

The Preston Magazine



Issue 20

IF I should die, think only this of me:

That there's some corner of a foreign field

That is forever England...

Rhymes of a Red Cross Man

Private Joseph Smyth

Private James Green

FREE

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Welcome to the 20th 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.

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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, Joseph Smyth by Frank Smith, Old Betty Redhead by Janet Rigby. Memories of Preston Grammar School by Allan Fazackerley and also Preston Catholic College by Tony Billington. Part 3 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 available at Waterstone's and Amazon.

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 will be kept at Lancashire Records Office.

Front Cover Image – Preston Pals Flower Bed, Miller Park designed by Frank Rampling, Brian McNeill and Tony Lewis

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PHOTOGRAPHS FROM PRESTON PAST



Preston Catholic College, The Lay Staff, Sports Day 1938.
Standing – F Stone, E Voss, WC Park, H Bolton, TA Rigby, WE Allen.
Kneeling – RW Stainthorp, CJ Kinleside, W Almond, J Smith.
Photo courtesy of Andrew Mather



Preston British School, 1899. Infants – Group 3.
Image courtesy of Preston Digital Archive



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— PRESTON —



ARTICLES FROM PRESTON PAST

WOMAN BOAT VICTIM – In the presence of a large crowd Gladys Stewart, 20, a native of St Helens and a barmaid at the Borough Tavern, Fishergate, Preston, was drowned while boating in the River Ribble, adjoining Avenham Park, Preston, yesterday. Although the river was swollen almost bank high, she rowed a skiff against the current and in passing beneath an old bridge lost control when trying to turn. The boat was swept round and over-turned. The girl's Pomeranian dog swam to the side and she herself clung for some time to the pillars of the bridge. A life buoy was thrown, which she missed, but she lost her hold of the bridge and was swept down the river. Three persons swam out to attempt a rescue but could not reach her.

Daily Mail 4th August 1914

AWFUL PUNISHMENT - Preston Soldier on his treatment in Germany. Sadler-Corpl. G Phillips, a Preston member of the R.F.A. which formed part of the original expeditionary force, was taken prisoner at Mons, and has been interred in Germany until quite recently, when he was allowed to be transferred to a camp for wounded British soldiers in Holland. Writing home to his wife at 50 Porter Street, Preston, he describes the reception that he and his fellow prisoners received at the hands of the Dutch. Britishers, he states, could not have received them with greater cordiality and enthusiasm, as they were met, on crossing the frontier, by a committee of ladies who gave them sandwiches, coffee, English papers and cigarettes and added 'it was quite a treat to see smiling faces once again'. It was the same at every station at which they stopped during a seven hours journey, crowds waiting and cheering them. 'Fancy walking about without a dirty big German prodding one in the back with a bayonet! You cannot know or think how it feels for us to be able to write to each other and say what we like without getting punished for it. Oh, the awful punishment I went through as I lay helpless for eight months!' Corporal Phillips adds that the difference in the treatment he has received since leaving Germany has put another ten years on his life.

Lancashire Evening Post 12th February 1918

PRESTON'S GOOD START - £152,479 RAISED FIRST DAY IN WAR WEAPONS CAMPAIGN – Public interest in the war weapons campaign at Preston received a decided impetus from the splendid lead given by the cotton manufacturers yesterday, which bought the first days total (up to the bank balancing hour, four o'clock) to £152,479. In the evening a large crowd assembled in the square, attracted by the fine programme of popular and patriotic music rendered by Dick Kerr's Band. During an interval an address was given by Father McKenna. Small investors showed up well during the day and there are many indications that the smaller amounts will accumulate to a significant total during the week. There is much activity in clubs, workshop associations and schools. From a fund subscribed by a local gentleman every small investor has a chance of sharing in prizes of varying value in the shape of free war savings certificates or war bonds. Yesterday an old lady who bought a certificate found on her return home that her envelope contained a slip of paper that puzzled her considerably. She turned up at the inquiry office last night with a strong escort of interested neighbours, and her delight was beyond description when she received a free war bond for £5 in exchange for the slip she had found in her envelope.

Lancashire Evening Post 9th July 1918

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
www.prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk

Preston Grammar School

After the relative peace of life at Emmanuel School, the beginning of life at Preston Grammar School came as an awful shock. The cosy days (admittedly with a few canings) of the one class, one teacher, were now just a distant memory. We set off on our first day with slightly large blazer and dinky blue cap, we, that is Roy Thomason and I, were guided in by Roy's older brother, Peter. He was an old hand, Year 2. We cycled in single file up St Thomas's Road, it seemed a long way because I could almost touch Emmanuel from where I lived in Hammond Street. Anyway, we got there very early, found a place for our bikes, and stood and watched the playground fill. I couldn't believe the amount of boys. There were obviously loads of boys in my year, easily recognised by the wearing of short trousers. Year 1949/50, and we wore short trousers! Still there we were later surrounded by older boys, the 6th formers were more men than boys, 18 years old, but still wearing those daft caps. Our caps were royal blue, and you soon learned that the ones in navy blue caps were prefects. Dangerous guys! They could dish out punishment just as the tutors could. If a prefect saw you improperly dressed, even coming or going to school, they would have you. So the bell went, and we went in. After my old school, what a size! Where was 1B?

None of us knew, but we soon found our new home. In marched Mr Coulthurst, 'Well, stand up!' We stood. 'When I enter the room, you stand'. Then we sat down again. He introduced himself as our form master, and also our Latin tutor. Latin! Oh God! What have I done coming here? It soon became apparent that we had a different tutor for each lesson. But sometimes you had to go to special rooms for subjects like science, art, music and my big dread, woodwork. The shock of all this was nothing compared to the 3 lots of homework scheduled for each night. No more hours of football on Moor Park, other things to do. After day one, we were introduced to the House system. Each boy was designated to a particular house. Miller (blue), Goodair (green), Harris (red), and Thornley (yellow). You became, or I did, very proud of representing your house at sport. Football and cricket were king in those days, but then the bombshell! we were predominantly a rugby school! We were to play this silly game Sept till Christmas, then soccer till Easter, that is, when the pitches weren't frozen, then cricket in summer, where it didn't rain. Of course, with so many boys the youngest went to the sports ground behind the Shawes Arms on a Friday, Years 3 and 4, Thursday and 5th and 6th formers, Wednesday. We had great pitches down there, and a nice pavilion changing room. I don't pass that way much these days, but I think the old pavilion is gone. The groundsman I remember was Mr Adams. He had the final say on the fitness of the pitches. If it was thumbs down, we had the dreaded cross country running. I was in Miller house, and we seemed to do quite well at sport. Rugby didn't please me at all, but it's a game I've come to love. So the first year passed, and you fell into things. Some loved, some hated. Being only 5 years after the war many of the teachers were quite old, and possibly longed for the days of fee payers. I don't think some were tuned into us back street boys. End of year one. My amazing brain power in the exams, saw me relegated from 1B to 2C. 2C, in later years became the notorious 5C. The motley crew of P.G.S. !!

By Allan Fazackerley

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SOUTH RIBBLE MUSEUM AND EXHIBITION CENTRE
THE OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL, LEYLAND
Tel. Preston 442041. www.southribblemuseum.org.uk

1st August to 18th October

1914 Commemorative Exhibition: Antarctic Witness

A second chance to see Frank Hurley's remarkable photographic record of Sir Ernest Shackleton's ill-fated Imperial Antarctic Expedition of 1914-16. This is a centrepiece of the Borough's commemoration of Britain's declaring war, which broke out on August 4th, 1914, as the expedition ship – 'Endurance' was making her way out into the English Channel.

20th September (Saturday)

'Family History Workshop For Beginners'

10.30am to 12.30pm at the museum. Pick up the basics for your family history research.

27th September (Saturday)

'Functional Origami'

Join our origami expert Stephen Watson with this hands on workshop producing boxes, vases and other functional origami items. All materials supplied.

4th October (Saturday)

'125 Years Of Leyland Morris Dancing'

This illustrated talk by the Morris Men team archivist Roy Smith, starts at 11.00am in the Museum Exhibition Centre.

9th October (Thursday)

'The Life and Journey of Sir Ernest Shackleton'

An illustrated talk with Malcolm Tranter, well known speaker amongst the local history societies makes a return visit to the Museum. 2.00pm start.

11th October (Saturday)

'Painting with Watercolours'

A watercolour demonstration local artist David Jaundrell from 10.30am

Pick up some hints and tips for your watercolour painting.

18th October (Saturday)

'South'

Your final chance to see the film 'South' the film record of Sir Ernest Shackleton's heroic but ill-fated attempt to cross Antarctica in 1914-16

25th October (Saturday)

'Grand Half Term Punch and Judy Show'

A traditional performance with Prof. Ivan Walters from 10.30am.

Opening Times: Tuesday & Friday 10-4 pm, Thursday 1-4 pm, Saturday 1- 4 pm.

Other times and group visits by appointment. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

PRESTON THEN AND NOW 1843-1893 NO. 4

While in the neighbourhood we pass down Winckley-street to the Square, where, in 1844, the foundation stone for the Literary and Philosophical Institution, including the Winckley Club, was laid by the late Mr John Addison, Mayor, with the Masonic ceremony. The building was designed by Mr Welch, then a well known architect in Preston, and opened in 1846. The adjoining Grammar School in Cross-street was built in 1841; also from the design of Mr Welch; and the whole of this block of buildings was the property of the shareholders, from whom, in 1860, the Grammar School was purchased by the Corporation for £1,527; and the remainder of the pile in 1868 for £1,500 ! The Italian Villa, at the south-west corner of Cross-street, was designed by Mr Latham, architect, and built for Mr William Ainsworth, JP, cotton spinner, who at the time had a mill in Cotton-court, Church-street. The statue of Sir Robert Peel, facing Cross-street, is the work of the late Mr T Duckett, of Avenham-road, and was erected by subscription of the cost of upwards of £600. It was unveiled by Alderman Monk, Mayor, in 1852. On the base of the pedestal may be seen a narrow channel cut in the stone; it marks the erasure of the inscription, 'Thomas Monk, Mayor, 1852', who in December 1857 was charged at the Police-court with forging, or procuring to be forged, the will of Edmund Turner, a reed malter, of St Paul's square. The only magistrate on the bench was Mr William Ainsworth, by whom he was committed for trial at the Lancaster Assizes in the following February. He was there sentenced by Baron Martin to penal servitude for life; but was liberated in May 1868. He at once returned to Preston, and until his death, which occurred a few years ago, had a pretty good practice amongst former patients. The evidence of a similar erasure to that above mentioned is visible in front of the Fire Brigade station in Tithe-barn-street, which was also opened by Mr Monk during his mayoralty. Something may charitably be said for him in mitigation of the severity of public censure. He was thrust upwards by injudicious friends into positions for which he was totally unqualified, either personally or pecuniarily, and it was doubtless grinding impecuniosty that drove him to the commission of the crime for which he was so heavily punished. On the west side of Winckley Square the road leading from Garden-street to the railway station – a portion of the ancient Syke – and the waste ground on each side were transferred by the Corporation in 1872 to the London and North-western Railway Company for a part of the old tramway, extending from the northern entrance into Avenham Park to the what is now known as the Long Walk, on the south side of the river. The underground passage of the railway follows the line of old Syke which ran into West Cliff. The road and land thus acquired by the railway company were very soon used by them in enlargement of their goods station, and fenced off from Garden-street. The residents in Winckley Square and all the Avenham district were thus deprived of their near cut to the station, and forced to make a detour through Fishergate, until the way by the Park Hotel gallery in East Cliff was opened. That road we suppose, is used by the public only on sufferance. A few steps beyond Winckley-street in Fishergate, the branch bank of the Lancaster Bank built in 1856, from the design of Mr J H Park, fronts the new Post Office, which was opened in 1870, and stands where for many years had been established the private bank of Messrs Roskell, Arrowsmith and Co. A shop adjoining it, at the corner of the passage, was for some time tenanted by Mr E C Buller, catholic bookseller. That bank stopped payment in 1868. Before the present Post Office was built the business was conducted in the building in Lancaster-road, now occupied by Mr Beck, wholesale draper. **Preston Guardian 11 March 1893.#**

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Diary of James Green 305712
8th King's Liverpool Regt.
B.E.F. France
1914 – 1918



Just before Xmas our landlady introduced us to some girl friends of the family, there were Nellie Murphy, Chrissie Murphy, Lizzie Murphy and Annie Howley they in turn invited us down to their house all of us in the billet, there were 5 of us. We had a good time. The house was just outside the Cardiff City Football Ground, I watched some army matches on it. We had a farewell party the night we had to go back. On Christmas Eve we all went to Midnight Mass. I had not heard from that girl I met at Blackpool for a long while, I wished she would write. I sent her a Christmas card, I hope she got it, her name is Emily Priestley. I did not, at this time, see much of the girls as all my time was taken up with the hospital. In the daytime I was too tired, I seemed to be drifting away from them with my duties etc taking all my time up. Anyway they're a lovely crowd. I would love to go back to Cardiff if I get through this lot. Well, the best of friends must part, we got sudden orders to join our Regt. back at Owestry. All the girls and their mothers came down to the station to see us off.

We arrived back at Owestry. I thought we had finished with this place. I soon got marked fit by the medical officer, I started training again. I got a free pass and went down to Cardiff and spent a few days with my friends, welcome was written on the mat. I am sorry the time was so short. I got another leave later on before I went to France. I spent that at home it was Whit-week. It was like an empty town all my friends and pals in the forces. There was nothing to pass the time on only visiting my relations. Our John came home on leave, he had been wounded four times. He was in the 'Lancashire Fusiliers'. We used to go up town and pass the time playing snooker along with my other brother, Richard, he had been in India and also the German East Africa and was later going to France. I was glad to see them both. My other brother, William, has got his discharge from the army he had the calf of his leg blown off at Le Basse in May. My youngest brother, Joseph, is a stoker in the Royal Navy. I think our family has done its share in this war.

Shortly afterwards we were put under orders for France again. I had to say goodbye to my chum, John Thompson, who helped to bandage me up when I was wounded at 'Festurburt'. He got wounded on the 'Somme', a nasty shoulder wound he is now Cat. B2. My other chum is now in France with the 'Liverpool Irish'. Good luck to him. We left 'Owestry' Sunday night June 10th 1917.

Arrived Folkestone 8 o'clock next morning, had some breakfast and dinner then we went aboard the troop ship. Also there came on board the advance party and staff of the Medical Corp of the American army, they were just coming into the war, they crossed to France with us on the 'S. S. Onward'. Goodbye England, for the second time.

Diary continues with the B. E. F. in France 1917.

We landed at Boulogne Harbour on June 11th at 7-30 and marched through the town to the rest camp. It's a stiff climb up the hill, I had done it before in 1915 but a lot has happened since then. We left the camp the next morning at 7-30 a.m but, before we left, we had a medical inspection, we had to line up in two ranks and the medical officer stood in the

doorway and shouted 'fit'. It was just a matter of routine. We then went to the stores and got our rifles and gas masks, fell in , and marched down to the station where we entrained for 'Etaples', a place much loved by the soldiers of the B. E. R.. It's the home of the 'Bull Ring', where all the soldiers coming out again to join different units have to go through extensive training in gas, firing, night patrols and wiring. We arrived at 'Etaples' at 2-30 the same day. It is a big camp, thousands of troops training. I met a lot of lads I knew.

Thursday June 14th. Went down to the training ground and went through the gas chamber in the afternoon.

Friday June 15th. Marched down to the 'Bull Ring' four miles away, gee but its murder. I am fed up already. Lads drop out on the march but there is no pity for them, they are hounded back in the ranks or put on a charge for dodging. I think a few have died through the hard training, there seems to be a few graves lying around. The weather is very hot, we had a cigarettes issue of forty each.

Saturday June 16th. Anniversary of being wounded first time, 1915. the same heat and it's getting unbearable. We went down to the 'Bull Ring', again, it can't be any worse up the line. Not enough to eat. I wrote four letters I have had no reply yet.

Sunday June 17th. Only church parade today, weather still hot. Got a letter from Clara at Cardiff.

Monday June 18th. Down to the 'Bull Ring' again, weather still hot had a little rain in the evening, what a relief.

Tuesday June 19th. Thunder storm, woke up to find all tents washed out, later on a washing and bathing parade. Drew 5 francs today.

Wednesday June 20th. More, 'Bull Ring'. No letters they must all be dead.

Thursday June 21st. Everything as usual. I am still in very good health. A lot of aeroplanes passing overhead. Still no letters.

Friday June 22nd. Cigarette issue 40 cigarettes and one box of matches. Breakfast: one slice of bread dipped in bacon fat. Went under gas again at the 'Bull Ring'. Tea at 4-30. Browned off.

Saturday June 23rd. Done a lot of firing practice and fatigues at the 'Bull Ring'. Passed a lot of drafts coming to join us from Boulogne. Got a letter from Nellie Murphy.

Sunday June 24th. Only church parade today. Went down to the market in the afternoon, bought some silk postcards sent them to Cardiff. Thing to remember, we had rabbit for dinner and two eggs for tea.

Monday June 25th. Parade all day at the 'Bull Ring' on a slice of bread for breakfast. Got back at 4pm for tea. German aeroplane passing over the camp.

Tuesday June 26th. Holiday today all tents taken down and later put up in the afternoon. Drew 5 francs today. Got a letter from Clara at Cardiff.

Wednesday June 27th. 'Bull Ring' all day today. Got a letter from Emily Priestley at Elland, Yorkshire.

Thursday June 28th. Out all night on operational duties.

July 1st. Heard that the 164 Brigade had 'gone over the top'. Had another full day of it. I have now left 'Etaples' and am at 'Poperinge'.

July 9th. Left 'Poperinge' to join the battalion out of the line on a rest at 'St Omer'. Had to walk ten miles to their headquarters.

July 10th. Getting ready for the C.O. inspection. Posted to the '7th Kings' D Company 15 Platoon.

July 13th. Got 5 francs pay also we are practicing for a big attack, we had tanks with us.

July 17th Tuesday. Drew 15 francs at a place called 'Morningham' in rest.

Continued next month

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

One Friday evening in winter when I reached Manchester Central the city was in the grip of an horrendous smog. Walking across to Victoria was a strange experience as all usual reference points were obliterated. The

smog was so thick that conductors were walking in front of their buses to aid their drivers. And at road junctions there were large duck lamps burning, adding to the already polluted atmosphere. On another Friday the train was late into Central and I missed my

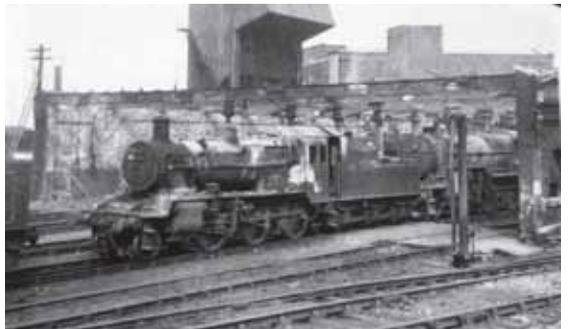
connection at Victoria. My quickest way home then was to catch a train to Wigan. As I waited at the north end of Wigan North Western station my train for Preston pulled in behind an ex-works 'Jubilee'. The driver was Bert Holt, of Preston shed. My hopeful request for a ride in the cab was met with 'Aye, get up' and I mounted the footplate to enjoy my first and only journey in the cab of a steam locomotive on a passenger train. I learned a lot just watching Bert's handling of the controls, and his mate's firing and working of the injectors. I was sorry to get off at Preston.



ROSE GROVE

The 12 months soon passed, but my hopes of taking up a fitting position at Preston were to be shattered. Either I had been in my own little dream world for the last year, or nobody had told me, but I found out that no vacancy existed at the shed. So, as I 21st birthday present I was given a list of possible places to transfer to, including Willesden and Crewe. Not yet feeling ready to leave the comfort of home and Mum's cooking, I opted for travelling daily to Rose Grove, Burnley, coded 24B. So in early May 1960 I presented myself to Norman Coulthurst, the Chargehand Fitter at the Grove, and was set to work. It was a strange feeling working as a qualified fitter, in a new environment, and on new types of locos – 'Austerities', 'Stanier Class 8's' 'Lanky 'A' Class' and 'Crabs'. I soon settled in and after a while I was called upon to take my turn on night shifts. I still had convenient trains from Preston, so that was not a problem. The routine appeared to be to get all our work completed as soon as possible and get our heads down on the fitting shop benches. I wasn't keen on this, but it appeared to be a local arrangement.

Entertainment was provided by rats which appeared, running along the pipework which ran round the walls. Nobody seemed paranoid about them in those days – one of the lads used to feed them. On five nights at mealbreak time I used to leave my mate and take my cup of tea and sit outside the rear of the shed on the stone retaining wall which dropped down to the Leeds-Liverpool canal. To the north loomed the bulk of Pendle Hill, of witches fame. I could hear sounds of shunting in the Up and Down Grid sidings beyond the station, and an occasional 'Austerity' or 'Class 8' labouring up the bank from Padiham with a train load of coal empties. The M65 motorway now runs across this very spot, having obliterated all signs that a busy engine shed ever existed there. One memorable day in late June, the 28th to be exact, I was home in bed after a night shift. At lunchtime I was awakened by my mother shaking me and saying 'Wake up, the



shed's on fire – go to the door and look !' She worked in the office at Abel Heywood's Newsagent's Wholesalers down Theatre passage next to the Theatre Royal Cinema and news of the fire had spread quickly. I dressed and ran down to the door. A pall of smoke drifted across Preston. I grabbed my bike and hurried up to Croft Street. I entered past the Police and Firemen to find a scene of devastation. A dozen or so locomotives were surrounded by the burning remains of the roof. The fire had piled up on and around them as the roof collapsed, burning all the paintwork off, setting fire to the coal in the tenders and the footplate floorboards, and melting all the white metal in the motion bushes. The rest of the locos and the Steam Crane had been drawn clear. It had started much the same as usual, a loco 'gassing up' before going off shed, and a small fire was noticed in the roof timbers. The lads had a laugh and ran out the hose, only this time they weren't quick enough! The fire caught hold, fanned by a stiff breeze, and by the time it was realised nothing could be done about it, and the Fire Brigade called, it was too late. Restricted access to the Shed through a door in a wall and up a 40 yard path and finally a narrow passage didn't help. There was the doubtless already inevitable future closure of Preston Motive Power Depot ensured !

Things began to go wrong at the Grove. A slightly awkward member of staff began to object to the arrangement whereby I could start and finish my day shifts a quarter of an hour earlier than them to fit in with train times, still getting my full eight hours in. Things came to a head when I was rostered for Sunday work and I found that there was no morning train. Being quite fit in those days out came my trusty bike and three or four times I cycled the 44 mile round trip to Burnley to cover my turn of duty. But I realised I wouldn't be able to do that indefinitely, so I tackled the District Superintendent about a move to another depot. No posts were available, but fate took a hand when I heard that a vacancy existed at Preston in the Outdoor Machinery Dept. in Butler Street. So one morning as I returned home from a nightshift at the Grove I walked down to the Depot. I was pleased to find that Vic Abram was now Chargehand there. He arranged an interview with the District Foreman, Mr Horrocks, who offered me the position, so in November 1960 I took up my new post after only six months at Rose Grove !

PRESTON O.D.M. DEPT.

My first surprise was finding that O.D.M. was not full of decrepit old men, but a good lively happy bunch. The workshop was modern, with new machine tools. The building was sited in the Goods Yard up against Butler Street wall, and opposite the huge warehouse with 'Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway' still proudly displayed on the roof in large letters. In between was a travelling gantry crane for loading and unloading rail and road vehicles. The time clock and card racks were in a small building as one emerged from Fishergate Tunnel into the Yard. My greatest surprise was discovering the range and variety of work for which the department was responsible, the bulk of which is listed as follows :-

Coaling and Ash Disposal Plants, Turntables, Wheeldrops, Water Columns, Storage Tanks, Troughs and Pumping equipment. Rail, Road and Fixed Cranes (Steam, Diesel and Manual), fixed and mobile Gantry Cranes and Warehouse Jiggers. All electric lighting and heating, Lifts (electric and hydraulic), B.R.U.T. Trucks, Workshop Machinery, Fire extinguishers, Capstans, a Wagon Traverser, Compressors and Exhausters, Ballast cleaners and Track Tamperers, and Temporary Trackside lighting and Generators !

More next issue

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Images by Don Greenwood and Peter Fitton



Joseph Smyth (1897-1917)

Joseph Smyth was born in Preston on the 14th October 1897 and was christened at St Wilfred's Church on October the 17th. He was the eldest son of Christopher Smyth and Jane Ellen Briggs. In the 1901 census they lived at 21 Albion Street West. Unfortunately in 1906 Christopher died leaving Jane Ellen with three small children to bring up. In 1911 they lived at 13 Marchand St. Joseph enlisted in the Royal Welsh Fusiliers in 1917 and unfortunately died of TB at Fulwood Military Hospital, Preston on the 12th Aug 1917. He is buried in a Military Grave in Preston Cemetery and is on the wall of the Harris Library under the name Joseph Smith. I started doing family history after my father had died and only realised my surname should have a y in it, my grand father being from Dublin. When I asked my Uncle Harry why

did they change it, he said when the teachers told them to write there names at the top of their boards and every time they put Smyth the teacher hit them over the head and said you do not spell Smith like that.

Frank Smith



Preston's Roll of Honour.

Name *Joseph Smith*
 Address *4 Marchand St*
 Occupation *Driver*
 Regiment *Royal Welsh Fusiliers*
 Rank and Regimental Number *Pte c/o 52457*
 Date of Death *10th March 1917*
 Place where killed or injury received *Removed from Kemmel Park*
 Remarks:— *to Military Hospital Wales*
Fulwood Died of Neo Monia



 CERTIFIED COPY of an ENTRY

 Pursuant to the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953

1917.		Registration District			Preston				
Death in the Sub-district of Broughton		in the County of Lancaster							
Columns	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
No.	When and where died	Name and surname	Sex	Age	Occupation	Cause of death	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar
244	Twelfth March 1917 Military Hospital Fulwood U.D.	Joseph Smith	Male	19 years	Private No. 52457 3rd Royal Welsh Fusiliers formerly Cart Driver	(1) Pulmonary Tuberculosis Certified by J.L. Webster M.R.C.S.	J.L. Smith Mother Present at the death 4 Marshland Street Preston	Twelfth March 1917	William Henry Rayner Registrar

Certified to be a true copy of an entry in a register in my custody.


 Wm. Henry Rayner
 12th February 2004

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 WARNING: A CERTIFICATE IS NOT EVIDENCE OF IDENTITY.



HE whom this scroll commemorates
 was numbered among those who,
 at the call of King and Country, left all
 that was dear to them, endured hardness,
 faced danger, and finally passed out of
 the sight of men by the path of duty
 and self-sacrifice, giving up their own
 lives that others might live in freedom.
 Let those who come after see to it
 that his name be not forgotten.

52457. PRIVATE JOSEPH SMITH

3rd Battalion., Royal Welsh Fusiliers
 Died, Home, 10/3/1917
 Born: Preston, Lancs, Enlisted: Preston



Five Years in Chapel Street Nick

On passing my scholarship (11 Plus) in 1960 at St Gerard's RC Primary, Tardy Gate, I first attended Preston Catholic College in late August 1960 along with Andy Little. Only three of us passed the scholarship that year, Geraldine Crook being the other. On one of the first days there we were asked which house we would like to be join. There were six named after saints or martyrs. Edmund Arrowsmith, Edmund Campion, John Fisher, Cuthbert Mayne, Thomas More and John Southworth. 'Billington, which house would you like to be in?' the teacher asked. 'Southworth, Sir' I replied. 'What reason have you for joining Southworth?' 'I've got a yellow football shirt, sir, the house colour'. I was in Southworth house. The shirt was actually a Wolves shirt, complete with black 'v' neck and cuffs. I don't know why I had it. I never supported them and it wasn't a hand-me-down! Over the next 5 years of my 'sentence' I began to hate some of the teachers with a vengeance. The feeling was mutual. Some of the staff were Jesuit priests, some ok, some not. Posh kids (some had their Scholarships paid for after not passing the exam) were favoured in a lot of cases. Teacher's sons and nephews also got preferential treatment in a lot of cases too. It wasn't the lads faults. We treated them the same as everybody else. Believe me, I was no saint and a lot of the 'persecution' was self inflicted. Report cards were a case in point. We used to get them every Friday to take home for our parents to sign. They were a record of our weekly achievements in each subject. Marking went excellent, good, fair, poor, bad, etc. I think if you got 5 bads, it was extra homework and a chat with the Head, Father Wren. If, however, you got 5 goods, it was an excellent and a homework free weekend. I was my own worst enemy. If in the mood, I'd get the odd excellent, other I broke even or did just ok. When not in the mood, I dreaded taking my report card home as my mum got very irate if I'd done bad. I'm sure some lads signed their own cards for years, I could never forge my mums signature, it was unreadable, like a doctors prescription.

My favourite subjects were English Language and Literature (this probably explains my love of writing), Geography, Swimming and Sports. Pet hates apart from the staff were maths, chemistry, music and technical drawing. Sometimes, I think a lot of people will agree with me, it was the teacher and not the subject, which put me off. Just think, I could have been a nuclear scientist if Mr Fussy hadn't been the chemistry teacher! I always looked forward to games afternoon at Factory Lane, Penwortham. Firstly, because I liked sport and secondly it got us out of maths! This occurred once a week in the afternoon. We dreaded any rain as this would prompt Dicky (Fr. Birch) to cancel at a moments notice. Each year had its own afternoon. After lunch we would set off walking through Avenham Park over Tram Bridge, down Tram Road and down towards Vernons. On one particular freezing cold afternoon (we actually wanted Dicky to cancel!) I had a painful experience, once again self-inflicted. I'd been dawdling in the huge changing room at Factory Lane when the whistle went outside summoning us all to gather immediately. I had just applied some 'Elliman's Embrocation' (very hot powerful liniment) to my legs, not to loosen muscles, purely to get warm. I dashed to the toilet forgetting I still had some on my hands. The result was the fastest 100 metres ever recorded (forget Usain Bolt) as I flew down the pavilion steps on in a long mazy run towards Whitehouse Junction, thinking the further I ran, the further I'd be away from the excruciating burning sensation which could only be compared with holding something precious over the gas-jet on the cooker! I would never ever repeat this act of negligence. Finally, one a week we would take the short journey down Chapel Street to St Wilfrid's Church for Mass. Each week two boys would be chosen at random to become Altar-servers for a day.

It didn't matter if you hadn't a clue what to do you had to do it. (Incredibly I was never picked out in 5 years at college, despite being an altar-server at St Gerard's for nearly 10 !) Usually it was a reluctant trek to the church but if one of our own classmates was 'selected' we would dash for front-row seats in order to support them in any way we could ie. making funny faces, pointing, hissing, etc. Resulting on one occasion in one classmate slipping down three steps on the altar trying not to laugh! Success. To sum up my five years at Preston Catholic College I would say I failed miserably. All I wanted to do was get home, get changed and play footy in the street.

However, what I can also say is that from leaving school at 16, up to taking early retirement at Royal Mail at 63 ½ , I was never ever out of work, not even for one day. In this day and age I wonder how many people will be able to say this in years to come. Great days, the jury's still out. Regrets, None.

By Tony Billington



Images of Preston Catholic College and St Wilfred's Church kindly provided by the Cardinal Newman College Archive, courtesy of Paul Swarbrick of the Preston Historical Society. To see many more photos of the college over the years look on Preston Digital Archive, you may be able to add some names to the faces.

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

When dinner was over Mr Thornley had another surprise for me. He told Kath to go with Walter to his girl's house and stay to tea. It didn't suit her but off they both went. Out came her grandad's bike, I was placed on the crossbar, he cocked his leg over, and off we went with the dog running behind. I have never mentioned the dog, a red setter, but it wasn't keen on going with children it preferred to stay with the menfolk. Kathleen and I had taken it on the Saturday morning, but it kept looking behind for its master and finally trotted back home. I felt sorry for it with its tongue lolling out and panting but she kept up with us just behind the back wheel. It was evident she had done this many times before. Mr Thornley told me we were going to Bamber Bridge where we used to live to see the old neighbours again, I think he made the journey quite often. 'I like to keep in touch' he told me. It took about 20 minutes he didn't go fast on account of the dog. By the time we arrived my iron seat was making my bum ache. He lifted me down leaving the bike at the top end of the row and walked down knocking on certain doors. When they answered he said 'Hi Jem, I browt someone to sitha an your missus as well' 'Dusta know this young feller?' Then the no's, eehs, and by gums would start. 'Thas med a biggun Arthur' I was always called Arthur when I lived in Dewhurst Row. The Dixon girls cried and kissed me, I nearly finished up crying myself. 'We think about you many a time, tha wert a bonny babby'. All in all we spent a good two hours recounting things I and they did four to ten years ago. A rather nostalgic moment was when the occupants of No. 9 let me look round my old home. I was heartbroken and let it show, all the years had fallen away and it all came back to me. The tenant was a young man who had lived with his parents higher up the street and had asked for the tenancy when we had all left. He got married and fetched his bride to Number 9. They had a little girl about three I think her name was Lucy. Another ride into Bamber Bridge itself to see a shopkeeper Mother Brown had been friendly with. I was duly shown off to her and asked all the questions my old neighbours had asked as well. 'Where's all them lovely curls'. It was a prison crop style you got where I was now living. Then half a crown, a princely sum, was pressed into my hand and off we went back to Leyland for tea. Straight after we had eaten Mr Thornley said 'Come on, lad, get thi cap and cooat on, wher off agean'. We crossed the road to the bus stop and in a few minutes along came a bus, destination Chorley. My companion booked one and a half return. We sat back on the slatted seats and I was allowed to sit next to the window. As we left Leyland behind we passed fields with cattle grazing and resting, chewing their cud. I never saw any sheep! A farm or two, one with a bevy of kids sat on the gate waving madly at all and sundry. Under a bridge with a train speeding over it. I surely was having an adventurous time. When I queried where we were going all I got was a laconic 'Tha'll see!'. Arriving at Chorley, we disembarked only to board another bus. This time we booked to Eaves Lane and a much shorter ride. We got off near some big gates and to my surprise we passed through them. It was then I realised it was a hospital. Mr Thornley spoke to a nurse and he called her sister. I thought it must be some relation of his but it transpired this was her title and she was in charge. I heard her say that it wasn't visiting time yet but she would make an exception on this occasion. 'You may stay for half an hour but in future come at the proper visiting times'. We went down a long passage then entered a ward with about twenty beds, maybe a few less, but a lot never the less. At the very top the last bed on the right sat a white haired old lady. Mr Thornley said to her 'Heelo Esther, I browt him'. She looked at me a long time then she sort of whispered 'Oh Arthur, come here and let me look at you. Its been such a long time.' There were tears in her eyes when she spoke. A line of spittle seemed to cling to the corner of her mouth and she held me with one frail arm to her breast. By now of course,

I had realised that this was Mother Brown, my foster mother, who had so lovingly in a strict fashion looked after me in my infancy and early boyhood. She cried, I cried, Mr Thornley's eyes looked suspiciously moist, even the sister wiped her eyes then left us together. 'You've grown Arthur love, but what have they done to your lovely hair. It's a shame my bonny lad with no curls'. Although I had missed her and not seen her for years I didn't know what to say and let her ask the questions. I did not tell her the truth about the orphanage, the hidings or Miss Hall's vitriolic tongue and just said 'It's not too bad'. She asked how old I was now. 'I'll be eleven on Christmas Eve' I said, then added shyly 'Mum'. 'Nay, lovey, you've got it wrong your birthday is on the twenty fourth of April'. Miss Hall said Christmas Eve was my birthday, she evidently didn't know so picked me one. At that rate I was already eleven and had been for about five weeks. Mum, as I must call her, tried to sit me on her knee but I was too heavy, so stood in front of her and held her hands. 'Thank you Edward' she said to Mr Thornley. 'Thank you, you have made an old lady very happy, you are so good to me'. I said I would help look after her when I was big like Walter. She smiled a big smile, that I would now term as wistfully. All too soon it was time to go, as the patients or inmates tea was to be served. So a rather subdued little boy of eleven left with the knowledge of knowing that at least there was one person who loved him. 'I'll bring him again when I get permission' Mr Thornley promised as we left. Another wan smile, and we had to go and leave her with her thoughts. I never saw her again (and all because of a rubber ball, that changed the course of my life for the worse). The return journey seemed to pass quicker than the outgoing one, due I suppose to me firing rapid questions at Mr Thornley concerning Mother Brown. I incidentally kept the surname of my natural mother, that, of course, was Crook. He explained to me about her having a stroke and the effect it has on people. Why she had difficulty with the movement of her left hand and her slightly slurred speech. Although she had been much worse in the beginning she would never be able to look after herself again let alone a young and active boy.

Kathleen had got back and was a bit huffy at not having seen us all day, but perked up when a lady said 'Have an hour or two outside, make the most of your last night you 're back home tomorrow. You should have gone tonight its school tomorrow. but you can have the day off eric, i have got permission for you to stay off Monday so off we went. Kathleen suggested dashing off to the Mayfields to see if we could find any pennies folk had dropped at yesterdays festivities. The fair was all shrouded up when we passed. Kath found a halfpenny and I found some toffees in a bag which we ate, then to my friends disgust I picked up a piece of brandy snap, I was just about to eat it when she screamed 'I shan't kiss you tonight if you eat that !' I blushed and threw it down. There was a group of people playing tennis in an adjoining field so we finished our stay watching them for a short while. Soon it started going dusk so we headed back home slowly to make the day last as long as we could. Supper was soon served as it was past nine o'clock, porridge of all things and a huge piece of custard pie. After our little repast we got our marching orders so we said goodnight and went upstairs but not before me lasso grabbed another kiss. When we were outside she said I was her boyfriend and we would get married. 'Lets see' she said 'I'm ten now so in another ten years.' How gullible, innocent and romantic kids of ten can be. I am turned 73 now, but I still do very often think about those three wonderful days when miracles did happen.

More next month

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

Foreword

I've tinkered at my bits of rhymes
In weary, woeful, waiting times;
In doleful hours of battle-din,
Ere yet they brought the wounded in;
Through vigils of the fateful night,
In lousy barns by candle-light;
In dug-outs, sagging and aflood,
On stretchers stiff and bleared with blood;
By ragged grove, by ruined abode,
By hearths accurst where Love abode;
By broken altars, blackened shrines
I've tinkered at my bits of rhymes,
I've solaced me with scraps of song
The desolated ways along:
Through sickly fields all shrapnel-sown,
And meadows reaped by death alone;
By blazing cross and splintered spire,
By headless Virgin in the mire;
By gardens gashed amid their bloom,
By gutted grave, by shattered tomb;
Beside the dying and the dead,
Where rocket green and rocket red,
In trembling pools of poisoning light,
With flowers of flame festoon the night.
Ah me! by what dark ways of wrong
I've cheered my heart with scraps of song.
So here's my sheaf of war-won verse,
And some is bad, and some is worse.
And if at times I curse a bit,
You needn't read that part of it;
For through it all like horror runs
The red resentment of the guns.
And you yourself would mutter when
You took the things that once were men,
And sped them through that zone of hate
To where the dripping surgeons wait;

And wonder too if
in God's sight
War ever, ever can
be right.
Yet may it not be,
crime and war
But effort
misdirected are?
And if there's good
in war and crime,
There may be in
my bits of rhyme,
My songs from out
the slaughter mill:
So take or leave
them as you will.



The Stretcher-Bearer Party (c. 1918)
Cyril Barraud (1877-1965)

Lancashire's Secondary School of the Year

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in action at our Open Day
Friday 3rd October

Between 9am-3pm, no appointment necessary

If you are unable to attend on the above date please contact us to
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