

The Preston Magazine



Issue 22

Preston Now and Then
Steeple Jack
Christmas 1930

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Annual Appeal

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

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

Read on !

1. If you have the ability to scan them to your computer, you can send them to our email address as attachments (300 dpi. Photo quality please) to prestondigitalarchive@hotmail.com
2. For the technically among us you can mail material to our local address. We will make copies and return them to you (at our cost) Our mailing address is as follows
Preston Digital Archive, 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.

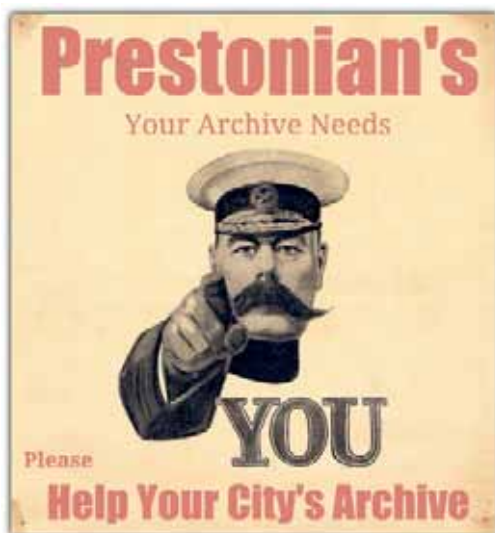
We also try and confine the general geographical area to Preston, Penwortham, Fulwood, Grimsargh, Walton le Dale, Bamber Bridge and Lostock Hall.

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 22nd 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 you can also access The Preston and Penwortham Magazines via www.blogpreston.co.uk

Included this month are – A Poem from Preston born Canadian poet Robert Service, from his book of poems entitled Rhymes of a Red Cross Man, which was dedicated to his brother, Albert, who was killed in action, in France in August 1916, Memories of Preston Shed by Robin Bamber, PNE 1964 by Tony Billington, Part 5 of the diary of James Green 305712, who 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).

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. Also if any of your family members are named on a Preston or South Ribble War Memorial and you have any information about them we would love to hear from you.

Should you require a copy by post each month, please contact us. We can also email you a pdf version of the magazine. If I have missed you lately please do let me know.

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 always on the look out 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 will be kept at Lancashire Records Office.

Front Cover Image – Park Hotel, Miller Park by local Penwortham artist John Matthews – should you require a print please contact John on 01772 743011

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PHOTOGRAPHS FROM PRESTON PAST

Gala Day Sunday 18th May 1986 as last game played on grass at Deepdale. Red Rum was the star attraction. Sent in by Tony Billington.



Crowds gather round Red Rum at the North End Gala.



ENDING ON A HIGH NOTE: The Cardinal Newman College team ended their season by winning the Lancashire Under 19 Cup when they defeated Blackburn College 2-0 with goals from David McCann and Andy Billington. The Newman squad, above, is: Simon Clarkson, Chris Smith, Neil Addison, Denny Mansey, Stuart Delaney, David McCann, Mick Hartley, Steve Abbott, Paul Cairns, Graeme Keenan, Rob Haworth, Kevin Holliday, Jim Hanratty, Chris Whittingham, Mark Noland, Andy Billington and Chris Dunlop. Back left is the college sport co-ordinator, Kevin Loughran and back right is Sean Haselgrave, college leisure facilities manager

Cardinal Newman College Football Team c. 1998. Lancashire Under 19 Cup Winners.
Sent in by Tony Billington

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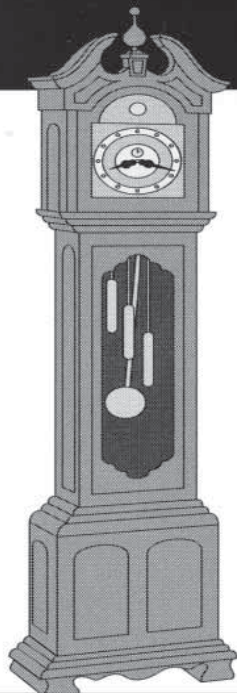


ARTICLES FROM PRESTON PAST

IMPROVEMENTS AT AVENHAM & C. Mr Milner's plans for the improvements at Avenham and Moor Parks were received on Monday, and on Tuesday they were inspected by the of the Health and Recreation Committee, at the offices of the Local Board of Health. Relative to Avenham, Mr Milner proposes many alterations and improvements. From an inspection of the plans we gather the following: Over the Ribble, near the old tramway bridge (which has, we understand, to be removed), there will be an ornamental bridge. In the centre of the park there will be a fine water fountain, from which paths will radiate in various directions. A sort of parterre will be made on the higher side of the park, access to which will be obtained by ranges of steps, at the base of each of which there will be a spacious walk. Along the sides of the various paths there will be shrubs &c. In connection with the park, and the other land to the north, recently acquired, there will be five lodges. At the end of the park, on the western side, there will be an orchestra for concerts. Near the brow, known as 'Constitution Hill' there will be a small erection of something like a Swiss chalet. At the north-eastern end of the park there will be a drinking fountain. In the ground between the two railway bridges there will be a large number of serpentine walks, some of which will converge to a sun dial, which is proposed to be put up. The plans relative to Moor Park embrace many improvements. The entire plot will be intersected with numerous footpaths, conjoined by shrubberies, &c. Towards the south-west corner there will be an ornamental sheet of water crossed by a bridge. There will be space set aside in the centre for cricketing purposes, and when desired, the aggregate plot in this direction may be used for military purposes, reviews &c. Two additional lodges will be erected on the park – one at the north-eastern and the other at the northwestern end. A broad footpath, edged at intervals with trees will pass between the two lodges. A drinking fountain, in the centre of a circular piece of land, will be raised near the present gate-house. Mr Milner also proposes to improve the plot of land opposite Stephenson Terrace. At the southern point he recommends the erection a lodge with double entrance. His plan also shows walks around the entire ground, trees, shrubs &c., in various parts of the plot; and converging walks in the direction thereof; also an outlet at the northern end. On Tuesday, the Health and Recreation Committee generally approved the plans.

DOG POISONING There seems to be a diabolical mania for dog poisoning in existence in Preston and the neighbourhood. Last year we frequently had to enumerate instances of canine poisoning carried out in a most wholesale manner, and in a way so secret that the vigilance of the entire police force was completely baffled in the detection of its perpetrators. The same sort of thing has again sprung up, and the villainous practice of dog poisoning seems to have constituted itself into a 'rage'. Within the past eight or ten days, fifty or sixty dogs, some of very valuable description, have been poisoned in various parts of Preston and the neighbourhood. Rewards have been offered for the detection of the rascals who have been indulging in this species of thuggism. It is supposed that the dogs are poisoned with either arsenic or strychnine. The animals after being in the streets a short time are suddenly taken ill and in spite of all remedial agents, they die within a few hours, in the greatest agony. The current idea, that small pieces of meat, containing poison, and 'operated' upon, by some strong smelling ingredient easily detected by the 'scent' of dogs, are dropped in the street at night time, and that this is done either by a class of 'larking' youths, or a gang of burglars anxious to quieten house dogs, and thus be enable to ply their depredations in quietness. We hope that the police will be successful in bringing the to justice the scoundrels concerned.

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PRESTON THEN AND NOW 1843 – 1893

'THE CHANGES OF HALF A CENTURY'

A change that would be one of the greatest surprises to a long-absent Prestonian is our beautiful Town Hall, occupying the place of its dingy brick predecessor. About two years before the Guild celebration of 1862, there was a good deal of discussion in the Town Council as to the site and plan of this new structure. The late Mr JJ Myres (afterwards alderman and twice mayor, 1868 78) proposed that a resolution be passed at a previous meeting of the council, to build it on the ancient site be rescinded, and that the new Town Hall be erected between the Old Shambles and Lancaster-road, a plan involving the demolition of all the houses and shops in Church-street standing between those thoroughfares. Councillor Myres showed that if his plan were adopted the building could be set back considerably, and the concavity of Church-street at that point would still further improve the view of the structure. On the site of the present Town Hall he would have erected offices and shops in architectural conformity with the Hall; and the rents of these, he argued, would be highly remunerative. Moreover, he suggested that if his plan were adopted a fine market-house might be erected behind, and if faced all round with good shops would realise a substantial income. To this scheme the late Alderman Miller was a determined opponent, and he declared that if it was accepted he would leave the council. It was thought at the time that Mr Myres, in describing his scheme, overloaded his explanation with details, which confused his auditors; and that it would have had a better chance of adoption had it been presented with a simple statement of the general design. However, either from this alleged mistake on the part of Mr Myres, or from the great influence of Alderman Miller, that grand scheme was rejected, in the face of a petition presented to the Corporation in its favour, and signed by about 5,000 ratepayers. If it had been accepted our magnificent Harris Free Library and Museum could scarcely have arisen on a site so eligible as that which it now adorns so that we may well be content; although it might have been erected on the north side of the Market place, where the Cross Keys Inn now stands. The ancient site having been determined upon, demolition of the old Town Hall was begun sometime afterwards. It was an ugly building. On the ground floor was a number of shops; one in the Old Shambles (the road east of the Town Hall) was occupied by the late Mr John Hamilton, draper, and another by Mr Thomas Rimmer, grocer; in front, one by the late Mrs Lawson, hosier, and another by the late Mr Armitstead, printer and music seller. The shop at the south west corner, fronting Cheapside, was tenanted by Messrs Wainman and Cottam, hat manufacturers; the shop adjoining by Mr John Kay, hairdresser; and the premises next door were then occupied by the late Mr Joseph Livesey, as the publishing office, of the 'Preston Guardian'. Behind the old Town Hall, and facing the Market-place stood the ancient timbered houses built in 1619 and 1629, forming a picturesque and much-admired feature of the square. They were demolished in 1855, together with a shop at the north-west corner, occupied many years by Mrs Stanley, milliner, and one at the north-east corner, dated 1618, and tenanted by Mr Banks, a dealer in second hand books. The principle building had at some time been divided into two shops, and one was occupied by a Mr Gardner, butcher, the other by Mr Cookson, seedsman.

The Preston Chronicle 18th March, 1893



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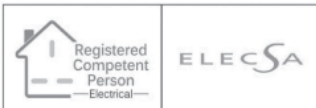
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CHRISTMAS 1930

A Green Christmas Thrushes and Primroses instead of Robins and Snow

The anticipations of the Doleful David's and the Weeping Willies that Preston's Christmas this year was to be the leanest ever were not realised. True, there had not been so much money spent in celebrating the festival, but apart from that this year's Yuletide was a jolly a time as any of its immediate predecessors. A stroll through the town on Christmas Day morning revealed the toy shops windows emptied of their wares, so that it was safe to assume the little ones had been well catered for by parents and relatives, and butchers and game reported that the demand for Christmas fare accelerated so sharply at the beginning of the week that it was possible to effect an almost complete clearance. Indeed, the only reasonable complaint that could be made against Christmas was the unseasonable character of the weather. Instead of glittering snows and shimmering frosts to remind one of the period of the year Christmas morning opened with a burst of sunshine of Spring-like geniality which inspired the thrushes to oust the robins from their time-honoured place in the Christmas scheme of things, and make unusual carols to please the ear. And the ground was as kindly as the air and the weather, for in many places, it was splashed with primroses and bulbs everywhere were throwing out their rapier-like leaves, giving a Christmas message of the joys and beauties of an advancing spring. The people in industrial towns of Preston's type are distinctly 'clannish' and in spite of all the outside attractions provided, the holiday remains essentially a time for family reunions, and this feature this year was as strongly pronounced as ever. The sun tempted many of the men out in the morning while the womenfolk were busy with the dinner preparations; the picture shows were a big attraction in the later part of the day; and North End's game took a lot of people over to Burnley. But everywhere there was a rush to get back home at night to join the family parties arranged. The festival was, perhaps, a little quieter than usual. Carol singers and bands were not so numerous, but still there were enough about to give the necessary picturesque touch of provided by the waits; and there was little of that boisterous exuberance prevalent which used to make (and often mar) the Christmases of other days. Unquestionably, people are becoming more sedate and take their pleasures in quieter moods. Charity always finds some fulsome expression in Preston at Christmastide and this year the number of poor children entertained in various ways constituted a very easy record, many hundreds more being breakfasted or dined. At the railway station it was stated there were very few travellers, apart from the football enthusiasts on Christmas Day, but prior to the holiday a fair number left for hydros and hotels in the winter resorts. Indeed, it would appear that this manner of spending more and more popular with a certain section of the community. The fair weather persisted until late evening, when rain came on and the wind at times almost reached gale velocity. A wild night, however, was followed by more attractive conditions. The wind abated and it was possible to get out in the open on Boxing Day with blue-flecked skies overhead, though they were heavily charged with rain clouds. The threat from the clouds, however, had very little effect upon the attendance at the football match at Deepdale, where the return game with Burnley was played. The busiest people in the town during the holiday were those at the Post Office, where more than a million packages and letters were dealt with. In spite of the staff being considerably augmented a great deal of overtime had to be undertaken.

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Diary of James Green 305712

8th King's Liverpool Regt.

B.E.F. France

1914-1918

We were all in scattered groups when we got to our objective, no officers,.. I and a few more of our fellows found ourselves at our objective under the command of two officers of the 'South African Scottish'. We held a strong point 2 days and 2 nights. All night long we heard the cries of the German wounded but we could not venture out to help them. After 2 days with the 'South African Scottish' in the strong point we left them. We made a dash across 'no-mans land', a couple of hundred yards, and found our own company remains in some shell holes, they were dug in to resist a counter attack which we knew was bound to follow to try to throw us back. He gave us a heavy bombardment but his attack was broken by our heavy artillery fire. Thank goodness for our artillery. All that time from going 'over the top' to holding the shell holes for 4 days we had no food, only biscuits (army) and water. Then, when we had given up all hope of being found, I believe the 'West Riding Regt.' came up at midnight and we made our way down through 'Sanctuary Wood'. It was every man for himself, we found a small light railway used for carrying shells to the gunners, we boarded it but, every so far we had to get off and keep moving shells from the lines. There were guides to show us to our meeting place. I think our officers cried as we staggered into camp. We had a good hot meal provided, and plenty of it as there were so few of us, and we fell fast asleep, the first for 5 days. I remember next morning I was told to cook the Colonel's breakfast, I made a right hash of it I cooked some sausages, I got away with it through some Germans' bombing the camp and it put breakfast out of their minds for the time being. I believe I wasn't wanted afterwards so I went back to my platoon. We got moved at last and went down to 'Vlamertinge' and from there to a place called 'Watou'. Having a quiet time.



September 26th Wednesday. We left 'Watou' for the 'Somme'. We boarded a long train. They were big horse trucks, covered vans, they held about 20 of us. We had a big fire in a brazier in the middle of the floor and we had a big supply of Corned Beef and biscuits (army). It was a long train ride, nothing to do for 2 days only eating and sleeping and playing cards to pass the time on, nobody knows how monotonous such a ride is on a French train. We used to be clanging along and then all at once we would stop in the middle of a field for no reason at all. We would get out to walk about and stretch our legs then, suddenly, the train would start off without us. We had to run alongside and jump on anywhere and wait until the next stop to sort ourselves out. Sometimes when we were travelling through a village we would have a crowd of boys and girls running alongside of us selling chocolates and cigarettes. The train was only going slow, at a walking pace, we could get out and buy something and get back on again. So we rolled along until we came to 'Albert'. We stopped at the station for

10 minutes, we all rushed out to the toilet and while we were using the toilets the French char women were mopping the floors all round us and nobody taking any notice! Marvellous the morals of the French. We boarded the train and resumed our journey, we rolled along hour after hour until we pulled up at 'Peronne'. A town in ruins as we marched through, a lot of the houses and buildings were not safe to go in, when the Germans left they had mined all the buildings as booby traps. One of the staff of one regiment had used the Town hall as a billet but they were all blown up anyway, they were not for us, we had to go where we belonged to the farms and pigsties. Went on to 'Bapaume', had a quiet time. Left there and went to a place called 'Barastre', we stayed 5 days and then proceeded 'up the line', stayed at a camp 1 night then on again to 'sandbag lane', stayed 5 days. Then up to the support trenches for 5 days. Plenty of working parties out wiring every night. Left those trenches for another part of the line on the left, stayed 5 days then went up in the trenches and stayed 6 days. Came out for a rest after 21 days in the line.

Sunday October 28th. Drew 15 francs pay.

Friday November 2nd. Left for the trenches 'Graften Post'.

Wednesday November 14th. We have now been in the front line 12 days, expect to be relieved 18th. Weather awful cold. I had a narrow escape at stand to, a spent bullet just caught me, I went to Advance Dressing Station got inoculated and went back to the trenches again.

Friday November. Got relieved after being in the trenches 14 days. We got 2 days rest then back in supports to the 164 Brigade.

Tuesday November. 164 Brigade made an attack on 'Gillemont Farm'. Got shelled out of it. it was to draw the Germans attention from the left where the real attack took place, gave him awful time, 800 prisoners, 100 officers and a lot of guns.

Saturday November. We are back in the line again at 'Ken Lane' same old stunt wiring every night. Trenches badly knocked about after Tuesday's stunt, plenty of dead lying about. Our guns our still advancing on the left, awful barrage fire, can hear it from here. Finished 5 days in 'Ken Lane'. Moved to 'Gillemont Farm' sector for 5 days a pretty rough time too. Went down to 'Duncan Post' for another 5 days, not so bad, guiding parties to the front line and anti-aircraft guard. Got relieved by the '16th division' and went down to 'St. Emilie' for 1 night. In motor transport next day to 'Peronne', 2 days. Moved by train from 'Peronne'. 12 hours ride to a place called 'Maurice'. In huts having a quiet time so far. Hope we are out for Xmas. Left after 3 days and marched to a village called 'Lingues', stayed 1 night. Left next day by 'shanks' pony' to a village called 'Crepuy', here for Xmas I hope.

18 December 1917. Drew 50 francs pay, £13-12-0d in credit (oh how nice).

25th December. Christmas Day. Oh what a contrast to Xmas in 'Old England' with ones own friends, roll on when I will meet them all again.

January 1st 1918. Played off again in the football match with 13 platoon. Result 1-1 draw after extra time, first round of competition.

January 3rd. Played 13 platoon and, after a hard struggle, got beat 2-1. Death of old 15 platoon.

January 27th. Put £10-5-6d in war loans. 21 certificates.

January 30th. Drew 50 francs pay (increase of pay started).

February 2nd. Played left-back for the left half of battalion against the right half, won 7-1.

February 3rd. Left 'Crepuy' and marched to 'Luying-le-Lire'. Stayed one night and next morning marched through 'St Helliers', 'Lillers' to 'Leclume'. Left here to come home on leave bad going up into trenches. Arrived in 'Boulogne' 8 o'clock Monday night.

Continued next month

STEEPLE JACK IN PRESTON

This notable individual who follows a calling as unique as it is daring, namely ascending lofty chimneys from the outside by means of an appliance simple in its nature, yet demonstrative of the ingenuity of its constructor, as well as his undaunted courage, inflexible firmness of mind and muscle in the use of it, has been in Preston this week, pursuing his interesting but dangerous avocation. It seems that this fearless, and, in his sphere, unrivalled, man has devoted himself to the perilous undertaking of thus ascending these lofty, and before his time, almost inaccessible erections for a course of fourteen years, during which time he has mounted no less than 450 chimneys of all lengths, breadths, and shape of construction, not for the mere purpose of display, the gratification of an idle curiosity in others, or the vainglorious feeling in himself, but a view to facilitating their repair, either in one respect or another. Jas. Duncan Wright, for this is his real name, 'Steeple Jack' being a soubriquet, need fear no rival in his unparalleled feats; his inconceivably rapid ascent and descent of the chimney, his nonchalance and coolness while on the dizzy height, are enough to appal the timid, and make the brave and courageous marvel. The modus operandi is as follows – he makes a kite of common calico, of the dimensions of 5 feet 6 inches long, 5 feet 3 inch at the lower end, and 3 ft 6 in at the top. To this he attaches a long and strong cord, which he holds himself. To some part of this cord another string is tied, which is held by his assistant, who, when the kite is borne aloft by the wind, repairs to the other side of the chimney. 'Steeple Jack' being in quite an opposite direction. In this position they manouvered with the kite until the rope or cord forms a sort of angle, the chimney being like a perpendicular line drawn from the middle. Then, they simultaneously 'strike' the chimney, that is, fix the string right in the centre (or as near to the centre as possible) of its summit. To this cord he attaches another considerably thicker than the preceding one, with a chain of a sufficient length to stretch across the top of the erection, and a pulley with a good strong rope, to the bottom of which a small oblong board is fastened, upon which 'Steeple Jack' seats himself when he takes his aerial flight. On Tuesday he commenced his preliminary operations, applying the kite, and arranging his apparatus, at one of the chimneys belonging to Messrs. Swainson, Birley and Co, Fishwick, the conducting rod of which was broken three weeks ago; and to replace this conducting rod by a new one is the object of Steeple Jack's mission to Preston. The wind was rather inimical to a kite-flying experiment, yet Jack, and his assistant, Peter Harris, who is also his brother-in-law, succeeded expeditiously in several times in throwing the line across the summit of the lofty pile (which is 227 feet high) but their exertions were frequently frustrated by several adverse circumstances. Ultimately however, the tackling was properly fixed; and since Wednesday, Jack has 'astonished the natives' in that neighbourhood – and he has been visited by crowds of spectators – by his unique, courageous and truly marvellous proceedings. He has already executed a portion of the work of taking down the old pipe, with the able assistance of his brother-in-law, Peter Harris. He will continue his avocation the whole of next week. It has been suggested that he should give an exhibition of his wondrous feats at an early date. If a subscription list were commenced for that purpose we doubt not it would soon be filled up, and the performance would attract some thousands of spectators.

Preston Chronicle 30th July 1853

Image taken from the History of the Borough of Preston and Its Environs in the County of Lancaster, By Charles Hardwick 1857.

'STEEPLE JACK'

Begs to announce that on Friday next, at half past Six o'clock in the evening, he will perform a variety of Extraordinary and unparalleled feats, at the Big Factory Chimney, Fishwick, including that of traversing a rope 1,500 feet long in 10 seconds. For further Particulars see placards.

Preston Chronicle August 13th 1853

Steeple Jack Grand Exhibition at Fishwick Last evening the most startling and extraordinary performance of daring feats that have been given in this part of the country during our recollection took place at the 'Big Factory Chimney', Fishwick, in the presence of a larger concourse of gratified spectators than ever assembled in that neighbourhood before. The performer was James Duncan Wright, the renowned 'Steeple Jack' the scene of whose unique exhibition was Common Bank valley, his stage a rope fastened to the top of Messrs Swainson and Birley's lofty chimney, and stretching out to the extent of 500 yards in the vale below, and his audience 15,000 inhabitants of Preston and neighbourhood. A colour was waving from the factory, while on the summit of the chimney another flag flaunted in the passing breeze, and on the ground were two bands of music and two pieces of cannon; so that the ensemble of the affair bore a truly dramatic and novel aspect. Jack, who was attired as a sailor, seemed in excellent spirits; and as soon as the signal was given by the discharge of the guns; he swiftly ascended the chimney, and very soon landed at the top. He there speedily affixed a pulley to the rope, with which was connected a sort of handle, which acts when pressed to the cord, with the same effect as a brake to a railway train, and to which moreover, was attached the seat in which Jack makes all his aerial flights. Having firmly ensconced himself in the seat, our hero fearlessly commenced the terrible descent, amidst cheers of the dense and serried mass of spectators; as swiftly as the arrow did he traverse the rope, which is some hundreds of yards high and coolly stopped midway, where he fired one barrel of a revolver pistol. He then quietly resumed his mid air journey, suspended over a dread abyss but 'bating not a jot of heart or hope' he left the chimney looming in the distance behind, and soon rejoin the cheering crowd on firm earth. The next feat was one which surpasses all power of description, and must be seen to be properly comprehended. Jack actually traversed the rope in the manner above detailed in the marvellous short space of ten seconds. He fixed the cord in a more perpendicular position, the signal was given, off went his airy car, a 'whirr' was heard as the pulley revolved with lightning velocity upon the rope, all was intense and breathless excitement among the people – Jack has travelled 500 yards in 10 seconds, and arrived safe and sound amid the hearty applause of those assembled ! Jack afterwards re-ascended the chimney, where he sent up some fireworks and stood amid a blaze of dazzling splendour; and this concluded the exhibition.

Preston Chronicle 20th August 1853



THE ROAD TO THE TWIN TOWERS 64

In the days when Preston North End were just one division below the big boys they embarked on an FA Cup run which ended at Wembley Stadium in May 1964. 1963-64 was already a season to remember with North End slugging it out with Sunderland and Leeds United at the head of the old 2nd Division.

Nottingham Forest away was step one in the third round. They were just an average mid-table 1st Division team so we set off confidently on a Ribble coach down the relatively new M6. A boring 0-0 draw but we had them back at Deepdale on the Monday night. As it was early January I'm not sure whether the 1st replay was postponed due to fog but I vividly remember when the game did take place it was nearly abandoned after a blizzard covered the pitch at half-time. The referee went round all the lines with a brush and the game continued culminating in a 20 yard thunderbolt from 17 year old Howard Kendall which proved to be the only goal. Round 4 took us over Belmont to Burnden Park, Bolton, where 2 Alex Dawson goals were cancelled out by Deakin and it was back to Deepdale on Monday night where goals from Dawson and Lawton saw us run out 2-1 winners. The next round looked a certain win for PNE when drawn at home to 4th Division minnows, Carlisle United. An Alan Spavin goal was enough to see off the Cumbrians but not without a few scares after ex PNE winger, Sammy Taylor, hit the woodwork 3 times. We were given no chance in the quarter-finals away at another 4th Division side, Oxford United. It was only Blackburn supporters who wrote us off after they had lost 3-1 in the previous round !

By now we were using Fishwick coaches and an early start saw us going down the motorway in Britain once again to Oxfordshire. Goals from Dawson and Godfrey ended Oxford's giant-killing dreams and we waited with baited breath on the Monday lunchtime to hear the semi-final draw. Would it be West Ham, Man Utd or fellow 2nd Division side Swansea Town (not City in those days). West Ham v Man Utd, phew, we got Swansea at Villa Park.

A scramble for tickets ensued, we got lucky and it was down to Birmingham on the Fishwick coach in torrential rain. The pitch was a quagmire. As both teams played in white normally, they had to change. We played in blue, Swansea in orange. By half time we were 1-0 down, both sides looked the same all-brown ! It all changed in the second half when a Dawson penalty and a 50 yard screamer from Singleton sent the Swans back to the valleys with their tails between their legs. I couldn't get a ticket so in desperation I went to the pre-Cup Final raffle at Deepdale and won a 17/6 ticket (about 87p now) As all my mates had 7/6 tickets I was getting worried, then a stranger came up, offered me two 7/6 tickets and half a crown in money ! We did Wembley in style. I drew all my savings out of the Post Office (Watkin Lane- Lindley Street corner, Lostock Hall). We flew from Blackpool airport to Luton, coach to London and return journey Saturday night. We lost 3-2 after leading twice. We gave the Hammers a hell of a game but goals from Holden and a typical bullet header from the 'Black Prince' Dawson weren't enough. I had my first ever 'Chinese' in London before the journey home. 51 years ago. Seems like yesterday.

By Tony Billington



GOAL FOR PRESTON, THEN THEY LOSE

The goal that gave Preston a 2-1 interval lead, headed by centre-forward Dawson (not in picture) in the F.A. Cup Final at Wembley, London.

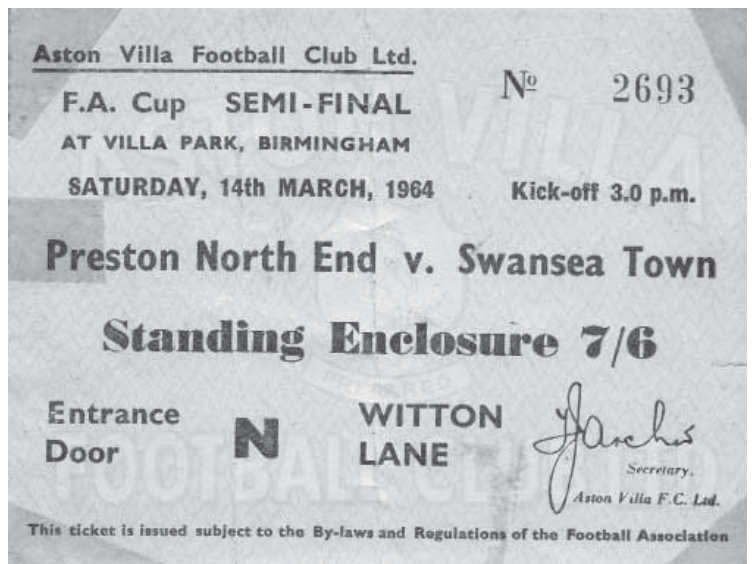
Left to Right – BURKETT: STANDEN (West Ham): ASHWORTH (Preston) :

BOVINGTON and BOND (of West Ham)

Despite the lead, Preston lost the match for the Londoners equalised almost immediately after half time and then went on to notch the decider in the last seconds of injury time.

May 2nd 1964

Courtesy of Tony Billington



MEMORIES OF THE FIRST ELEVEN YEARS OF A CAREER ON BRITISH RAILWAYS, INCLUDING LIGHTER MOMENTS

BY ROBIN BAMBER

GETTING ROUND THE DISTRICT: Regular forays to the Wigan area provided a chance to work with different colleagues and on different equipment, with much work at Spring's Branch and Wigan L & Y sheds. The O.D.M. staff were housed in a gas-lit workshop in the Wallgate Yard, and we helped out there if they were short staffed. All Wigan's loco water supplies came from a borehole at Kenyon, some 8 miles away. One big job that I worked on was the removal of one of the two pumps units for overhaul. With only the motor visible above ground level we lifted the lot with block and tackle. Fifteen 8 ft sections of pipe and pump drive shaft to be uncoupled till finally the pump itself reached the surface. The drive shaft bearings were made of lignum vitae, a hard wood that was found to be ideal for use in water. Fitter Jim French was a character, as was his mate, little 'Arry Parr, two typical Wiganers. 'Arry's use of dialect was a real education ... anyone he didn't like was referred to as a 'ra'at tusk', using the toilet was 'goin' t'ot petty' and my favourite was 'Art fer't gooin wom?' meaning 'are you ready to go home?'

Southport was a pleasure to visit – only 4 staff there, based near Chapel Street station. An enjoyable ride by train on the line misguidedly closed by Dr Beeching. Water supplies there for the loco shed and station were piped from a borehole at Plex Moss, on the disused line to Altcar, some 6 miles away. And the electric car repair shops at Meols Cop were a pleasure to work in, always immaculately clean and tidy. I enjoyed a few weeks at Southport acting on relief when the leading fitter was away.

AREA/NAME CHANGE: Around 1963 we had an upheaval. An incentive Bonus Scheme was introduced and a new Supervisory set up was established. Vic Abram became Work Study Foreman after a training course; posts of Mechanical and Electrical Foremen were established and also Mechanical and Electrical Examiners. Jack Bardo took the post of Mechanical Examiner. The bonus scheme paid us a little more money for basically doing the same amount of work, only in a more orderly and planned fashion, the aim being prevention rather than cure, with greater emphasis on written records and thus accountability. At this time the O.D.M. was laid to rest, and we became the Plant and Machinery Dept, or P & M. To cap a hectic period the areas were changed and we regrettably lost our friends at Wigan and Southport, but gained all East Lancs, Skipton, Hellifield and Carnforth. So we lost three loco sheds but gained others at Lower Darwen, Accrington, Rose Grove, Carnforth, Skipton and Hellifield (closed but with a working turntable). Along came new colleagues based at Accrington, Carnforth and Skipton. At Carnforth were Charlie Denwood, soon to become Mayor of Lancaster and Ken Fletcher (Flogger) so named because of his prowess with a big hammer and not larceny. Just two staff were based at Skipton, but most were based at Accrington – nine staff under the control of Chargehand Gilbert Dady, a native of Suffolk. One day, with mate Neil Gabbott, I was in the workshop there having lunch when Gil asked us 'have you got a few minutes to help me finish sweeping my chimney?'. We went to his house nearby. He'd borrowed a set of sweep's brushes and had already swept upwards from his living room, but wanted to go on the roof and sweep downwards for some reason. An old blanket was draped from the mantelshelf and was pegged in position by

various objects. 'Keep an eye on it' he said as he disappeared with his brush onto the roof, while Neil footed the ladder. The blanket began to billow outwards as he thrust the brush down. Suddenly a mass of soot whooshed into the grate and the blanket fell away. 'Whoa', I shouted as the atmosphere in the room darkened. Neil and Gil came in and we peered at each other through the gloom as a layer of soot began to settle on every surface ! The stuff was everywhere. 'That's torn it' said Gil (not his actual words). While we were considering the next step Gil's wife arrived home for lunch. She laid into poor Gil good and proper, as Neil and I made our excuses and left, laughing at his predicament. Apparently he was in the dog house for days afterwards, and it cost him a new carpet !

In the 1960's any reader arriving at Blackpool by train might remember two old locomotives in a siding at Central Station, and one at North Station, used for Carriage warming duties, but by then virtually redundant. Periodically they were sent to Horwich works for overhaul, which involved preparing them for moving in train formation. The main job was the removal of a 20 ft chimney extension which carried smoke away from platform level, and Neil and I were sent to help Chargehand fitter Joe and his staff to prepare one of the locos at Central. The first task was to get a 30 foot pole, extension ladder and rope blocks to site from their workshop at Talbot Road, a distance of about half a mile. The equipment was loaded onto a tow wheeled handcart and pushed down Talbot Road to the promenade, then along past the Tower to Central Station, under the bemused gaze of holidaymakers. I'd no idea how the task would be accomplished but old Joe had done it many times. The rope blocks were fixed near the top of the pole, four guy ropes were attached and the pole raised by pushing it up until vertical. Four lads had a guy rope each and I operated the rope blocks. By controlling the ropes, the pole was leaned in at an angle towards the chimney, Joe shinned up the ladder and fixed a sling to the chimney and attached the hook of the rope blocks. 'take weight' he said, and I tightened the blocks. Down he came to the boiler top and unscrewed the already loosened bolts at the chimney base. As the last bolt came out the 20 ft swung gracefully away before being lowered to the ground. Simple, really, but so much easier nowadays with a hire crane to do such work.

ON CALL DUTIES. One of the most important aspects of our work was the On Call system. Most unusual calls for fitters were water supply failures and hydraulic lift problems. Night time was an extremely busy period for a large station like Preston, and a goods lift failure caused havoc with movement of parcels and mail between platforms. In the early sixties, newly married, I lived in Lostock Hall. No telephone, and mobile phones unheard of, the system of 'knocking up' was still used. A shed labourer from Lostock Hall Depot would arrive on a bicycle and attempt to hammer the front door down. If I was in bed I'd lean out of the bedroom window and take the message, then dress and cycle to the Shed, or into Preston, as required. We also had a contract with a taxi firm, and occasionally a cab would arrive from the taxi rank at Preston Station, and stand with its diesel engine thudding away in the narrow road as I quickly dressed and went out. Mostly I would send him away and use my bike, as there was often a problem with the return journey of trying to persuade unwilling drivers to undertake the trip with no chance of a tip!. We were paid a minimum of 3 hours at time and a half for a call out, a good source of extra cash in those days and I could occasionally be home with the hour if I was lucky. I got so used to being disturbed during the night that I would sometimes be wakened by the sound of the knocker-ups bike rattling and scraping as he propped it up against the wall, and I was at the window before he could reach the door!

MORE NEXT MONTH

A Preston Lad

Mr Thornley and I caught the bus back to Preston, a Leyland Lion it was, and you could smell the petrol fumes inside. Whilst I was looking out of the window I imagined I could hear Miss Hall exhorting 'If a tree shall not bear fruit, it shall be hewn down, and be cast into the fire and burn for ever and ever with fire and brimstone. So peculiar, I had a feeling of apprehension for a minute or two. I bucked myself up thinking what a wealth of stories I would have to tell the other boys. Dismounting at Preston Mr Thornley said 'Lets walk it to the Home'. Off we set down Church Street we stopped and he took me in the Lamb Hotel, he ordered two meat pies and a pot of tea. I thought he meant a pint pot but when it arrived there was a teapot and two cups and saucers. For the first time in my life I tasted sauce, meat pie with HP sauce on it. I still like it, in fact the only time I ever have sauce to this day is on a meat pie. I thought 'Mr Thornley, for three days I have been in another world, Thankyou ! Thankyou ! Thankyou ! Of course after we had finished the snack I said thank you to him in a proper fashion. In fact, Walter's girlfriend had remarked 'Isn't he a mannerly little boy'. After this it was only a short walk to Brockholes View and back to my usual lifestyle. Miss Hall answered the door and invited him in. 'Hello Mr Thornley, has Eric been a good boy for you ?' 'Yes' he said 'Eric is a very well behaved boy indeed' I thought it's a good job she doesn't know about Kathleen she would have had a fit had she been mentioned. Miss Hall invited Mr Thornley in to have a cup of tea with her and a rock bun, but he declined, said he would have to go and that all his family had enjoyed having me there. 'Very good' she minced, and told me to go and get changed and put my clothes in the wash basket. I went upstairs to do as she had ordered and could hear him talking to her in the porch, but didn't know what she was saying. I was soon down and my benefactor rose his voice so I could hear him saying 'I will see you a week on Saturday.' Then we exchanged bye byes and he was gone. Miss Hall asked if I had dined I said 'No, Ma !' and was told to help the other boys set the table, you are just in time for tea. So, in spite of my three hectic days, within minutes I had slipped into the old routine of the Home as if I had never been away. I cheered myself up thinking of and looking forward to the following week. Walking Day on the Monday and the annual visit to the fair the day after. Bedtime came and a lot of whispering went on as I related bits of what I had done during my three days of leisure and scurried back to my lonely room when I heard the clock strike ten. Miss Hall came up and slipped the catch on my door, fastening me in before she retired. The week passed slowly and Whit Monday dawned. After we had done our jobs and breakfasted, washed up the pots then ourselves. Miss Hall announced that we could all go up to the top of the street and watch St Josephs marching in their procession, the Catholics walked in the morning and other denominations in the afternoon. I always thought the Catholics put on a much better show of splendour etc. than that of the C of E, even those walking behind the tableaux and banners, the rank and file as you might say, all had a coloured ribbon with a medal or some sort of insignia attached. It was a very nice show, particularly the small children, some mothers had been busy making and sewing outfits. The curling tongs and rags that were used to wind the kiddies hair the night before producing the most lovely tresses and curls. We boys and most others resorted to soap to style our hair and keep it in place. If you could afford threepence one could purchase a tin of Kolene at Hindson's. A fancy round tin with a mirror in the lid, filled with a compound of some sort, we called it axle grease and was reputed to make you have lice in your hair. To clean our teeth we used soot and salt, it tasted awful. Back to Whit Monday, after dinner we all got ready after having blacked and polished our shoes. Miss Hall brought out our new suits shirts and ties, also new caps. This happened every year. We all went along to

Hepworth's to get measured then would patiently wait for Whit Monday when we could wear them for walking Day. I used to feel a little disappointed because on arriving at Sunday School I had to go along to the vestry where my new suit would be covered with a surplus and cassock. My tie this year was the same as the school colours, amber and black, alternate stripes running crossways. My cap was black with yellow stripes across looking for all the world like a hot cross bun. To finish off all this finery for the first time we had a snake belt, so called because it had an 's' shaped metal buckle that was fashioned like a snake. Off we all went feeling very posh in our new garb. It was organised chaos for the Sunday School teachers and officials getting everyone into their proper places and order especially the little ones who had to carry a lot of little placards with paper flowers, forming words to complete a saying like 'Feed my Lambs' or 'God is Love'. The banners had to be raised and the pullers, downers, and steerers took their place, and the men waiting for poles to be lifted and slipped into pouches fastened round their middles. Our church had to wait till St Matthews came down New Hall Lane then we who were assembled in St Marys Street tacked on to the rear of them. The vicar and parochial church council etc led the way behind the first banner and band, the choir immediately following. The main thing on my mind from then on was would I see my companion of the previous week walking with St Emmanuels. I didn't know where the church or school was so didn't know what its position was in the overall phlanx of humanity treading the streets that day. As it was, I almost missed her. I saw the Emmanuel banner when passing the Guardian Office on Fishergate, our procession was going towards Church Street. Emmanuels proceeding in the opposite direction. We spotted each other as we were passing Lancaster Road. If we had been half a minute later or less we both would have been hidden by the underground toilets opposite the New Vic. Kathleen was waving madly, I wanted to do the same, but I mean to say! A chorister had to act with a bit of decorum. I grinned at her and wagged my surplus in her direction. It was all over in a couple of seconds but I had seen her and it made my day. A wonderful thing this feeling that existed between two young kids, calf love, I suppose it was in its eventuality, but at that time in our lives, at least in mine, it made up for the things that usually happened to me. Sod the orphanage, and Sod Miss Hall. At last or again after a long time somebody cared and it was a nice feeling. It made the raucous noise of the fairground music sound like an orchestral arrangement. For years I remembered the tune coming from the Flying Mary Anns or maybe the Dragons, they were the nearest to where we were marching. I saw her twice more under the same circumstances, both times my heart skipped a beat. The last time I thought she was going to rush out and come to me, but the procession which had been stationary moved on and she was carried along with it. In the ensuing years, I had left school, wasn't in the district even, was Attending St Leonards in Walton le Dale and my beloved Kathleen became consigned to a piece of history. Tuesday came and the boys and girls attended the Whitsun Fair as usual, and in the excitement and knowing that I would see Mr Thornley the following Saturday. Kathy was pushed to the back of my mind. During one of his visits he confided in me that when it came time for me to leave the orphanage he was going to arrange with the authorities that I should go to live with him. His son would teach me the art of shoe repairing and I would become a cobbler and have a real profession, and I would get to see Kathleen regularly at his house. I thought it was a wonderful gesture on his part to take such an interest in my welfare. I thought of all the things I would say to Miss Hall when the day came for me to leave Ivy Bank, as it transpired I didn't say a word ""

Arthur Eric Crook 1917-1997

Rhymes of a Red Cross Man by Robert W. Service (1876 – 1958)

The Volunteer

Sez I: My Country calls? Well, let it call.
I grins perlately and declines wiv thanks.
Go, let 'em plaster every blighted wall,
'Ere's ONE they don't stampede into the ranks.
Them politicians with their greasy ways;
Them empire-grabbers—fight for 'em? No fear!
I've seen this mess a-comin' from the days
Of Algyserious and Aggydear:
I've felt me passion rise and swell,
But . . . wot the 'ell, Bill? Wot the 'ell?

Sez I: My Country? Mine? I likes their cheek.
Me mud-bespattered by the cars they drive,
Wot makes my measly thirty bob a week,
And sweats red blood to keep meself alive!
Fight for the right to slave that they may spend,
Them in their mansions, me 'ere in my slum?
No, let 'em fight wot's something to defend:
But me, I've nothin'—let the Kaiser come.
And so I cusses 'ard and well,
But . . . wot the 'ell, Bill? Wot the 'ell?

Sez I: If they would do the decent thing,
And shield the missis and the little 'uns,
Why, even I might shout "God save the King",
And face the chances of them 'ungry guns.
But we've got three, another on the way;
It's that wot makes me snarl and set me jor:
The wife and nippers, wot of 'em, I say,
If I gets knocked out in this blasted war?
Gets proper busted by a shell,
But . . . wot the 'ell, Bill? Wot the 'ell?

Ay, wot the 'ell's the use of all this talk?
To-day some boys in blue was passin' me,
And some of 'em they 'ad no legs to walk,
And some of 'em they 'ad no eyes to see.
And—well, I couldn't look 'em in the face,
And so I'm goin', goin' to declare
I'm under forty-one and take me place
To face the music with the bunch out there.
A fool, you say! Maybe you're right.
I'll 'ave no peace unless I fight.
I've ceased to think; I only know
I've gotta go, Bill, gotta go.



Penwortham

Priority
ACADEMY



We are pleased to announce that work has started on our $\frac{3}{4}$ of a million pound refurbishment to part of our Science Labs. The refurbishment will deliver exciting and innovative learning spaces, inspiring individual pupils to flourish.



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