

# The Preston Magazine



**Issue 17**  
**February 2014**

**Diary of James Green 305712**  
**Emmanuel C of E School**  
**Shepherd Street Mission**

**FREE**

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# 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 to 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](mailto: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, 121 Broad Oak Lane, Penwortham, Preston, PR1 0XA.  
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.

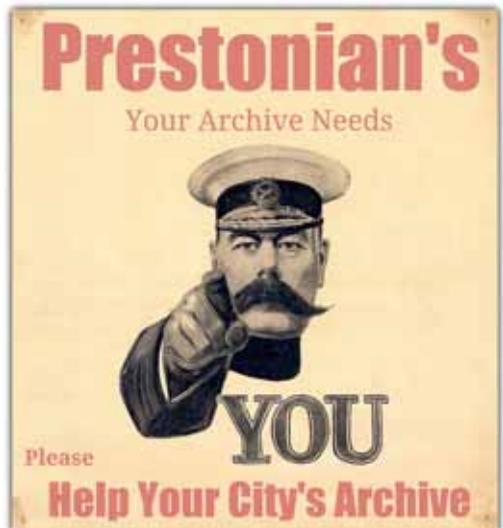
Finally we welcome any suggestions you might have for improving our archive.

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



# Welcome

Welcome to the 17th 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 help us by advertising, 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](http://www.priory.lancs.sch.uk) you can also access The Preston Magazine via [www.blogpreston.co.uk](http://www.blogpreston.co.uk)

This month's guest writers are Steve Halliwell and Joshua's War by Sgt. J. Kelsall, a Preston soldier's diary of action in the trenches in WW1. We have also been allowed to publish the diary of James Green 305712, who also served in the Great War, our thanks go to Mrs Rita Finley for her permission to print her Uncle Jimmy's diary. As always our ongoing serial 'A Preston Lad' by Arthur Eric Crook (1917-1997). Our thoughts go out to Mr Peter Vickers for his recovery from a recent operation. Due to lack of space this month 'Preston Now and Then' will be continued in next month's issue.

**If anyone has any family memories, photographs or any items of trench art relating to the First World War that could feature in our magazine please do get in touch.**

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

**Preston Historical Society's next meeting at Preston Minster is on Monday 3rd March 'Titanic Talks' with Speaker Nigel Hampson at 7.15.**

Please would you submit any memories, information or photographs that you would like to see included in the magazine. Contact details below.

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** – recently featured in the Lancashire Evening Post - is looking for old photos of Preston and surrounding area, please get in touch at the number below if you would like to contribute. We can scan any images for you and give you a digital copy.

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

**Front Cover Image – Preston Bus Station by Bernie Blackburn.**

Regards, Heather Crook

**Contact Details - Heather 07733 321 911**  
**121 Broad Oak Lane, Penwortham, Preston, PR1 0XA**  
**Email [theprestonmagazine@gmail.com](mailto:theprestonmagazine@gmail.com)**

## PLEASE SUPPORT OUR LOCAL ADVERTISERS

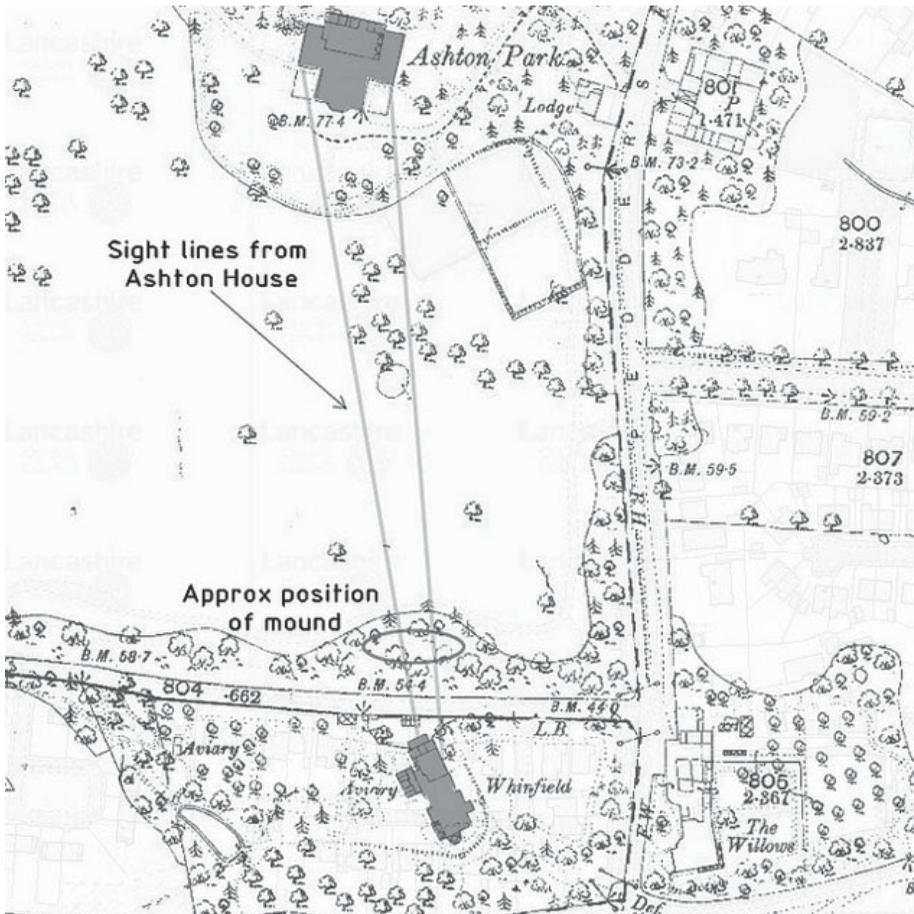
The Preston Magazine accepts no responsibility for any transactions, goods or services, entered into with or provided by advertisers within these pages. We wish to apologise if any items cause offence, they relate to times gone by, and are not necessarily the views of the editor.

## The Mound on Ashton Park

A map to show the relationship of the small mound at the edge of Ashton Park sometimes called "Indian Hill" by local children over the years. The mound is around 3-3.5m in height. There is a fall of approximately 7-7.3m fall from Ashton House to Whinfield house. The mound would easily have hidden Whinfield House from the view of the residents of Ashton House. There is a story told over the years that the mound was built to hide quarrelling brothers houses from sight of each other. If one considers that The Willows can easily be seen from Ashton House there may be something of substance to the story after all...

**Information courtesy of Phil Sullivan**

James Peddar had lived at Ashton Lodge (House) for 26 years until his death in 1846. His son, Edward, inherited the house. One of Edward's younger brother's H N Peddar was living at Whinfield House in 1859. These could be the two brothers mentioned above.





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## Articles from Preston's Past

**Playing at ball on Sunday** - On Tuesday, **Peter Deval**, a boy about ten years of age, was brought before magistrates, at the Town Hall, charged with having, on Sunday, climbed a wall, near the five-sailed mill in Park Lane, to recover his ball, with which he and others had been playing. - The complainant stated that the ball players were very noisy and troublesome to the neighbourhood; but did not himself see the boy playing. The Mayor admonished him to abstain from such practices in future, adding that if he were again brought up, he would be fined. He was then discharged.

**Preston Chronicle May 26 1832**

**Transportation** - **John Willis**, 40, pleaded guilty to a charge at Preston to stealing a silk handkerchief, the property of **Robert Parkinson**. There were several previous convictions against the prisoner, for which he had been imprisoned, but without effect, and the court sentenced him to be transported for the term of seven years.

**Preston Chronicle July 5 1834**

**Bird stuffer** - A purple crested heron (*ardea purpurea* of linneus) was last week caught near Yarmouth, and transmitted alive, on Tuesday last, to Mr **Richard Sharples**, bird stuffer, of this town. The specimen is intended for **G.A. Legh Keck** Esq. of Bank Hall. This bird is very rarely seen in England. The curious will find a good description of it in Bewick.

**Preston Chronicle June 15 1844**

**A Fugitive slave** – On Wednesday evening, a man of colour, named **Andrew Jackson**, delivered an interesting lecture in the Temperance Hall, being a narrative of his escape from slavery in the southern states of America. His object in visiting England is to obtain a sufficient sum of money to purchase the freedom of some members of his family.

**Preston Chronicle November 1 1856**

**Operation under the influence of chloroform**- As an illustration of the value of chloroform as a means of counteracting pain, we may state that yesterday afternoon a horse was subjected to its unasthetic influence at **Mr Breakall's** infirmary, after which a tumour of considerable size (1 ½ lb,) was extracted from the chest of the animal, without the horse apparently suffering the least pain.

**Preston Chronicle January 3 1857**

**Sad drowning fatality in the canal** – On Tuesday afternoon a lad named **Robert Carr**, 16 years of age, who resided at **6 Henderson-street**, boatman, lost his life by drowning in the canal. He was engaged about half past two o'clock quanting a canal boat, the captain, **John Hardman**, having gone on to the towing path for the purpose of getting the horse ready to attach to the boat. The only other person on the boat was the captain's daughter, and the lad Carr told her that she might go below and get her dinner. She went into the cabin and shortly afterwards heard a splash. She immediately went on deck, and then saw the deceased in the water with a quant in his hand. He struggled for a short time, then letting go his hold of the quant, sank below the water and was drowned. With a boat hook **Hardman** searched for the body, and after about half an hours time recovered it. An inquest has since been held and a verdict of 'Accidental Death' was returned.

**Preston Chronicle Oct 26 1889**

\*Quant – a pole used to propel a barge

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Preston Chronicle 26<sup>th</sup>

January 1861

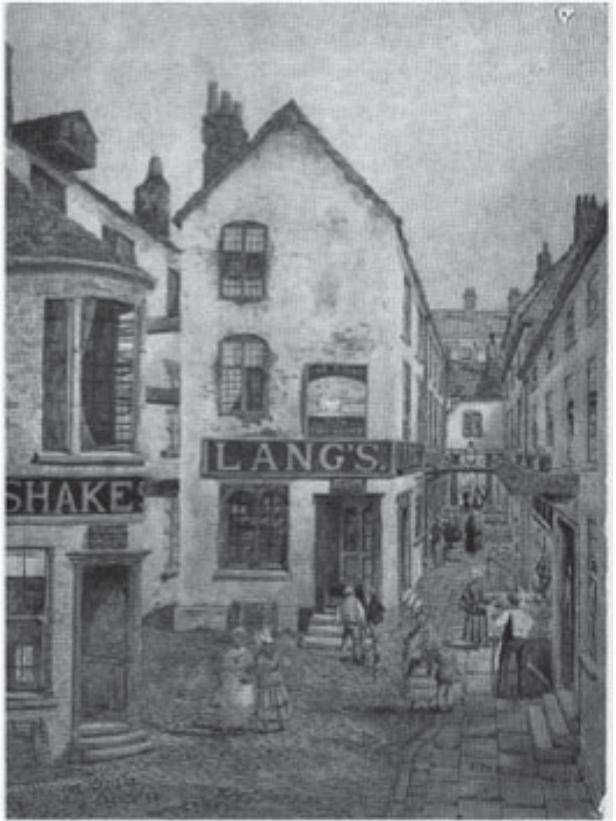
Poster: Heather Crook / Steve  
Halliwell

Lang's "Swan with Two  
Necks" Strait Shambles

## A DARKIE AND HIS BANJO

*A coloured man named  
Thomas Davis, who said  
he was a traveller  
serenader, made the  
following complaint to*

*the Bench: he said that on Thursday night he went into the eating  
house of Mr. J. Shaw, in the Market Place, for the purpose of  
purchasing a penny pie. Whilst he was in the shop, two other men  
came in and attempted to steal a piece of beef. They got some into  
their hands, but afterwards let it drop, and ran away. Just as they  
were going out, Mr. Shaw came up, seized him (Davis) by the throat,  
and sent for a policeman. He was taken to the Police Station, but was  
afterwards set at liberty. During the time he was at the police station,  
his banjo, which was left in the shop of Mr. Shaw, had been broken by  
a man named Bibby. PC. Farrington was asked if he knew who Bibby  
was, and he said, "Yes, George Bibby, landlord of the Swan with Two  
Necks." Mr. Shaw said he thought the two men had been connected  
with Davis. The Bench issued a summons against George Bibby.*



# THE BLACK HORSE

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## Allan Fazackerley, Emmanuel C of E School, 1940's

I can't help but make comparisons when I pick up 6 year old Poppy from school in Lostock Hall. At home time, each child is presented at the door, and has to recognise an adult in the yard. No one there ? Back in and wait !

That compared to the early 1940's at Emmanuel C of E School, between Brook Street and Emmanuel Street. Lessons were finished ushering a mass stampede. I was lucky. We only lived one minute away in Hammond Street, but even then, we were free to roam. I don't think we got far whilst at the infants, but 7 years up, it was Moor Park, Haslam Park, the rec, top of Greenbank Street, and the only rule was back at dusk.

We were well cared for in the infants by **Miss Gallant and Miss Guy**. I do remember being sent home because my Mickey Mouse gas mask lacked a filter. I used to use it as a spinning top.

We did have responsibilities though, two of us were jam jar monitors, and we took the washed jam jars across Hammond Street to the Co-op. The manager, a man called **Mr Mee**, gave us in return blue bags containing lentils. We had glossy cards at school with our names stamped on them, and we had to cover the print with lentils. Usually as you finished the paper buckled and the damn lentils were everywhere, 16 letters in my name. How I envied people with short names !

We had some basic jigsaw puzzles at school, and I bragged to **Miss Gallant** that my Dad had a jigsaw and made better ones. She later took up Dad's 'kind' offer, and he did produce jigsaws and 3 ply figures for her. It took a long time for him to forgive me !

I did like school, except for two visitors. One, Nitty Nora, who combed our hair looking for foreign bodies, and our big hate was the arrival of the dreaded yellow caravan. We called the dentist, 'Stumpy', because I swear he had a wooden leg. What he didn't have was much in the way of anaesthetic, just a quick spray with what looked like a plant spray and yanked them out. Then it was on to junior school, Emmanuel took kids up to fifteen in those days, ceasing just after I left at eleven. Then they passed on to Trinity. That was where we encountered the fierce **Joan Hughes**. Good teacher, but a great can wielder. Trouble was she wore thick glasses and often spotted the wrong culprit, and when you held out your hand to be caned, she landed anywhere from your fingertips to your elbow. If you got to Friday without being caned, she would apologise for missing you out and clobber you 'just in case'.

Still those were lovely years. My mother used to appear at the railings at playtime with cocoa and toast, along with other ladies, it looked like a zoo. Sadly there were many kids there in those days who had a pretty bleak life. Being caught eating an apple, pear or biscuit lead to being 'mugged'. 'Core it us' was an oft used phrase, and the lucky recipient would eat it down to the pips.

Across from us in Hammond Street lived **The Brewers**. Colin was my hero. He would appear, on leave from the RAF, and he always seemed to have an apple and a pear in his pocket. A good man, I am still friends with his son, David.

We had another teacher, **Mrs Norris**, who was brilliant. I know teachers (female) were not supposed to teach once married, but the war changed a lot of that. Anyway the talent of that lady, or a very poor year, led to five of us passing for Grammar School. I'll never forget her reading, '**Ray Thomason, Ian Spencer, Allan Fazackerley, Anthony Holt and David Gore**. You may go home and tell your parents you have passed the Exam !' Our kid, Sheila, was already at the Park School, and my mum must have thought 'Oh, what joy, another uniform to buy.'

**Allan Fazackerley**

# PRESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## PROGRAMME 2013-2014

- 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),  
Church Street, Preston PR1 3BU, starting at 7.15 pm

**Visitors and new members are very welcome**

Members £10 annual subscription.

£2.50 admission for visitors.

**PLEASE COME AND JOIN US**

For further information contact our Secretary, Karen Doyle  
Telephone 01772 862673 or Email [kd@pdprojects.co.uk](mailto:kd@pdprojects.co.uk)

[www.prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk](http://www.prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk)

# Diary of James Green      305712

## 8<sup>th</sup> King's Liverpool Regt. B.E.F. France 1914-1918



I joined the army on September 22nd 1914, when war broke out. I should have gone back and rejoined my old regiment, The Loyal North Lancs TT, with whom I had served 5 years, being discharged in 1913. Instead I joined The King's Liverpool through seeing a poster displayed in one of our local shops in our street. It read, 'Wanted 800 Picked Men' so I went down to the Town Hall in Preston, I was duly enrolled in the army. It was The 'Liverpool Irish'. I did not tell my father that night but, next morning, instead of going to work at 6 o'clock I went down to the Town Hall, fell in with the other recruits and we were off to Liverpool to Shaw Street Barracks. Two days later I was joined by my pals, John Thompson, Billy Dixon and George Clough.

We had no uniforms at first, we used to march to the training ground wearing an armband to show which regiment we belonged to and we only had 1 wooden rifle and we took it in turns to carry it. We got issued out with uniforms and that week-end I went home on pass. I had to face my father but everything passed off alright. I went back and we were drafted to the Battalion at Sevenoaks, we were put in billets in private houses. Next day we were issued with equipment and rifles. I started doing some training and we were posted to B Company, we stayed about two weeks then we left late one night for a place called Canterbury. We arrived late at night and with our platoon were put in the Tap Room of a pub called 'The Three Cups' in Broad St. Next morning the sergeant came and said there was a billet for four so we drew lots who had to have it and my mate, John Thompson, won it for us so Dixon, Clough, Thompson and me went as billet with the Edney family of 106 Broad St. We had a very good time and they were very homely people. Mr Edney worked on a traction engine in the hop fields, he used to take us down to the hop fields to watch them tying up the hops. They used to have stilts about 8ft high tying them up on 20ft poles.

About this time I had to leave my mates. They were forming a special company of trained soldiers and I was one of them picked as I had had 5yrs training with the Terriers. I was attached to a machine gun squad and we were posted off to a place called Whitstable on the coast. There was talk of an attempt to land troops on that part of the coast to coincide with the 'Kaisers' birthday. We had a machine gun post on the coast and we were on duty all that Christmas. We were billeted in a big hotel on the front, it was our headquarters there were no civilians in it. We were on army rations and there were not enough of them. It's a nice place, Whitstable, and we made a lot of new friends we even got an invitation to go with the local fishermen, and catch oysters. One morning there was a loud explosion that shook the town and shattered all the windows, we heard later that H.M.S. Bulwark had blown up with all on board. It was supposed to have been the work of spies. My three other mates came from Canterbury to join us. We all had a nice time together but it didn't last long. While there our Battalion got presented with a cup and shield by the townspeople for their good behaviour, I was at the presentation it was a nice send off. We

left Whitstable and went back to our billet at the Edney's. We went on leave to Preston, it was pretty dull round Queen St where we lived, everybody seemed to be either in the army or at work, it was pretty dull. I had taken my concertina back with me and we had some nice sing-songs with the family at nights. I used to go to the pictures in the High Street, I used to see Charlie Chaplin pictures, they were great.

We got word that we were being moved to a new camp just outside the town, we were in huts. We did a lot of intensive training and drilling, at night time it was right lively being an Irish Regiment, there was always a lot of jigging and Irish reels some of the lads could keep it up for hours. I sent my concertina 'home, I did not need it now. I got word that my brother, John, had been wounded, I was in a base camp at 'Calais', he was in France with the Lancashire Fusiliers. I met another young lot from Preston, John Green was with them, his father was a 'Rag Merchant' in Back Lane, he was in our Second Battalion. Then one Sunday morning we left Canterbury, at 6 o'clock, for Bedford to join the 51<sup>st</sup> Highland Division. All the Edney family came down to the station to see us off, they were all crying but the best of friends must part. Well, we arrived at Bedford and were put in a lot of empty houses and we had to make the best we could of it for the next few days, we were busy getting our kit and equipment ready for overseas. I made friends with a small boy whose father was a Colonel in the Indian army, he used to come round to the billet and bring cigarettes for me.

We left Bedford one afternoon and a band played us down to the station, the people gave us a good send off and that little boy gave me a small present. We arrived at Folkestone harbour at 9-30 the same night and embarked on the S. S. Queen. It was a stormy passage the Channel was very choppy and the ship was pitching and tossing in the swell, we had no lights everything was in darkness and there was no smoking as we were in 'U-Boat Alley'. I was sea-sick all the way, wasn't I glad when we put into harbour and I was able to get on firm ground at Boulogne. We then had to march about two miles to a camp and it was uphill all the way. We stayed one night and left the following morning by train to go up the line, all the lads were happy now that they were in the war, as we were going up we passed train loads of wounded soldiers coming down from the front lines. It cast a gloom over us all and it made us think what we were going into, well, we had been wanting to come out here for a long time so it was here for good or otherwise. We arrived at a village called 'St. Omar' it was a typical French village. We marched through the night, about 10 miles, to another village called 'Norrent Fontes, we were all fagged out and tired, after a rest we left on 4<sup>th</sup> May and marched to a place called 'St. Floris'. We stayed a week sleeping in old barns, we were alive with lice, and cockroaches walked all over us at night. It was laughable to see Billy Dixon trying to make the people understand him and what he wanted. We packed up and went to a place called 'Merris'. It had been occupied by the Germans but our fellows had succeeded in driving them out after some heavy fighting. There were 500 men of the 'Irish Guards' buried there in one field. The 'Royal Welsh Fusiliers' fought to a finish in the ruins of the church and were buried where they fell. Their caps were on their graves. What an entry for us in the war. The convent in the village was badly damaged and the nuns had been badly treated. I got a medal from the head sister which I wore round my neck but I lost it later on. We left there and went further up the line to a place called 'La Gorgue'. No rest for us. We moved on again to a place called 'Locon'. There a canal ran through it, there was an (estaminat) at the other side, if you wanted a drink you had to get in a small boat and pull yourself across with a rope.

More next month .....

## ***Dennis Crompton – A Lancashire Lad (Now living in New Zealand)***

*These are the recorded memories of three of my siblings, **Hilda, Fred and Jean**. We were all sent to the Shepherd Street Mission Children's Home when we were young as our mother had died and our father could not cope at home with us all, and his work, on his own. **Hilda** At the age of 41 in 1930, our Dad was left a widower with five young children. I was 8½ years old, Fred 6¼, and Miriam 5, (already away from home and in hospital as she was a spastic, unable to do anything for herself). As Mum had not been able to look after her owing to her illness, (she had cancer), Dad thought it best for all of us if Miriam was cared for where she could be looked after properly, leaving him more time to look after Mum, we four children and run his business, which wasn't doing too well as the country was going through a slump at the time. Jean would have been about 3 and Dennis just turned one year old. For about a year after Mum died, Dad employed various housekeepers to look after us and run the home. This wasn't very successful, he reckoned they were robbing him all ends and sides. So the next move was to give up his home, his building business was practically finished and we moved in with a very good friend, Mrs. **Sarah Noblett**, her husband and five children of theirs. They'd had ten altogether, the eldest five were already working, living-in on farms, where they were employed as farm-hands or domestic workers. Aunt Sarah was a jolly, motherly, hard-working little woman, with a heart of gold. The house we lived in was quite a walk down a lane near the village of Woodplumpton. We christened it 'The Tottering Temple' as it appeared to sway behinds the trees which lined the lane at that point. We must have stayed with them for about a year and as Dad was finding it increasingly difficult to find work, he had to travel about quite a bit to find employment, as his building business by now had folded. As children do the world over, there were often squabbles between the two families & with Dad working away from home sometimes, he had to find other accommodation for himself. Very reluctantly and with much heart-break, we were put into the Children's Home in Oxford Street, Preston, belonging to Shepherd Street Mission. It must have been around Easter time then, and thinking back, most of the momentous things in my life have happened around Easter time. There were 56 children in the Home at that time, plus **Sister Marland** and **Sister Holden** for the girls, matron, **Mrs. Chadwick**, a cook, matron's maid, two laundrywomen and handyman, **Mr. Dagers**. All the work,*

such as cleaning the children's quarters, darning socks etc, was done by the children, those between the ages 8 – 14. As I got older, about 13 years of age, I had to clean all the windows, inside and out downstairs and inside, upstairs, on the girl's side once a week. I have never liked cleaning windows since. The daily routine was as follows: 7am, rise, wash, dress, clean teeth, the youngest ones being looked after by the older girls. Each week day four of us swept, polished and dusted the dormitory after first straightening the beds, putting on the white counterpanes for the daytime. Each counterpane corner had to be perfectly square and the top turned down in a straight line with the rest of the beds. The landing, toilets and stairs were done by other girls. Saturdays, the dormitories were given an extra clean. Firstly, the polish was put on and later polished to a high gloss. All this done on hands and knees – no polisher in those days. When this job was done, I had to clean the windows. Breakfast: two slices of bread and margarine, and a cup of cocoa, and occasionally we'd have a hard-boiled egg, when they were plentiful and maybe someone sent the surplus in for the children. After breakfast, I had to help with the washing up before going to school. From the age of 11½, when I won a scholarship to Deepdale Modern School, I had to walk there and back twice a day, no tram fares unless it was raining and only for going to school, I had to walk back in the rain, unless one of my friends paid the halfpenny fare. Dinner on Mondays and Wednesdays: stew and milk pudding, Tuesdays and Saturdays, pea soup and milk pudding ( I still hate pea soup), Thursdays and Fridays, mince beef, potatoes and vegetables, and a milk pudding. Sunday was the best dinner of the week, when we had roast beef or mutton, potatoes and vegetables, and the usual milk pudding. Sometimes we had what we called cake pudding, which to us was a real treat, it being a mixture of various kinds of stale cakes mixed together with custard poured over it. Tea times didn't vary much, same as breakfast. Sometimes we had a boiled egg, hard as usual, or bread and jam, in which case the bread had no margarine on it. By bedtimes I was always very hungry. We had bread and jam, I suppose it was, because there was no fat on the bread. We didn't have suppers. Sunday, we had either rhubarb and custard, stewed apples and custard or jelly and custard, depending on the time of the year. We went to the mission in Shepherd Street, three times a day on Sunday. Sometimes it was a real treat to go on Saturday evenings too, especially if there was a concert on – mainly items by the choir, recitations, hymn-singing, etc. The highlight of the evening was the refreshments, which consisted of a cake or maybe a biscuit and a cup of tea.

# Memories of the first eleven years of a career on the British Railways, including lighter moments.

By Robin Bamber

In July 1955 I left school aged 16, with no real idea of what my future career would be. My Dad suggested I try Leyland Motors, where he worked. It was good steady work, a 'job for life' as the saying went in those days.

My application was successful, and I started work there as an apprentice in the Training Centre in September. After a few months, and against my wishes, I was sent into the machine shops in South Works. I wanted to be a fitter, but turners were in short supply ! Through 1956 I became increasingly disenchanted with lathe work. I asked for a transfer to 'Leyland Comet' assembly lines, but was refused. Then a friend, Gerry Cooke, told me that there was a vacancy for an apprentice fitter on British Railways at Preston Motive Power Depot, where he worked. I applied for the position, and was told that provided Leyland agreed, I could transfer my apprenticeship. Such an agreement was duly obtained and I started work at the Croft Street depot on 21-1-1957.

I was already familiar with the place, numbered 10B in the depot identification system, having made numerous visits there since the early 50's following my hobby as an avid locomotive spotter.

So on that Monday morning, on my bike, I left home in Middleforth, along the Riverside, Broadgate and Strand Road, taking care to cross the Dock Branch railway lines there, always a hazard to cyclists. Then up Marsh Lane, and up to the very top of Croft Street, where a gateway in the wall on the right gave access to the Depot.

Stowing my bike in the cycle rack I entered the rear of the Depot, and up the tarred and whitewashed passage, enjoying the fact that I was there officially, and not needing to creep up cautiously, watching nervously for officials, who invariably sent locospotters packing with a flea in their ear, and dire threats as to what would happen if they were caught again.

I reported to the Chargehand fitter, Mr Ernie Hodgkiss, who sorted out the necessary paperwork for me,

and took me into the Fitting Shop. 'What do we call you, lad ?' he asked. 'Robin', I replied, but a voice said 'I know him, he's Bob Bamber's lad', so to my surprise I became Bob for the next 38 years as a railway employee. 'Right-O,' said Ernie, 'Drop wi' Brian Hough on 9196, up Number 9'. Preston Depot had 9 stabling roads for engines inside the



*Preston M.P.D. (24k) July 1 1961. Image courtesy and copyright of Tony Gillett*

shed, so I approached 'Super D' class No. 49196 (the '4' prefix was never referred to) and said 'Mr Hough ?' A blackened face appeared from the open smokebox door .. 'Aye, gerrup 'ere in this smokebox'. My introduction to life on the Railway had begun ! The first week or so was spent getting to know my colleagues, Ernie, (ex-Plodder Lane, Bolton) ran the show from his cabin, 'The Bug Hut' along with Shopman, 'Long John' Hothersall. Fitters were Cliff James (Dolly) and ex-pal of my dad's in the Home Guard at Howick House; Harry Clegg (Moff); Charlie Moat (Moto); Stan and Brian Bertram (father and son, ex-Royston and Cudworth, Yorkshire); Bill Hooper (ex-Wigan Spring Branch) and Jack Cross.

Charlie Mullard (Charlie Chuck) attended to repairs on engines 'in steam': he was assisted by Mate Jack Topping (Topper) – the combined ages of the pair was approaching 130 years then. Older readers of the 'Lancashire Daily Post' may possibly remember Charlie's sister, who was an avid contributor to the letters columns, always signing herself 'Katie Mullard (Miss) !

Freddie Grundy was Mechanical Examiner; George Ritson (Boilersmith), and apprentices Derek Rampling (Ramps), Ronnie Crozier, Gerry Cooke, Raymond Garlick and Norman Hurst. Fitters mates were Bert Cross, Harold Martin, Archie Brown (Bladder), George Smith (Sailor), who was also the Steam Breakdown Crane Driver, and Jack Nixon (Nicky). Together they made a great bunch of colleagues.

The fitting shop was a hotch-potch arrangement. An ancient lathe, a modern Mitchell's drill, hydraulic bush press and large grindstone were the most-used machines. To the rear of the shop was the hydraulic pump for the wheeldrop, which was situated on No. 10 road, outside the main shed. As the name implies, this was used for the removal of loco wheelsets for repairs and remetalling of bearings.

The Shed had once consisted of 15 roads under cover (see book by Bob Gregson, 'The London and North Western Railway around Preston' for details), but now there were only 9, and the wheeldrop was situated in a decrepit open ended wooden shed, not a pleasant place to work in.

Also in the fitting shop were a Blacksmith's hearth and a white metalling hearth, and a row of ex-LNWR tool lockers. The only heating was a large coal stove, where bodies and tools were warmed during the winter months. There was a very basic washroom and a mess hut. Drivers and Shed Staff had their own messing facilities near the Shed entrance passage, with the depot toilets nearby. 'The Black Hole of Calcutta' was not a place that encouraged a lingering visit !

At the end of No's. 6 and 7 roads stood a Shadow Board for large spanners, and nearby was a firebar rack. The shed was gas lit, with no pit lighting. A few 50 volt handlamps provided illumination for work, if one could find a working socket. Mostly used was the ubiquitous 'ducklamp', whose naked smoky flame, together with the general atmosphere, provided some remarkable nose contents at the end of the shift ! The shed was always smoky, especially at 'lighting up'time, when the loco fires were lit, and in winter when it was bitterly cold, pretty standard conditions then for a small steam depot !

Along with all other staff I was given a small pay disc, ex-LNWR, with my clock number on it. We booked on and off in the Timekeeper's Office in the Driver's lobby. We were required to book off and on again at lunchtime, strangely. Discs were supposed to be handed in individually, but occasionally an unseen hand would chuck a few in together to cover for early 'getaways'. And on payday our money came stuffed in small round tins, together with carbon ink covered payslips.

To be continued.....

## JOSHUA'S WAR (Part 4)

### A Preston soldier's diary of action in the trenches of WW1

We moved through Bailleul and Shunwerelle on the Belgian frontier on the environs of which we sat the night on the roadside – a weary night by the way – rested till 4pm in Steenwercke.

Meanwhile more prisoners arrived captured by our cavalry patrols. One had dum- dum bullets in his possession. He will probably be dumb-dumb by now. Advanced to Croux du Lac where we had another night on the road.

October 16<sup>th</sup>: Easy day. We billeted in farm at Saily Sar ...s.

Oct. 17<sup>th</sup>: Marched to Armentiers driving the enemy still.

Came under heavy fire today. Billeted for the night in the Hospice Nationale. Many Germans captured today. Not a few have been killed by the natives account. They could hardly believe their own eyes when they saw it was English arriving instead of their erstwhile guests. Stuffed us up with everything

after they found out who we were, even to bringing us coffee, soup, tobacco, cigarettes etc., almost in the firing line as plenty of stray bullets kept whizzing overhead.

On the morning of the Oct.18<sup>th</sup> Sunday, we were ordered to attack the enemy, the movement of course, to find out their numbers and position. It was quick work. Starting from our billet at 6.30 we found the enemy waiting for us at 7 am after skirmishing about a mile of open countryside, in which we lost heavily.

There was about 20 yards of ground they must have marked well. Our Company had to cross it under murderous fire. We at last arrived within 150 yards of the enemy where we found cover and dug ourselves in. If it had been English firing, not a soul would have reached the cover. But the wretched German fire saved us wonderfully. As it was we had a few casualties at this spot.

We had no sooner dug in when the German shrapnel began to scatter about us. In ten minutes they had blown up a farmhouse to the other side of the road to where we were entrenched and set it on fire offering a splendid mark from which to direct their fire to our trench.

I had heard a lot before this concerning the accuracy of the German artilleryman. By so, I am convinced that our boys can lick them into fits, although they have set fire to a farm 30 yards to our front and one 100 yards distant from us on the right, also a railway bridge 60 yards to our left. We are getting it hot, but no actual hits so far. We were continually shelled until dark, when we had a bit of peace.

Monday Oct. 19<sup>th</sup>: Stood to arms about 4am. At daybreak I crossed the road to the smouldering ruins of the farm to cook the bacon for myself and pal. The Germans were taking pot shots at us all through the cooking process. Had just made the tea when 6 shells in quick succession came over. I and others who were there made a bolt for our trench in which we landed all right. Things were getting hot so I will put down .....

8am: They are shelling us like hell. Just heard that our total casualties yesterday were 300 killed and wounded. Found out by now there are tremendous forces in front of us.

Von Gluck's main body in fact. We have only to show a pin-head target when over comes a shower of bullets from their expert snipers who are too well hidden for us to get a bit of our own back.



One of our aeroplanes just returning to our lines. The Germans have fired about 12 shells at him and hundreds of bullets. He lands our lines safe as houses. These chaps are doing marvellous work.

12am: We have had a respite from their guns since 10 am. They are now making up for lost time. Counted 18 in 5 minutes and getting closer by practice. Our fools of fellows keep bobbing out of their trenches drawing upon us the enemy's wrath. 4pm: German aviator just passed over our lines chased by an Englishman. German machine much too fast for him. Our aviator crossed their lines at a very low altitude, so low indeed that he enticed the enemy to waste thousands of rounds of small arms ammunition and about 40 shells. Judging from the firing from the German lines there must be thousands of them entrenched. The aviator escaped and must have gained a lot of useful information.

Tuesday, Oct. 30<sup>th</sup>: Enemy attacked us at dawn but were beaten off. 8am: The most violent artillery duel I have yet experienced is in progress. They are also giving the vicinity of the trenches something to go on with. As yet they have done no damage. We drew rations this morning, also 1 1/2 packets of fags and a packet of Westward Ho. They arrived just in time as we had smoked up and had eaten up our emergency rations. We deeply appreciate the kindness of the people at home every time we have a smoke.

9 am: A shower of bullets and pieces of shrapnel fell over our trench. They kept it up for a good ten minutes with the usual result – atmosphere disturbed. A lull in firing continued till 11.30 when they gave us half an hour's spiteful bombarding after which we finished our bully beef and biscuits. 4pm: Heavy artillery fire on our left rear from the enemy. Sound like big guns and the noise is deafening.

6.30: We are still scatheless. Received orders to quit our trenches and take up another position about 400 yards away commanding the railway.

Oct.21<sup>st</sup>: About 2 am after digging ourselves in, we again received orders to take up another position. This second move was a very risky experiment as we had to cross a front of about a mile where the enemy, had they known we were moving, could have blown us to smithereens. But with absolute silence and a very slow step, we accomplished the movement satisfactorily. At 7.30 pm the enemy shelled our new trench. They continued at intervals all day killing one of our men and injuring 6 in 'D' Company trench on our right.

8 pm: They have set fire to a farm behind us, the better to show our position. By the way, this is a regular instance of German tactics, burning farms, churches, etc., and pillaging. Have found unmistakable evidence in every town and hamlet we have traversed in the war zone.

9pm: The fire has ignited two boxes of ammunition carelessly left by the Royal Fusiliers who, together with a party of Red Cross men and wounded, had left just in time. Expect an attack tonight, Germans must think they are having us on toast as the ammunition is exploding as form a machine gun and making no end of din. After the boxes had finished their racket, a party of us went to the farmyard for water and to make out tea on the fire.

We had no sooner laid out our mess tins when the enemy started their attack on our front and left. It was laughable to see the way they boys scattered back to their trench.

The Germans cheered as they charged reminding me of Osbourne scoring a goal for North End. It had hardly the hearty, lungy shrill of the British and it seemed to be checked at its birth, or so it seemed to me. It only lasted a few seconds as our machine guns and rifles stilled it for ever. They were mown down like ripe corn. In front of our half Company, our lieutenant counted heaps of dead. They retired with tremendous losses. **Recorded by Sergeant Joshua Kelsall, Rifle Brigade, of Preston. 'By kind permission of Mrs Freda Howarth and LRO, Bow Lane, Preston. Ref: DDX2084/1'**

## A Preston Lad

I think the best hiding I ever received was for the following incident. I had gone to the greenhouse, it was not really a greenhouse as we know them. It was a long brick built lean to that ran the full length of the gable end and it had a glass roof. The sacks of potatoes were kept in there and the large skips we called 'washing baskets', where all the soiled linen was deposited ready to go to the workhouse laundry. At the far end where there was a drain stood one of those old fashioned squeezers, or wringing machines to give it its proper name. I had gone to use them to wring out some dusters that had been hand washed. Whilst I was thus employed, in came Emily Sanger, from next door, bringing some dirty washing to put in the skip marked FEMALE. She held up one of the articles and said 'Look at these !' It was an article of underwear, blue with a thin white stripe, 'a pair of unmentionables'. 'Bet its the first time you've seen a pair of these', she teased. 'I saw Gladys Huxley's' I retorted. 'When she fell in Lex Street'. We both sat on our respective baskets. ' Tell you what' she continued, 'Doris Watson fancies you'. 'Hong Kong Harry's sister' I said. 'Yep' she nodded with a twinkle in her eye. Doris and Harry had this nickname because they had previously lived in Hong Kong and been back in England about six months. They ..... were posh, lived on Fishwick View, number 32, I believe. It was only a stone's throw from Ivy Bank and we shared the same panoramic view of the whole of Fishwick Bottoms with the River Ribble dividing it from Cuerdale, Walton and Samlesbury, one of the most beautiful views in Preston. The home had a more oblique angled view, and it brought in Brockholes Wood, hence our address Brockholes View. 'You're codding' I said to Emily. 'I'm not' she retorted. Wow – Doris Watson was one of the bonniest girls in school. She was very aloof, all the boys thought she was stuck up and dare not accost her. She wore a velour hat, gloves and shoes, real posh, she was. Anyway I did not believe this tale and said so, and we laughed and joked a bit longer. Miss Hall heard our voices and looked through the pantry window and saw us sat there swinging our legs and gabbling away. 'Knock ! Knock ! Knock !' she banged on the window. 'Cripes ! Hell !' I muttered as we ran to our respective domiciles. Miss Hall was waiting at the porch door, anger, disgust and incredulity all chased across that grim visage. 'You disgusting wretch !' she screamed. 'What were you talking and laughing about and sitting down to do it almost next to each other'. We had broken the strictest rule of all. Fraternizing. She dragged me by the ear to the girl's home and Miss Taylor. We were lined up in front of these two outraged females. Emily didn't get clouted, I don't think Miss Taylor was that sort. She was gated for a month and no spending money for the same period. I was not confined to barracks, but she chased me round the house striking me with the strap whenever she could for a good quarter of an hour. All the kids, the younger ones, were screaming, me as well. I never suffered in silence, if you tried to be brave and not cry, you got hit harder or longer. I yelled out after the first stroke or two. Miss Hall was out of puff and had to take a powder, so the day after she boxed my ears for 'making her ill' as she put it. The headmaster, Daddy Lamb, queried the weals when I went to school, so I told him I had been misbehaving. It was a good job he hadn't seen my back. Everybody was subdued for about a week or so. After that display of anger I did not get any pudding, pie or biscuits for a week and forfeited my Saturday penny for three weeks, it seemed like three months. Nevertheless, after a suitable period of time it was forgotten and life resumed to its usual harsh and work demanding way. I had broke the rules and had to pay the penalty – fair enough. She had threatened to stop me going to the Sunday School Field Day, but she relented.

And I still believe that Doris Watson never fancied me, and that Emily had been pulling my leg and much later events proved me wrong. She said to someone that she liked Eric Crook and someone she had confided to chalked it on some boards. EW=EC. I still feel bigheaded about that sixty years on. Incidentally, I never spoke to her, I was too shy. I once stared at her and made her blush. The first Saturday I received my penny spending money, after my super hiding, I bought a packet of Crayol at Mrs Heald's shop that boasted the fag machine that delivered the goods. Then all of us went down Bezza brook, got down the banking and smoked ourselves silly. We caught a few minnards or minnows with a jam jar some previous adventurer had left behind. At least living the life we did experience a whole garnut of emotions that perhaps other kids did not experience. Pain, tiredness with all the work that was our lot to accomplish, the pleasure of getting away from it all and attending school. To me, the sheer delight of singing ones heart out, the excitement of how to spend our Saturday penny, a lucky bag, maybe, what whoppers they were, or twenty aniseed balls, possibly two ounce of London mixtures. Fear reared its ugly head, fear of being found out for something we had done wrong and its consequences. And finally the feeling of bliss getting into bed, relaxing, thinking through the days events, then sinking into most times a dreamless sleep till six am the next morning.

When Mr Brown was our headmaster, and, as I have related our choirmaster, we had to learn all the classics. Londonderry Air, Sweet Lass of Richmond Hill, The Trout – I have forgotten its real title the first line went – I stood beside a brooklet, that sparkled on its way. Then one about the Baron – Today is my Wedding Day, ten thousand pounds I'll give away. Who aloft thy head did rise, forest green – went another one. Then one about a druid stood in a dark oak wood of a distant northern land, all about the virtues of mistletoe. Finally one about a hermit in a wood. All these songs that Mr Brown had to learn us to sing, he wrote out in tonic solfa, reams of black paper about two and a half feet wide, was draped over the blackboard then eased over the top, with his cane as we progressed. Hours upon hours he must have spent writing out the sharps and flats, clefs, minims, quavers, crochets, breves and semi-breves, etc, 2.4 time, 3 4 4 6 8 etc. He must have been the most dedicated man to his music and he tried to transmit it to his pupils. Unfortunately not many appreciated his good intentions, yet even today I can still remember the words and lines of most of those songs and sing some of them in tonic solfa, so at least it did not all fall on deaf ears.

After our music lesson, which was on Friday, three till four, we would sometimes have a silly half hour. All the boys in their turn had to tell a riddle or a joke. One day it came to the turn of Fishy Burns to recite something to us, and he did not know any.

'Come on, Burns', shouted Daddy Brown, 'surely you know a tackler's tale or a Pat and Mick story'. No, he remained silent. Eventually he said he could manage something, he began,

A riddle ma riddle ma ree,  
I saw a black man pee,  
He peed so fast, it made me laugh,  
A riddle ma riddle ma ree.

For a few seconds, stunned silence, then roars and screams of laughter from the assembled boys, led by Mr Brown who had to wipe his eyes at this wholly unexpected effort of Burns attempt to tell a funny joke. At least he succeeded and got the biggest laugh ever.

## When I were a Lad

I suppose it is only correct to head this article with the title as shown above because it is all nonsense about 'when I were a lad'.

In the late 1940's I was brought up just off New Hall Lane at 2 Maitland Street, Preston. It was there that I was often 'minded' by my Grandmother and during those occasions she would often recite a ditty, the first two lines stayed with me for the rest of my life but it was only recently during a conversation with Brenda, a friend, that between us we recalled the rest of the verse. I hope in recording it here it stimulates a few memories for other people.

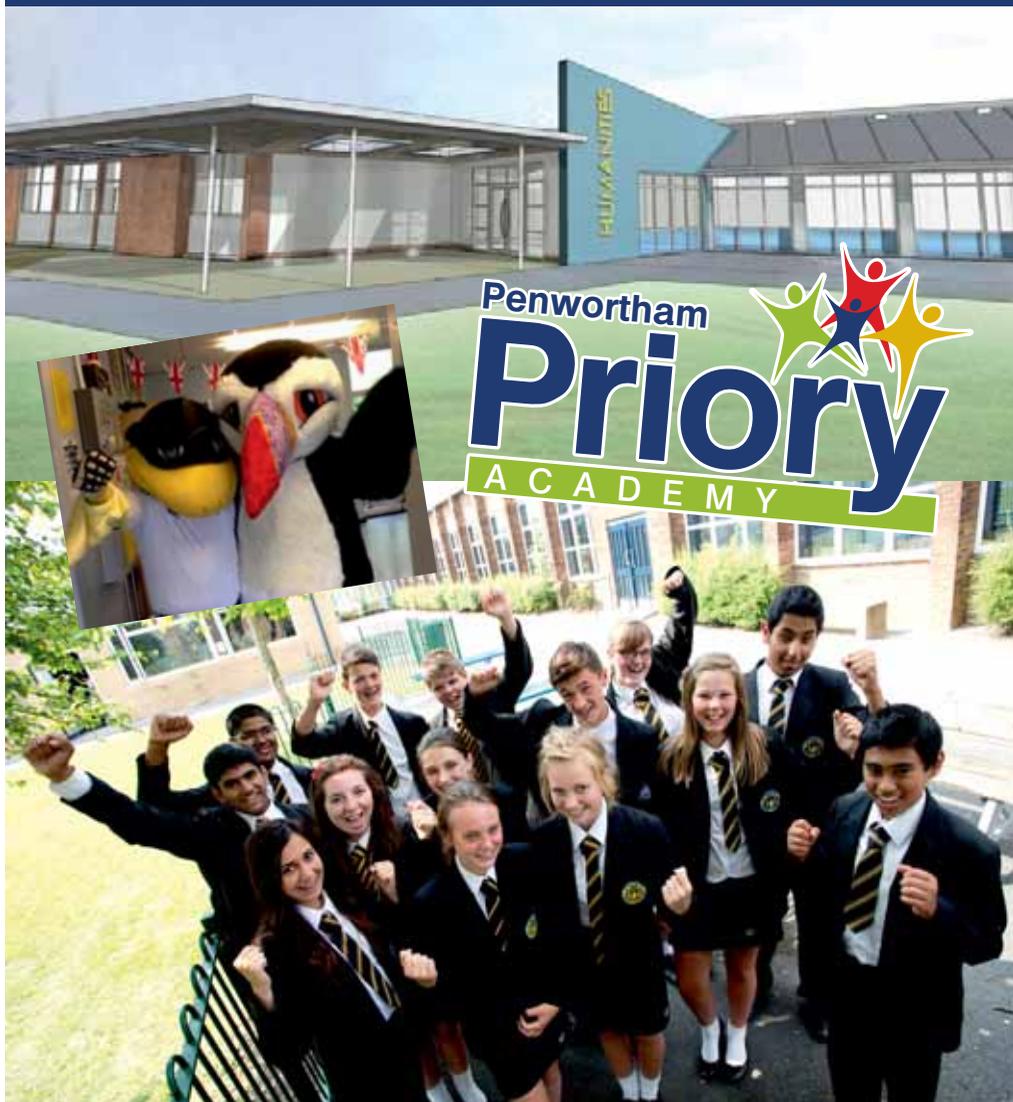
When I were a lad as big as mi Dad  
I came out of a pea swad  
Peas swad was so full  
I came out of a roarin' bull.  
Roarin' bull was so fat  
I came out of a gentleman's 'at  
Gentleman's 'at was so fine  
I came out of a bottle of wine  
Bottle of wine was so good  
I came out of a lump-of-wood  
Lump of wood was so rotten  
I came out of a bag-a-cotton  
Bag-of -cotton set on fire  
Blew me up to Jeremiah  
Puff-Puff-Puff

**Remembered by Barry Ashton and Brenda Shelaker**



*Image Courtesy of Steve Halliwell*

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