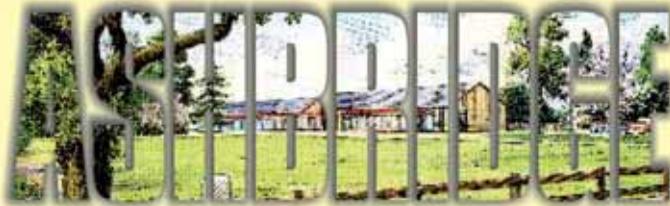
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