

# The Preston Magazine



Issue 19

**Old Betty Redhead**  
**Diary of James Green**  
**William Bernard Croghan**

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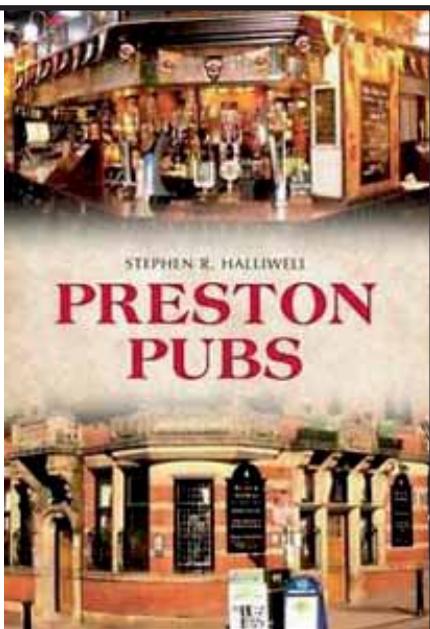
**'Dunkeld' 27 School Lane, Longton Nr, Preston PR4 5YA**

## Preston Pubs

Congratulations to our very own Steve Halliwell who has his first book out !!! 'Preston Pubs' the first definitive account of over 800 Preston Inns, Taverns and Beerhouses over the last 400 years up until the Second World War and stories from around 100 of them, published by Amberley Publishing.

It is out now and available at Waterstones and various outlets in Preston

You can buy it online from Amazon.  
ISBN 9781445638584



# Welcome

Welcome to the 19th 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 and Penwortham Magazines via [www.blogpreston.co.uk](http://www.blogpreston.co.uk)

Included this month are - Information about William Bernard Croghan who served in the First World War by his granddaughter Mrs Hilary Hull, Memories of Preston Shed by Robin Bamber, The Nurses Special by David Hindle MA, Old Betty Redhead by Janet Rigby. Also part 2 of 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).

**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.

See the listings for South Ribble Museum for the summer and Preston Historical Society for the coming season. Steve Halliwell's first book on Preston Pubs is now out (see opposite page).

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. **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** – 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 is kept at Lancashire Records Office.

**Front Cover Image – View of Preston from Penwortham by Heather Crook**  
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**

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## Photos from the Past



### **Preston Catholic College 'Bantams' Football Team 1961-62 Season**

Back Row – M RUMAN – E NORCROSS – C WALLBANK – M CRAVEN –  
A ROBINSON – J HUNTER – J TAYLOR

Front Row – J RUMAN – A LITTLE – F MYERSCOUGH – M TURNER (capt) –  
B BOWKER – T BILLINGTON



### **Preston Catholic College 'Cockerels' Football Team 1962-63 Season**

Back Row – J TAYLOR – M CRAVEN – J HUNTER – B BOWKER –  
M RAWSTHORNE – F MYERSCOUGH

Front Row – J RUMAN – A LITTLE – M TURNER (capt) – T BILLINGTON –  
M RUMAN

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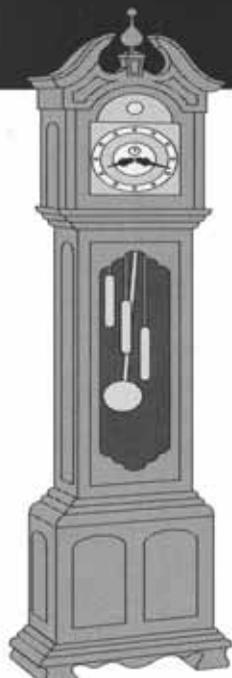
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# PRESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## PROGRAMME 2014-2015

- Monday 1 September 2014 *Preston as it was – or was it?*  
Speaker: Stephen Sartin
- Monday 6 October 2014 *Moses Holden 1777-1864: Lecturing Astronomer, Freeman of Preston, and much, much more*  
Speaker: Stephen Halliwell
- Monday 3 November 2014 *The Great War You Don't Hear Much About – a Lancashire perspective on operations beyond France and Flanders*  
Speaker: Lt Colonel John Downham MBE
- Monday 1 December 2014 *The Making of Preston's Parks*  
Speaker: Colin Stansfield
- Monday 2 February 2015 *Place Names and Landscape in Medieval North Lancashire*  
Speaker: Dr Alan Crosby
- Monday 2 March 2015 *Pathways to Preston's Past. A. J. Berry, H. W. Clemesha and the History of Preston*  
Speaker: Dr Keith Vernon
- Monday 6 April 2015 *Aspects of Freckleton*  
Speaker: Peter Shakeshaft
- Monday 11 May 2015 Annual General Meeting followed by  
*Preston in World War I*  
Speaker: Jane Abramson

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**

£2.50 admission for visitors.

**PLEASE COME AND JOIN US**

For further information contact our Secretary, Karen Doyle  
Telephone 01772 862673 or Email [info@prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk](mailto:info@prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk)  
[www.prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk](http://www.prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk)

**South Ribble Museum & Exhibition Centre,  
The Old Grammar School, Church Road, Leyland, Lancashire.  
Tel Preston 422041. [www.southribblemuseum.org.uk](http://www.southribblemuseum.org.uk)**

***Events Summer 2014***

**June 10<sup>th</sup>-July 6<sup>th</sup> Brownies Centenary Exhibition**

- Thurs 12 7-30pm. St.Leonard's (Walton-le-Dale) Arts Festival. Talk and graveyard walk exploring the ancient church and its site with David Hunt (DH). Meet at the church. Refreshments.
- Sat 14 11am Official Opening of the exhibition.  
9<sup>th</sup> Brownies (Moss Side: Paradise Lane) in Attendance.
- Sat 21 12<sup>th</sup> Brownies (Seven Stars) in Attendance. 2014 Leyland Festival Day.  
Performance by Leyland Morris Men en route to the park.
- Sat 28 8<sup>th</sup> Brownies (Moss Side: St.James) in Attendance.  
10-30 to 12-30pm. Punch & Judy Show and Workshop ...with Prof. Ivan Walters.
- Sat 5 July 7<sup>th</sup> Brownies (Hough Lane: URC) in Attendance.  
11am. Short local history walk. DH. 'Who's Who in Leyland Churchyard'.

**July 8<sup>th</sup> -26<sup>th</sup> National Archaeology Festival: Exploring Farington Moss.**

A celebration of our local archaeology in recognition of 40 years of South Ribble Borough Council. Will also feature the Borough's treasures on loan from the Harris Museum: the Cuerdale Hoard, the Penwortham Castle finds, the Worden Hoard and the finds from Roman Walton-Le-Dale.

- Sat 12 11am. Illustrated talk. DH. 'The Vanished World of the Faringtons'.
- Thurs 17 2pm. Local History walk. 3 miles. DH. 'Worden Hall and Park'.
- Sat 19 11am. Illustrated talk. Dr W.Shannon.  
'Hell Holes and Mere Stones: The Leyland Mosses in the time of the Tudors'.
- Sun 20 2pm. Archaeology Walk. 3 miles. DH. St.Leonard's church, Cuerdale Lane, Walton-Le-Dale. Strong shoes essential. Remember our firm's motto -*There Shall Be Rain!*  
'England's Greatest Treasure: The discovery of the Cuerdale Hoard'. (Provisional at 1-6-14)
- Thurs 24 2pm. Illustrated Lecture. Elizabeth Huckerby. Now retired, but one of our leading authorities.  
'Reconstructing the Past: How Pollen Analysis works'.
- Sat 26 11am. 'Focus On Leyland'. The Damp Brothers film of life in the town in 1964, followed by David Ashmore's study of the building of the Tesco superstore in Leyland.

**August 1<sup>st</sup>- Oct 18<sup>th</sup> Our August 1914 Commemorative Exhibition: 'Antarctic Witness'.**

*A second chance to see Frank Hurley's wonderful photographs of Shackleton's 1914-16 Imperial Antarctic Expedition. The exhibition thus also commemorates the centenary of the greatest Arctic adventure.*

Hostilities broke out as *Endurance* was making her way out into the English Channel. On hearing the news Shackleton immediately volunteered the ship and her crew for military service, only for Winston Churchill to telegram the single word 'Proceed'. This sheds light on the contemporary view that the European crisis was not particularly serious and need not stand in the way of scientific exploration. When they finally escaped from the ice and shipwreck two years later the party was shocked to learn that the war had spread around the world and would rage on for another two years!

- Sat 2 Aug 10-30am. Official Opening. 11am. Short Local walk. DH. 'Leyland's Belgian Refugees'.
- Tues 5 Aug. **The first day of the Great War.** 2pm. Local History walk. DH.  
'An introduction to Leyland in the Great War'.
- Sat 9 Aug 11am. Illustrated talk. Malcolm Tranter.  
'August 1914, Winston Churchill and the Imperial Antarctic Expedition of 1914-16'.
- Sun 31Aug 2pm. Local History Walk. 2 miles; DH with local specialists.  
'McNamara VC: An introduction to Bamber Bridge in the Great War'.  
Meet at St Mary's church, Brownedge Lane, Bamber Bridge.

**8-12 September: South Ribble Walks week. Theme 'Endurance'.**

- Mon 8 Sept 11am. Official start of Walks Week. Meet at Museum. Short walk, 3 miles.

**Opening Times: Tuesday & Friday 10-4pm, Thursday 1-4pm, Saturday 1-4pm, Other times and group visits by appointment. Children must be accompanied by an adult. 1-6-14**

## PRESTON THEN AND NOW 1843-1893

### The Changes of Half a Century (No.3)

In reference to the Victoria and Queen's buildings we omitted to say that the site of the latter, on the South side of Fishergate, was formerly fenced off from the street with rough railings but were afterwards taken up by some wooden buildings, one of which was occupied as an agricultural implement warehouse by Mr Standing, and the other by Mr Miller, painter and plumber, until the railway company required the ground. Proceeding we come next to the handsome stone edifice, the Baptist chapel, erected at a cost of nearly £7,000, at the corner of Charnley-street, from the design of Mr James Hibbert, architect, of this town, and opened in 1858. It has two beautiful rose windows, the principal one being in the front elevation of the building, which is a conspicuous ornament of this part of the town. Nearly opposite, the Theatre Royal presents a front than which nothing could be more unlike the original – an ugly brick structure with an insignificant portico. The present front, which includes two handsome shops and the principle entrance, stands about 25 feet in advance of the original building, which was erected at the beginning of the century by a company of shareholders. It was purchased by a Mr Parkinson, an operatic singer, in 1869, and the new front and various internal alterations and improvements are due to his enterprise, which unfortunately was not successful; and the Theatre is now the property of a building club. The handsome shops, nearly opposite the Theatre, occupied by Mr Norwood and others, like so many in the principle thoroughfares of Preston, were till within the last few years private dwelling houses with short flights of steps and palisades. At the north-east corner of Mount-street, before the shops of Mr Robinson, bookseller, and those adjoining were built, stood a house inhabited and we believe owned by Old Betty Redhead, dealer in cakes and toffee, a very pronounced Tory of the old original 'true blue' school. (See article on Old Betty Redhead) The Old Dispensary, opened in 1809, stood where now stands the Savings Bank. It was a plain building of dressed stone, with iron palisades in front; and when it was decided to transfer business to the Infirmary, the site was purchased for the present Savings Bank, which was opened in 1872, Mr Hibbert being the architect. Before the erection of this bank, its business was transacted in a small stone building adjoining the Wesleyan Chapel in Lune Street, specially erected for that purpose in 1842. It was afterwards occupied as the Union Bank, and is now the Wesleyan Literary Institute, the directors of the Union Bank having been so successful, that they found larger premises necessary, and built the handsome bank at the corner of Winckley-street, on the site previously occupied by the shop of the late Mr Stephens, the draper. A noticeable feature of the town which disappeared many years since, was the square space at the north-west corner of Chapel Street, formerly the burial ground of a Congregational Chapel, erected about a century ago. On that ground now stand the offices of Messrs Myres, Veevers and Myres, architects and surveyors, and the shop of Mrs Maudsley, fishmonger, at the corner of the street. A glance down Chapel-street gives the sight of the recently re-edified Roman Catholic Chapel of St Wilfred's, which had previously undergone one or two improvements. Just past Chapel Street as we proceed up Fishergate, we come to an imposing structure occupied by the Preston Banking Company, erected in 1857, from the design of the late Mr J.H. Park, elder brother of Mr J.W. Park, JP. This bank stands on the site of two houses of a terrace – a line of fine private residences between Chapel-street and Winckley-street. The terrace was railed off from the footpath, and was gained at each end by three or four stone steps; but it had disappeared before the erection of the bank, on the transformation of the remainder of the houses into the present shops.

**Preston Chronicle 11 March 1893**

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# **MEMORIES OF THE FIRST ELEVEN YEARS OF A CAREER ON BRITISH RAILWAYS, INCLUDING LIGHTER MOMENTS. By Robin Bamber**

## **LIGHT RELIEF**

Daily life in the Shed was by no means just work ! We would sing the pop tunes of the day loudly, or early TV jingles for toothpaste or washing powder. Going upmarket we could be found 'La-la-la-ing' to the Anvil Chorus whilst bashing the nearest metal object with a hammer or spanner. Mr Cunningham (Bob Hope) the Shedmaster, had a bad hip, which gave him a funny walk. Ramps could mimic him brilliantly, to the extent of sometimes following him around a few paces behind when he was on the prowl, whilst everybody fell around laughing. Another laugh was to find a shedman or cleaner reading his paper or having a nod on a 'warm 'un' (an engine in steam). Someone would creep up the pit under the footplate and fix a detonator (fog signal) above a ducklamp flame while we all watched from an adjacent footplate. The detonator would finally explode and the poor soul would leap into life, check in the firebox, and leg it as fast as he could. We could wind up one particularly nervous shedman if there was a slightly leaking washout plug on a loco boiler, sizzling gently away. With a spongecloth in hand someone would hold it over the plug and simulate unscrewing movements, saying 'Should this be loose ?' The look of panic in the man's eyes as he screamed out 'No ! Don't do that, its dangerous !' made our day.

The 'Kelbus' sand drier stood near the Stores. It was always piled high with drying sand for loco sanding gear, which gave adhesion to the wheels on wet rails. One of us would engage a new cleaner or shedman in conversation next to the drier, allowing an already positioned colleague on top of the unit to dislodge a shower of sand on the unsuspecting prey.

On two occasions in the late '50's the shed roof caught fire. Lots of hilarity ensued, shouts of FIRE! FIRE! and a hose was run out from the nearest floor hydrant, water sprayed everywhere and the flames extinguished. No danger, just a big laugh, really. Or so we thought !!

Sometimes on a particularly hot afternoon a few of us would be sat on the footplate, our work completed. One of the fitters would fork out for ice creams, which entailed an apprentice crossing the Main Line and down the steps adjacent to No. 5 signalbox. A small terraced house on Leighton Street sold delicious home made ice cream, doled out by an elderly lady, and the lad had to hurry back across the tracks, taking occasional licks at each ice to prevent drips.

On the 19<sup>th</sup> August, 1957, I unfortunately broke my leg in the evening playing football on Bamber Bridge Rec. I was off work until January 58. I resumed and life carried on much as before. The first Diesel Multiple Units (DMU's) had appeared by now, based at Accrington, and they worked into Preston via the East Lanes line. Fitter Stan Betram had been on a basic fault finding course, and we apprentices got our first knowledge of diesel traction during visits to the station to attend to minor faults. Stan was a real character, having spent some time in India, and he regaled us with his supposed knowledge of the language. Then one day a lad called Naga Patel joined us as a fitter's mate. Stan tried to converse with him. Patel just sat looking more and more mystified. 'Rum lad, that' Stan mused later, 'Doesn't he understand his own language'.

In Patel's bag every day he carried a large newspaper parcel, heavily grease-stained. It contained a mass of fried rice and vegetables, into which he dipped his hand at break and lunchtime to have a feed. He offered it round to us sandwich and chip eaters – I think I

was the only one who dared try it. I found it to be absolutely delicious – probably the cause of my lifetime love of spicy food !

A mention here of two men in overalls who appeared occasionally in the Shed, Vic Abram and Stan Kayley. When I asked colleagues who they were I was told 'Oh, they're with the 'Old Dead Men!' 'Who ?' The ODM – Outdoor Marketing Department they look after lighting and water supplies'. Later on when I started attending the AD, Adriatic Ballroom, the venue for many teens and twenties in the 1950's I discovered Vic and Stan kept order there (they'd be called bouncers today). When we rolled up, occasionally slightly glassy eyed, from the Spindlemaker's Arms over the road, we always managed to gain admittance thanks to me knowing them.

## WORKS TRAINING

Following my 20<sup>th</sup> birthday in May, 1959, it was time for my one years training in a Main Works. Most Preston apprentices chose Horwich or Crewe – I chose Derby. The place had always been an attraction since my first visit as a locospotter in the early 50's, and the thought of actually working there was too good to miss. I opted to travel via Manchester rather than via Crewe. Train to Victoria, walk across to Central, then down the Midland route to Derby. The journey was always interesting to a locospotter ..... Heaton Mersey, Chinley, Gowhole Sidings, Peak Forest, Rowsley, always a chance of a cop or two. I travelled down on Monday morning, to start work after lunch, and back home on Friday evening after tea, if the trains ran to time, I'd just make it for the last pint with my Dad in the British Legion Club, on Leyland Road, Middleforth. I lodged for four nights in Derby in Copeland Street, off Siddals Road, a five minute walk from the Works entrance.

The year was a good experience, as I was put to work in the Erecting Shop, Stripping Pits, New Erecting Shop and Motion Shop. Steam loco building had unfortunately finished at Derby in 1957, with BR Standard Class 4 No. 73154, and New Builds at the time I started there were 'Peak' Class diesels No's D3 to D6, and the D.5000 series BO-BO's. Three of my four nights there were spent attending nightschool at Derby Technical College.

One memory of the Motion Shops was of a Monorail Crane which trundled up and down carrying heavy connecting and side rods. One day the fitter that I was working with said 'Nip and get me a bar of chocolate off John' and indicated the crane driver. Mystified, I approached him with my request, and to my surprise he got off his seat and swivelled the cover plate held loosely by a single bolt in one corner, exposing a compartment of about two and a half feet square by two feet deep, filled with chocolate, sweets, cigarettes and tobacco. I don't know how official all this was, but it was hardly a secret. I suppose the shop foremen turned a blind eye to this budding entrepreneur and used his services themselves.

A few things I learned concerning language and local differences. I was nobody's 'Mate' – I became 'Duck' or M'Duck'. I found out that we 'mashed' the tea, we didn't 'brew' it. And once, on being shown a photograph of another apprentice's girlfriend, I described her as 'a bonny lass' a compliment in Lancashire, but he was from Walsall, and he was offended, because 'bonny' was taken to mean 'on the plump side' where he came from ! I worked on steam locomotive repairs, and on the construction of the new 'Peak' class diesels, and I had a week or two across in the adjacent locomotive Shed, coded 17A, with a fitter from the Works. When locos left the Works after overhaul they were sent to the Shed for steaming and running in. I was surprised at the number of niggling faults that occurred so soon after Heavy Repairs.

**Continued next time .....**

## William Bernard Croghan

My Grandfather, William Bernard Croghan was born 28<sup>th</sup> August, 1894, in Preston. His father was John Joseph Croghan, a plate layer, and his mother, Mary Bogan (or Bohan, etc..) were resident in Napier Street, Preston. They were Irish immigrants, some time in the 1880's and were married at St Ignatius's Church on the 12<sup>th</sup> February 1887. William went to St Augustine's church and school. His mother died in 1900 and his father in 1910. He lodged with an uncle and aunt but was not happy there and I think he enlisted at Bowerham Barracks as soon as he could. He must have been a regular soldier at the

outbreak of 1914-18 war and was a member of the 'Old Contemptibles' – The British Expeditionary Force who arrived in France on the 19<sup>th</sup> August, 1914. The name 'Old Contemptibles' was given when the Kaiser exclaimed that the British had no chance with their 'contemptible little army' (because of the difference in the overwhelming forces of Germany). He

was a gunner in the Royal Field Artillery. William Bernard was mentioned in dispatches in 1915 and awarded the Military Medal in 1916. He was wounded twice – the second time he was wounded by gunshot in the abdomen and was in hospital for two years up to the end of the war, as the wound was very slow to heal.

William Bernard joined the Territorial Army in the 1920's and was also in the Home Guard at the outset of Second World War. He was awarded the following medals

MILITARY MEDAL

BRITISH EXPEDITIONARY FORCE MEDAL 5.8.14 to 22.11.14

1914 – 18 MEDAL

GREAT WAR MEDAL with Oak Leaf Cluster

DEFENCE MEDAL 1939 – 1945

He worked as Chief Clerk at the County Courts in the Civil Service.

My grandmother, Kate (nee Collier) was born on 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 1893 at Littleton-on-Severn, Thornbury, Gloucestershire. Her father was Henry Thomas Collier and her mother was Rosa Collier (nee Dee). Henry and Rosa were married 24<sup>th</sup> November, 1867.

Like my grandfather, Kate went to stay with relations after her parents



died, although I do not think this was a long term plan, as in 1911 she was working as a parlour maid in Thornbury. She was later engaged to a man named Eugene (surname not known) who was killed prior to 1917. Probably Kate was devastated and yet, typically, she joined the Q.M.A.A.C. and went to France in 1917 – all 4 foot 10 of her! Small, but quite fiery. She recounted an occasion when in France where a carter was beating his poor horse and Kate attacked him with her broom! Kate served as a worker from 1917 until 1919 and came home to England. She must have decided to make a new start and came to Preston, where she met William Bernard and they were married on 29<sup>th</sup> January, 1921. William Bernard died on 13<sup>th</sup> March, 1970. Kate died on 8<sup>th</sup> October, 1970. Kate's medal's were

1914-18 MEDAL

GREAT WAR

MEDAL



# Diary of James Green 305712

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

Afterwards I was sent down to the '1<sup>st</sup> Canadian' dressing station. From there I was sent on to Boulogne. It was a very weary journey. I was only there 2 days then I was sent on to 'Rouen No 2 General Hospital'. I was there 3 weeks, I had 2 operations on my knee there were about 12 stitches put in, it was a big gash. I had a nice time, plenty to eat and the nurses were great (Canadians). One morning the doctor came round and started marking all our charts. The next morning the sister came to my bedside she said, "Green you are going to Blighty". I could not sleep that night, pain and everything forgotten. I left 'Rouen' on the hospital ship S.S. George and sailed down the 'Seine', I had a good voyage across. I was a bed case, got good food and, best of all, I was going home.

We landed at Southampton got put on the train and taken to No 1 Temporary Hospital at Exeter. I did not care much for the place. I was there 3 weeks then moved to Barnstaple V.A.D. We were taken on some

nice outings, as it was a voluntary hospital, sometimes they used to take us to a little seaside place called Saunton. We were moved on to another V.A.D. hospital at Crediton. There we had a nice time on 'Lady Buller's' estate she showed us the grave where General Buller was buried, he was a great hero of the 'Boer War'. She showed us all around the big mansion and also took us to a room where all the trophies were, Spears, Assesies, Clubs and Shields. The Zulus were in the war that General Buller was in.

I stayed at that hospital a month and then went home on leave. Quiet time at home all my pals and friends were in the services and Queen St. was deserted. I was pretty fed up with wandering about. I was really glad when it was time to go back and join my regiment.

I rejoined my regiment at Liverpool and had a couple of weeks recruiting duty. I was sent to join some more convalescent troops belonging to different units of 'The Kings'. I was still not fit for duty so was sent to convalesce at Squires Gate Camp. I met a lot of new pals, Tommy Steele from Farm Fold, Yorkshire, he was in the 'Green Howards', Midgley from Burnley, he was in 'East Lancs', Pte.Mills and Pte.Chadburn, they were both in the 'Manchester Regiment' also Pte. Hewitt from Scholmburg St. Liverpool he was in 'The 9<sup>th</sup> Kings Regiment'. We had some grand times while we were there. We were in No 5 Grandstand. We were doing a lot of running and training to get fit. We were allowed out in the afternoon, we wore hospital blue and red ties. I played up to the third round of the medal competition for the No 5 Grandstand at five-a-side.

I met a girl called Mabel Hodgson from Shaw Road. I used to meet her when I came out in the afternoon if she was not working. We had a few nice times together at Lytham and



St. Annes. Later on I met another girl called Emily Priestley from Yorkshire. She was on her holidays with her friend, Dorothy Pickles, she still writes to me. We had a lovely time, me and Hewitt used to meet her and her friend, Dorothy Pickles, and go round to their lodgings, she would introduce us to her friends in the lodge and then we would have tea with them. At the end of her holiday I carried her luggage down to the station for her and then said goodbye.

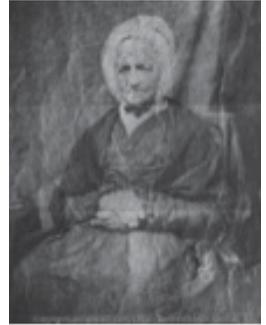
I got discharged from the camp September 1916. Me and Hewitt left at the same time. Mabel came to the station to see us off. We had a poor time at home they were all glad to see me, my aunts and sisters and father, but there was nothing to pass the time away during the day. I used to go in the mill and chat with my father and go in the weaving shed and see my Aunt Elinor and Cousin Polly and the people I used to work with. I went back to stay with Mabel, her friends mother put me up. I returned home and my friend Hewitt came over from Liverpool to our house in Queen St. and stayed the night. We both left the next day to join the battalion at Owestry. It was a poor place to be in, just a new camp that had been made and huts put in. I was examined and put in Cat. B 2. I was given a light job looking after the coal stores. I was taken off that job after a while because I was giving too much coal to my mates when they came round for their rations. I was put on delivering telegrams round the camp that came to the camp post office. About this time I lost my pal, Hewitt, he got put in a draft and went to join the '1<sup>st</sup> Battalion the 'King's Regiment' in France. It had always been his ambition. While me and Hewitt were in camp, before he went to France, we used to be sent on escort duty to Liverpool to bring back deserters and absentees. There was a sergeant, me and Hewitt, we had side arms and handcuffs and we had some exciting times when we came out of Dale St. Police Station. The prisoners trying to escape and the crowd helping them, we used to have to handcuff them. Then it was the long journey back in the train often the prisoners escaped and then the sergeant would be reduced to the ranks.

I was taken off that job and sent down to Cardiff to work in a hospital, Lansdowne Rd. Hospital. We were put in billets, 4 of us, with a Mrs Lane, 105 Straitnaum St. It was a homely billet and we made friends with her son Jack and his friend Bernard. I was on duty during the day and my pal, John Green, was on other duties we all used to meet at teatime at the billet. I got on very well with the staff at the hospital. I did the usual jobs, bedpans, bottles and all the odd-jobs, lighting fires in the Sisters rooms and helping with the meals, you are at everyones call. Sometimes I was on stores giving the overcoats out to patients who could walk and who were allowed out in town. Sometimes I was put in charge of the gate with orders not to let anybody out until I got a signal from the office. I had to stand a lot of abuse such as cries of, "Get to the front". I got put on night duty in the wards. During the night no sleep, every so often I went round the wards to see if any of the patients wanted anything, sometimes I had to sit by a patient who was very ill. I have seen a few pass away. Then we would have to help the washing and the breakfast for them. I got on very well with the R.A.M.C. boys, a good lot I will not forget them. There was Moss on O block on P section with Pts, Dukes, Duck, Lewis, (Trevor Jones) R.W.F. transferred with me from Owestry. Also on M and F section with Jimmy Hardacre, Tom Fox, Judas Williams, Bob Yanner, Sergeant Young Mearthy and Billy Davies. Some of the best. They have since been replaced by women and gone to France. I became friendly with a girl called Clara Stacey, she lived near the hospital, she took me home to meet her mother and sister, her brother had been killed with the 'Welsh Guards'. She gave me her photo.

More next month .....

## OLD BETTY REDHEAD – A NOTED PRESTON CHARACTER

One of the most noted and eccentric characters that have lived in Preston was a lady called Betty Redhead who was born on 21 March 1774 in a small house opposite the Shelley Arms, Fishergate. She died just ten weeks short of her ninety second year and was the second oldest inhabitant of the town, at the time and the oldest shopkeeper. She never married and was always known as "Old Betty Redhead" throughout the town to at least three generations of Prestonians. She ran a provision shop at the north east corner of Mount Street from Fishergate, a shop that for the time was extremely prosperous, dealing in "cakes and toffee", one of the first of the corner shops which was a hotbed of gossip; indeed it was said that Betty "knew everything about everybody who had ever been anybody in Preston. She was also credited with having a most abusive tongue. Unusually for the time she was a woman of property, owning the house in Fishergate for which she paid a ground rent to Lady Shelley and three freehold houses in Mount Street.



When Betty was a young woman, the population of Preston was around 6000. At the time of her death in 1866, it was nearly 90,000. There was only one cotton mill and only three churches in existence, the Parish Church, St George's and the RC chapel of St Mary's in Friargate. She saw the advent of gas lighting in the town, the Preston strike of 1842, and the construction of the first canal in her lifetime. One of the many surviving anecdotes about her was that she was once deceived by a mischievous neighbour into believing that two gaudily dressed strangers walking down Fishergate were ladies of the House of Stanley. Betty who was a passionate admirer of the Derby family, tripped out of her shop and, confronting the ladies she made a low curtsy and sycophantically enquired after the health of Lord Derby. Thinking that she was mocking them, one of them said, "Get out of the way you silly old lunatic." In reply Betty unleashed a torrent of abuse on the terrified woman, who fled down the street with her companion.

Betty was often referred to as "a very pronounced Tory of the old original true Blue school and a singular character loquacious, loud and turbulent of tongue." Her allegiance to the Derby family knew no bounds, from Lord Derby, the Hon. Frederick Arthur Stanley to his father before him the 14th Earl of Derby, and was said to have often "reverted with a flush of fine party pride to their deeds in Preston." Her proudest moment was the occasion of the run up to the election of 1852 when the Hon. Frederick Arthur Stanley visited the town. As his carriage passed along Fishergate, Old Betty stood at her shop door, and called for cheers from the crowd. This prompted Mr R T Parker, of Cuerden Hall colloquially known as "The Cuerden Cock" and who was accompanying the Conservatives to their headquarters at the Bull Hotel, accompanied by the band of the Royal Rifle Corps. to go down Fishergate to persuade Betty to return with him and be introduced to the Hon. F A Stanley. They were an unlikely pairing, she with her enormous mob cap and print gown, grinning with delight and he said to be "spruce as a young beau, in blue frock coat, white hat, white trousers and a canary vest – long the conventional rig of the stance True Blue – enjoying with unfeigned pleasure the astonishment of the spectators at him and his incongruous companion." They both proceeded arm in arm to the Bull Hotel where Old Betty was introduced and then driven home in a cab. For several days Betty was so elated a bespangled banner filled with Tory mottoes flew from her shop window in honour of the day.

On Saturday 31 July 1852, it was reported in the Preston Chronicle that there had been a fracas in Betty's shop which led to a charge of assault. James Walmsley of Mount Street, had accused a Richard Haggart at the Town Hall the previous Wednesday with assaulting him by throwing him down. The complainant said he went into Betty Redhead's shop and was teasing a parrot which belonged to Betty, when Haggart seized him and threw him down the steps. He suffered a severely bruised head as a result. He defended his actions by stating that Haggart had called Betty a whore "so I put him out of the shop." When asked by the bench to promise not to annoy him again and pay the costs Walmsley refused.

Back in 1843 the Preston Chronicle published an article "A Reminiscence of Old Betty" that recorded that "In June 1843 the day after a detachment of the Sixth Regiment had marched into Preston, the officers had temporarily taken up their quarters at the Red Lion. John the waiter informed them that the old mess woman of the Sixth wanted to see the gentlemen" and Betty Redhead was duly handed into the room in her whitest apron, brightest handkerchief crossed over her shoulders, very largest cap and a black satin bonnet of ancient make over it. She dropped a curse and by way of introducing herself respectfully said "And how's John Gardiner, adding that she had messed the corps in 1811, when he was the Major at the mess house in Chapel Street. She made many enquiries for officers in the corps. When she was tolerably young and very good looking, as the said John Gardiner afterwards reported. He was at that time in 1843 Major General Sir John Gardiner KCB, Deputy Adjutant General at the Horse Guards, some of whose escapades may even now be remembered fifty years after. She said "Ah he was a born devil".

Betty's address, her manner, her habit of calling everyone gentle or simple, by their Christian names, all puzzled and amused the young officers, few of whom had ever been to Lancashire before. She drank to the health of "the saucy sixth" in port wine; and was probably well satisfied with her visit, for so long as the detachment was quartered in the town, whenever the "quality" ordered rolls from Betty for dinner parties, a basket of her sweet "cobs" was sure to appear in

Water Street with "Betty Redhead's respects for the gentlemen." Before embarking for Dublin in December 1844, the officers requested Mrs B C, aunt of one of the captains, to purchase something that she thought would please Betty, as a remembrance of the young sixth. She selected a shawl, deep blue, the colour of their present royal facings with an orange border, that being the colour they formerly wore, having been William the Third's Dutch Guard. This shawl was carefully laid up in lavender, only making its appearance on very special occasions, such as the wedding of one of her favourites or a confirmation. Betty had a great relish for "going to see the childer ordained" as she usually called it or some other event of importance.

Betty would often boast that she only left Preston once in her life when she had to travel to Dublin to give evidence in a trial concerning property. Even so far from home she managed to cause a stir in the capital, for her demeanour in the court room. She was asked by a barrister as to what she did for a living. Her reply was "I keep a shop and serve th'better end." This caused considerable amusement and on being pressed further she said "I serve th'better end of folk; I sell to th'quality." She was anxious not to appear as an ordinary shopkeeper.

She also caused consternation at her hotel for her choice of attire. She wore her favourite outfit for special occasions which included a large orange coloured silk handkerchief, worn in honour of her admiration for the Derby family. The landlady of the hotel begged Betty to remove her handkerchief or "else every window in the house would be broken before night." Betty was completely unaware that a colour that was associated in her mind only with a great Lancashire family could be offensive just across the water. After matters were explained to her, she reluctantly removed the offending garment.

Old Betty never married, never "bothering her head" as she used to say with matters of the heart. In one of the many obituaries published after her death printed in the Manchester Courier entitled "Death of an Old Prestonian" she was referred to as "a genuine Prestonian of the ancient school, well known by nearly everybody and recognised as a "character" by all who had ever met with her and listened to either her opinions or anecdotes. It went on to say that "she had a rare fund of anecdote; her powers of expression were unique; she was wonderfully sarcastic and often humorous." "Her talk was certain to create a laugh or a look of wonder and her death will leave a blank in the rounds of many a local gossip whom we could mention. "She was well known by those who she termed "the quality" of the town and many moving in the highest circles used to either patronise her shop or engage with her in chat." She was also mentioned in detail in the Manchester Courier of 11 January 1866 under the title "Death of a remarkable character". It said that she had attended at St George's Church up to the Sunday before her death. "Her quaint old form as she sat in her accustomed seat near the door, was well known to the congregation.

It went on to say "She had many peculiarities, one of which was her promptitude in the discharge of accounts brought against her. This remark as to her promptitude however does not apply to taxes "she couldn't abide 'em" and she has died somewhat in arrears with the collectors," Not all in this obituary was praiseworthy, she was referred to as a "scraping parsimonious woman." In 1867 a year after her death she was still being talked about. A letter to the Preston Chronicle just after Christmas bemoaned the fact that at this time of year businesses were suffering due to the fact that "Much positive distress is occasioned by the dilatoriness with whom some of the wealthy and well to do classes or as the late Betty Redhead used to say "some o'th better end" pay their accounts.

However, there were a few surprises at the Sale of her effects by auction at Mr H C Walton's sale rooms in Fishergate on Monday 29th January. As well as her house and shop in Fishergate subject to an annual ground rent of fifteen shillings there were some items which caused considerable amusement on the day. The place was crowded and the Lancaster Gazette reported that "Representatives of the most respectable families of the town were in attendance and made numerous purchases."

The items included a copper pan in which Betty used to make her misnamed "Everton" toffy and which made 5 shillings and an old clock, behind the door of which Betty kept her accounts was sold for 21s. 6d. A spinning jenny which the auctioneer said was the "first made by Sir Richard Arkwright brought 5s. 6d. A punch-bowl bearing the words "Success to General Burgoyne" (formerly MP for Preston) was sold along with a lot of old crockery for a small sum. There were various items of china including a set said to have been bought at the Earl of Derby's sale in Preston which brought thirteen shillings. There was an old walnut chair which Mr Walton said that "Lord Derby used to be shaved in" and was bought by a local antiquarian who the newspaper said was "shaved" out of ten shillings for it. Portraits sold included those of the Queen, the late Prince Consort, the Earl of Derby, Sir Peter Hesketh Fleetwood etc. Her will was proved at Lancaster – effects under £200.

She was buried in the churchyard of St Andrew's church, Leyland and not in the town that had served her so well and for which she had a great affection for. Before she died she gave strict instructions that she should be buried in a deal coffin, as one of oak, she considered was only suitable for one of the "quality". It was said after her death that "with all her political prejudices, Old Betty was a thorough Englishwoman and notwithstanding all her emphatic modes of expression and her gossiping eccentricities, we may wait a long while before we shall see her equal – in her sphere of life, and with her education – in honesty of heart and straightforwardness." This was written over a hundred and fifty years ago and I suspect that they were right.

**Janet Rigby, 19 February 2014**

## **The Nurse's Special –** **A Music Hall Conundrum by David John Whittle MA (2)**

However, back on the Whittingham train anything could happen! The patented coaches bore an uncanny resemblance to cattle trucks. They even had the luxury of wooden seats around the sides of the carriage and gas central-heating provided by a Calor Gas bottle, which was locked away inside the coaches. I am not very sure about the loose coupled conveyances having other minor features such as brakes! Nor did the driver need to worry about signals or single line tokens, because on this single-track – without any passing loops apart from the siding at Grimsargh - they simply did not exist and who had ever heard of gradient or mile-post signs?

Happily the joint skills of driver and fireman were synchronised as a team in maintaining the momentum over the gradients with a watchful eye from the footplate. There was not a single bridge over the Whittingham line, only occupation/footpath crossings and culverts over Savick and Blundell Brooks. The largest structures along the line were two arched stone bridges the first crossing over Brabiner Lane, the second was an occupation over bridge nearby (the latter still in situ in 2012.)

Suddenly and unannounced there was a jolt and a lurch followed by a blow on the engine's whistle, as the train eased off from the platform to commence the journey to Whittingham. The tiniest of windows allowed us to savour the pleasant countryside during the six-minute journey to Whittingham, which was a fairly comfortable ride at a speed of around 15-20 miles per hour. From Grimsargh Station, the line curved in a north-westerly direction away from the Longridge line, past an exchange siding used to stable British Railway's coal trucks, before reducing to a single track approaching Dixon's Farm.

Here, at the first footpath crossing over the line a family group gave us a friendly wave from lush green fields and the driver gave a reciprocal toot on the engine's whistle.

Meanwhile I was totally mesmerized by the whole experience of the Whittingham line; including riding past tumbling lapwings with the exhaust beat and shrill whistle of the engine competing with joyful chirrupy swallows and strident calls of curlews, echoing over the meadows and not to mention galloping heifers.

The latter had a clear lead over the engine and seemed to be winning an impromptu race. Advancing along a straight downward gradient, the train gained some speed and may even have reached 20 miles per hour whilst crossing the valley of Savick Brook – perish the thought. After all surely the last thing anyone needed, whether patients, staff or visitors, was a white knuckle ride! Fortunately

I had been re-assured by the crew that there had never been a serious accident on the W.H.R. involving personal injury to passengers.

After crossing Savick Brook the train veered slightly right and entered a cutting about 30-40 feet deep, gloriously festooned with colourful wild flowers to emerge on a high embankment whilst crossing over Blundell Brook and Brabiner Lane bridge, the largest bridge on the line. This was where my parents took me in Dad's old Morris 8 to watch the train passing by whilst we enjoyed a picnic by the brook, a scene that somehow harmonised with the rural branch line adding the icing on the cake to an idyllic country scene. Sadly a scene that is now long gone. After crossing over the stone over-bridge at Dale Brow the familiar water tower landmark at Whittingham hospital with black smoke rising from the boiler-house chimney came into view. One suddenly felt a feeling of *déjà vu* on behalf of successive generations of patients who euphemistically had held a one-way ticket for the journey to the Victorian asylum that the railway line had served since 1889. As the train trundled along it seemed to acquire an unnerving swaying motion whilst negotiating a left hand curve on a high embankment and where fortunately a checkrail was in place.

Approaching Whittingham station, on a rising gradient of 1 in 120, the line passed an abandoned loop line, used to store a collection of antiquated passenger carriages, which I vaguely remember. The driver eased off the throttle and the train quietly clanked into the station without further incident. This worthy station building commanded a good view of the hospital's sewage farm - not a real show-stopper as tourist attractions go! Alighting from the train onto the narrow platform we walked past the engine-shed and around an ornamental lake in the hospital grounds. Then, after being attacked by a busking mute swan it was time to walk back to the railway station and experience the return journey, but on this occasion with 'Jimmy Fryar' propelling the train from the rear all the way back to Grimsargh. Maybe the driver had x-ray vision but then in those days who had heard of something called health and safety – it could only have happened on the Whittingham line, I think.

Twenty three years later at the start of the 'swinging 1960s' I was employed at Whittingham Hospital when curiosity beckoned me to follow an old sign, 'to the station.' Whittingham station was by now just a shadow of its former self with the rails long gone and only the track bed remaining. Thereafter on many glorious spring mornings, I walked the two miles along the track bed to work at the hospital, and reacquainted myself with the tumbling lapwings and 'larks ascending' happy in the knowledge that just over two decades previously I had travelled on the quaint and totally eccentric hospital train from Grimsargh to Whittingham and lived to tell the tale. In conclusion the WHR was undoubtedly a music hall conundrum let alone a music hall joke!

## A PRESTON LAD

The fair was in full swing, prior to their annual visit to Preston for the Whitsuntide Fair. The procession started off from the Leyland Cross. I think it was 1.30, led by Mr Jack Lord, the butcher and all the works in Leyland had a float and chose a theme each year. Dozens and dozens of workers and committee people must have worked ceaselessly for hours on end to deck out the lorries. Sundays Schools, churches and different bodies all helped to swell the pageant. All except St Andrew's, the parish church, the Vicar, Reverend Ensor called it the devil's festival and held his own walk and fete. This divided the church as many were in favour of holding the historic affair for which Leyland was famous. I was lucky being with Mr Thornley, his domicile was smack in the centre of the village and on route along which the procession wended its way, so for a bird's eye view, we watched from one of the bedroom windows. We soon got the warning that it was coming, as the band struck up their music. A lot of towns quite far distant entered the contest for the best Morris dancers, of which Leyland had a very good troupe. Everything seemed to be represented, Britannia, Tom Thumb and his wife, Ten little niggers, as they were called then, without any disrespect, dozens of tableaux by adults and children depicting something special. The piece de resistance, of course, was the May Queen, flanked by her retinue. There was always a Scotsman, in full regalia, accompanying her and the retiring Queen followed or preceded I forget which. It took a long while to traverse the route, the last act was a comic fire brigade which caused much merriment to the onlookers. Every so far were comically dressed figures brandishing a pig's bladder on a stick and they would belay the crowd, and plenty of collectors asking tribute in the form of monies, of which it was all about, raising funds to help next years effort and charities. Then the procession proceeded to the May field, or Vicars field, up Church Road, where the Queen was crowned in front of an appreciative crowd. The pubs were open all day and on every corner where vendors selling, balloons, brandy snaps, silly hats and all that sort of trivia. After the Queen had been crowned and she had finally left the landau, her guard of honour, the sailors and bands etc., all worked their way off the field. Our party made its way home for tea. At the corner of Westgate, a man had set up against a wall, his means of making a few bob, just an enamel bucket stood at an angle, and for a penny children or anyone were given three wooden balls, the idea being to try and get one or more to stay in the bucket when thrown. I was given three pence by Walter to have three tries. Many before me had tried and failed as my first two efforts proved. The man being in an expansive mood, before I had my last go said 'Look, Sonny, throw them like this !' He took a turn with three of his own balls and scored with every one. 'Watch me' he said, 'the trick is to aim your ball toward the top of the bucket slowly and to one side of the bucket and it will spiral downwards and stay in, instead of hitting the bottom and bouncing out !' My first two attempts failed, but my last ball stayed in and I was rewarded with a coconut for my effort. I felt quite proud of my achievement, then off we went to tea. Before tea, Kathleen and I had a drink of coconut milk, after Walter had made a suitable hole in the bottom of the nut. My first experience of tasting that delectable fluid, later the nut was broken into pieces but I found it dry to eat and didn't particularly relish the thought of eating my prize. Teatime came and I was asked 'Do you like salmon, Eric ?' I said I didn't know as I had never tasted it. So salmon sandwiches it was, and I have liked salmon ever since. Fruit cocktail and custard followed polished off by some sort of cake. Then Walter's girlfriend ran across the road with a tray of six glasses on, and treated everyone to an ice cream. I'd already had one on the May field, two ice creams in less than three hours, unheard of, that was two years rations for me. After tea Walter took us

in the back yard and took our photographs, five of us in a group, then one of me and Kathleen, she said 'Come on, lets hold hands !' but I darent, but the forrat (forward) young devil grabbed my hand as he clicked the camera's shutter. I was beginning to feel a little frightened of what she might do next, I did nothing but blush when she was around. Walter was asked why he didn't take his camera on the May field with him but he said it cost a lot of money and he 'mide loyse it' (might lose it).

When the washing up had been completed Walter said 'Come on, you kids, lets go in the front room, I'll play the piano and you can sing, lets hear the boy soprano in action'. But Mr Thornley had beaten us to it, he was sat there reading the evening paper, football results, etc., I suppose. Kathleen bought out some comics for both of us to read, but actually she fell asleep. I suppose it was as well as we had a very late night. I was not prepared for what was in store and Kathleen didn't tell me. Walter and his girlfriend started to get ready and then told us to get our coats on and come with them. I could not understand where we might be going to as it was getting dark and asked where we were going to. As we passed the picture house, 'You'll see' said Walter, then I knew we were going to the fair. There were crowds of people all going the same way and I thought we will never get on anything, but no, we passed where the roundabout was and carried on through what I knew later was Worden Lane. We followed the crowd and went through some big gates, we were in Worden Park. Squire Farington's estate, he always opened it to the public at the May Festival and treated the people to a massive firework display. It started about nine o'clock. It was pitch black and there were no lights on the park. We sat only on the driveway. We were sitting on a blanket waiting impatiently for the display to start. Kathleen started her old tricks and leant over and gave me a kiss. 'Stop it !' I whispered. 'Well you are my boyfriend for the weekend'. 'Shurrup!' I replied, though secretly feeling ten foot high. Behave yourselves you two, came Walter's admonishment. Then on came the display and us two children were enthralled and 'oohed and aahed' with the rest of the crowd, I had never seen anything so wonderful before, Bonfire Night paled into insignificance against this show. The maroons made us jump when they went off. It all came to an end after about an hour. Everyone had to be out by a certain time and then they closed the gates. Kathleen, of course, had seen all this before, but to me, a first timer, it was like being transported to fairyland. After this we had a little wander round the fair, had some parched peas, then it was back to No. 7, tired and happy finishing off a perfect day by holding Kathleen's hand all the way home. Quite willingly. A surreptitious kiss at the bottom of the stairs and off to bed to fall asleep instantly. For years I relived this marvellous weekend over and over again. Sunday morning, no church, I stayed in bed till 9.30. A quick wash in cold water downstairs. 'No bathroom here, lad!'. Toast for breakfast, another thing we never got at the orphanage, neither did we get chips. I would get to taste those when I left the in years yet to come. We were still bodily tired from the previous days events, and neither of us wanted to go a walk. We were allowed as 'honoured' guests to play some of Walter's records. Ramona Pasedena, There ain't no sense sitting on a fence, to name but a couple. For Sunday dinner besides meat, we also had a sausage, something else I never got, it was quite tasty. One good thing I was allowed to leave the fat off my meat on the edge of my plate. At the home everything had to be eaten, and I can tell you there was some fat on orphanage meat, thick and yellow, like blubber. I tried to let it go cold and congeal and slip it in my pocket if ever I could. Oh the freedom I felt that weekend !

*By Arthur Eric Crook (1917-1997) more next month .....*

## Articles from Preston Past

**Local Chit-Chat** - Complaints are now and then made about the way in which rough, careless, young fellows monopolise or walk irregularly upon our main street parapets at night time – persisting in taking the wrong side, perambulating in fours and fives abreast, and not caring how they inconvenience persons whom they meet or those who wish to pass them. But young fellows of the kind referred to are not the only offenders. The other night about half past nine o'clock, whilst in Fishergate, we noticed four or five females, of the workshop girl type – forward, mop fringed minxes – walking all in a row along the southern parapet, apparently determined to maintain that kind of spread-out attitude, and, through their persistence in it, causing several persons to collide against shop fronts, or step off the pathway altogether. And, by way of 'improving the occasion', one of the girls was whistling, in quite a loud cart driving style, the air of that classical composition, called 'Pop Goes The Weasel'.

**Preston Guardian 8 June 1889**

**Shocking Accident at a Preston Cotton Mill** – An inquest was held at the police station on Wednesday before M Myres, Esq., coroner, upon the body of a woman named **Alice Butler**, who was killed whilst at her work on Tuesday. From the evidence it appears that the deceased was fifty years of age and was employed as a piecer at **Messrs Rawstorne and Burrows** cotton factory, Stanley-street. The self-acting minder under whom she worked, a man named **Nightingale**, said that shortly before eleven o'clock on the day named he heard a noise and saw deceased being run round the upright shaft. He instantly rung the bell and the engine was stopped, but not before the deceased had been revolved round the shaft a good many times. She had no right near the shaft as it was the duty of the creeler to put the bobbins in when required. The place had been boxed off, but the casing had been pulled down two months ago. Cross-examined by **Mr Edelston**: he said there was no danger to a creeler from the shaft, and that the deceased should have been in the wheelhouse. From the evidence of a mechanic, **William Westley**, it appeared that in consequence of information he received he went and found the deceased fast to the shaft. He removed her from it. Both her feet were taken off, her legs were also taken off, her bowels were laid open, and one of her hands taken off. He had never seen the shaft boxed off, but he had boxed it off since the accident. He found the casing for it in another part of the premises. The spinning master was examined as to why the casing was not on the shaft, but he stated that he did not know that it was without. He thought the guard had been taken off when some wheels near the shafting were repaired a few months previous. By Mr Edelston: he said his attention had never been called to it by the workpeople – A verdict of 'Accidentally killed' was returned. From what we learned at the mill it seems the deceased's petticoats had got caught by the shaft, and gradually tightening, the deceased would be thrown down and whirled round the shaft, her body striking against two projecting pieces of iron. Her feet, legs and hands, have thus literally been knocked by the rapidity and force of the concussions against the irons, besides her body being otherwise frightfully mutilated. The deceased remains were picked up and put in her coffin, and afterwards were removed to her daughter's house. She was a widow, and leaves three children, the youngest of whom is twelve years of age.

**Preston Chronicle 11 October 1873**

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