

The Preston Magazine



Issue 25

Daddy Dunn

The Black Prince of Deepdale

Catholic College

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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, this month is our final chapter and I would like to thank Robin for allowing us to print his memories. Our ongoing serial 'A Preston Lad' by Arthur Eric Crook (1917-1997) is now onto Volume 2 which are memories from his early working life and memories from the 1930/40s around Preston. Old articles found relating to Daddy Dunn, Preston Gas Pioneer, The Cretemanor, a concrete barge built at Preston in 1919. Gerard Kelbrick has written about his memories at the Catholic College in the 50's. Tony Billington has written an article about Alex Dawson – The Black Prince of Deepdale – Preston North End player.

If anyone has any family memories, photographs or any items of trench art relating to the First World War that could feature in our magazine please do get in touch. Also if any of your family members are named on a Preston or South Ribble War Memorial and you have any information about them we would love to hear from you.

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

The Preston flag seen on the front of the magazine was designed by **Philip Tibbets**, copyright has been waived to allow it to be used by anyone.

Take a look at the Preston groups on Flickr, there are thousands of images, old and new. **Preston Digital Archive** – is always on the look out for old photos of Preston and surrounding area, please get in touch at the number below if you would like to contribute. We can scan any images for you and give you a digital copy.

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

Front Cover Image – By the River Ribble taken by Heather Crook

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PHOTOGRAPHS FROM PRESTON PAST



Old Preston Firestation, Tithebarn Street, Preston. Courtesy of Preston Digital Archive.



Delivery Boy (thought to be in the vicinity of Marsh Lane) courtesy of Mel Johnson, Preston Digital Archive. Do you know who or where it is ?



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ARTICLES FROM PRESTON PAST

PRESTON SOLDIERS – One Drowned – Letters from Survivors – A number of Preston soldiers who were on the Cameronia have written home to inform their relatives of their safety. Private M Goodwood, of 3 Poplar Street writes : 'We were swimming about all night on rafts in the rough sea, and were picked up by a minesweeper; I was nearly done up, but they landed us all right'. Private Thomas Thornley, Lowther Street, Ashton-on-Ribble: 'There were some lads who were saved taken to another camp, so don't worry'. He adds that he lost all his belongings, and was rescued from the sea by a ship. Private Jos. Blundell, 28 Poplar-street, Preston writes most cheerily to his mother: 'We're all right now, so what does it matter? Keep on smiling'. Private Tom Clarkson, 24 Brierfield-road, Preston writes in a similar strain. Amongst the drowned was Private JW Fitchie, of 9a Bank-place, Ashton-on-Ribble, chief clerk at Margerison's Soap Works, Preston.

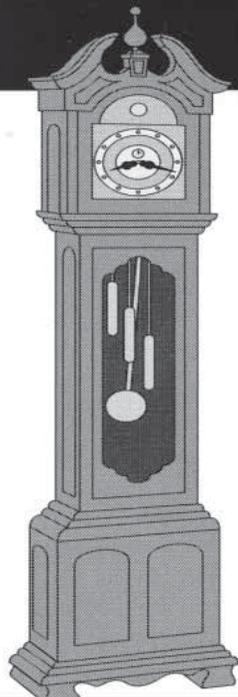
Lancashire Daily Post 19th May 1917.

THE DEMAND FOR LAND WORKERS – Tomorrow's Demonstration at Preston – Several Lancashire towns have already held recruiting rallies on behalf of the Women's Land Army, and tomorrow it will be Preston's turn to appeal to the patriotism of women who are urgently needed to take the places of the men called to the colours. Volunteers have the choice of enrolment in either the agricultural, forage, or timber cutting sections, in each of which there is scope for the employment of an immense amount of female labour. The needs of the cropping farms at this moment make it imperative in the national interest that labour shall be forthcoming, and the South Lonsdale and Amounderness Sub Committee of the County Committee for the employment of women on the land under whose auspices tomorrow's demonstration and pageant will be held, could place hundreds of girls in situations if they were available. Prejudice against the employment of women on the farms is being rapidly broken down, largely due to the proficiency the land army girls have shown. A Lancashire farmer well known in county agricultural circles, who has given his sons to the Army and utilised female labour for a long time, records a recent incident that should encourage prospective recruits and prompt farmers to show forbearance with newcomers. A girl left her employment in the mill and made considerable sacrifices in a monetary sense to take up work on the land. At first she dare not even approach the cows in the shippon, but in a few days she proved an excellent milker, and only this week could have been seen carting lime from the station to the farm in charge of a team of horses. The processions of the land army girls to be held in Preston tomorrow – particulars are given in the advertising columns – will include some interesting tableaux representing various phases of farm work. Associated with the afternoon parade will be a pageant organised by Mrs Burton, of Penwortham, on behalf of the local Prisoners of War Fund, for the worthy objects of which Saturday will be observed as a flag day.

Lancashire Daily Post 21st June 1918

CORPORATION CHRYSANTHEMUMS – Great Show of Blooms at Preston – Each year the show of chrysanthemums in the corporation conservatories at Miller Park, Preston, is a great feature of the autumn horticultural season, and on this occasion the display of blooms is described as the finest yet by Mr Tye, Head Gardener. The exhibition is once more open to the public for a month, commencing yesterday, every afternoon and evening, and although no charge is made those passing through are asked to contribute a little to boxes which are in aid of the local Prisoner of War Fund.

Lancashire Daily Post 12th November 1917



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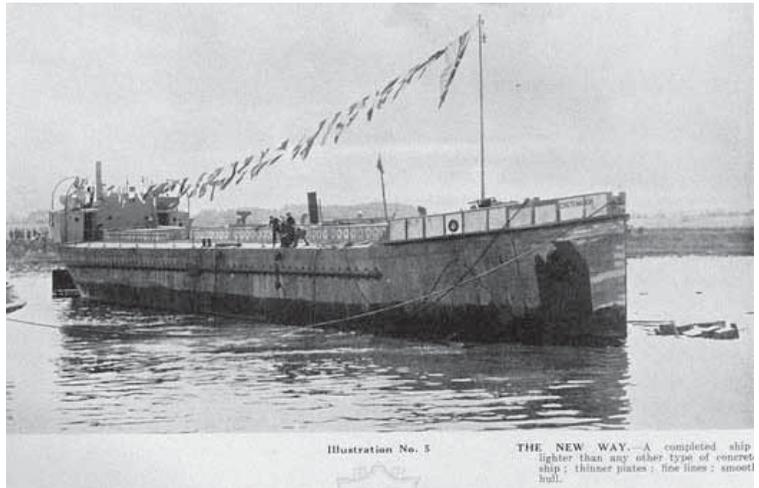
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THE CRETEMANOR

Launch at Preston
– First 1,000 ton concrete barge takes to the water. The Cretemanor, the first 1,000 ton reinforced concrete sectional vessel built, according to the principles of Mr H Ritchie, Liverpool by Messrs Hughes and Stirling at the new shipyard, Preston Docks, was successfully launched from the firm's yard in the presence



of crowds of people within the yard and on both banks of the river. There has been one other launch of a vessel on the same lines, but this was only one-fourth of the Cretemanor's carrying capacity and was an experimental vessel, which, we are assured, has achieved all the builder and designer hoped. The Cretemanor, has a dead weight carrying capacity of 1,000 tons, is 180ft long, 31ft beam, and 19ft 6in moulded depth, and has been built for the Admiralty. Another on practically the same lines will be launched in October. The barge is fitted with boiler and wince gear, but does not contain self-propelling machinery. The boat is built in sections, joined together by grouting and by diagonal steel bracings, and the deck, fore peak and after peak are cast in situ with concrete. Altogether the Cretemanor is a very symmetrical as well as serviceable looking craft.

The launching took place at a few minutes to two, the naming ceremony being performed by Mrs HE Hughes, wife of one of the partners of the building firm. There were present in the yard Mr Hughes, Mr Stirling, Mr Hellyer and Mr Stuart, (Admiralty representatives) Mr Hill (Lloyds) Mr Weir (Board of Trade) Mr Ritchie (Inventor) Mr Thwaites (Messrs Hughes and Stirling) Mr E Williams M.I.N.A. (Managing Director of the Concrete Seacraft Co.) Mr Dawson (Blacketts Concrete Shipbuilding Co., Stockton) Alderman Margerison, and Messrs Barron and Hopperton. Mrs Hughes in naming the vessel, smashed a bottle pendant from the summit of the bow, and with a presentation mallet and a chisel severed the launching cord. Immediately the barge began to move down the launching ways, to gracefully alight on the water some seconds later, the launch being accomplished without a hitch. All concerned were perfectly satisfied. The mallet with which the cord was cut contained a box, on which was an inscription plate containing the following: 'Presented to Mrs H E Hughes on the occasion of the launch of the Cretemanor, August 14th, 1919, by the works staff, New Shipyard, Preston.' Vessels of the type of the Cretemanor are suited to coastwise and trans-continental traffic, and built upon the same principles are capable of being fitted with engines and doing the work of ordinary steel-built cargo boats at much less cost of production and infinitely less cost of maintenance than the all steel variety of vessel. The time occupied in building the Cretemanor was much longer than was necessary, due to a variety of courses, but it is computed that facsimiles can be turned out in about four and a half months. It is a great many years since any vessel was launched at Preston.

Lancashire Daily Post 14th August, 1919.

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Preston Now and Then

We return now to Saul-street, where in 1851 the Baths and Wash houses were opened by Alderman John Catterall, Mayor, and immediately afterwards, Mr John Livesey, Editor of The Preston Guardian' had a warm bath, the first person who made use of the establishment. Total expenditure on the Baths and Washhouses was upwards of £11,000. Next, we come to the Magistrates Court and Police-station in Lancaster-road, on the south side of the Orchard, erected in the mayoralty of Alderman Spencer, 1857, from the design of the late Mr J H Park, and opened in the following year, during the mayoralty of the late Mr John Humber. The old lock-up in Avenham-street was then razed and the mill of Messrs Horrocks, Jacson and Co., was extended upon the site. Of the Orchard, which a hundred years ago was called 'Colley's Garden' it may be said that for three generations it has blossomed only in bricks and mortar. The foundation stone of the United Methodist Free Church, erected in 1862, on the north side of the Orchard was laid by the Rev. John Guttridge, the first minister and man of mark in his day among the Dissenting Community; and the Congregational Chapel, on the east side of the Orchard, was built in the following year. The very fine Covered Market occupies an area of 4048 square yards of the Orchard. The roof is a remarkable specimen of the engineering skill of Mr Garlick as it has no internal support, the outer pillars alone maintaining its position. The late Mr Joseph Clayton entered into a contract with the Corporation for its erection in 1870 for 6,070, but when he had constructed about one-fourth of the roof a severe storm on the 6th August, destroyed it utterly and he gave up the contract, declaring that no roof made on that principle would stand rough weather. Messrs Bennett and Co., of Birmingham then took the contract for 9,000 but they also gave up alleging a similar objection. Its construction was then undertaken by Messrs Allsup and Son of this town, who completed it at a cost of 9,126, and it has withstood many severer storms than that of 1870. In preparation for the Guild of 1882, the Corn Exchange was greatly enlarged and materially altered internally. At the west end the pork shambles were abolished to permit of the extension of the building, and internally the alteration was so great as to obliterate any trace of its former aspect. The original building was erected at a cost of £11,000 in 1824, the inner court, or area, being then open to the sky, but in 1856, a glass roof, we believe designed by the late Mr Philip Park (then Borough Steward and Mayor in 1863-4) was erected, and thus the area was made available for large public meetings, concerts, balls etc., in all weathers. The alterations and enlargement were designed and carried out by Mr B Sykes, and were completed for about £16,000; and the structure has since been designated the 'Public Hall' in which Preston possesses the largest hall in Lancashire. Liverpool's Philharmonic Hall has an area of 10,241 square feet, the Free Trade Hall in Manchester 13,770 feet, and the Preston Public Hall 14,076 square feet. It has sitting accommodation for 2,764 persons, and standing room for about 800 others; but if standing room only be required several thousand more could be admitted. It was in the Guild Week of 1882 during the Mayoralty of Alderman E Birley, that the foundation stone of the Harris Free Library and Museum was laid in the Market-place, with Masonic ceremony by the Earl of Lathom. Prince Leopold (Duke of Albany), the Queen's youngest son, and the Duchess, had accepted the invitation to the Guild, but almost at the last moment his presence was prevented by illness, and the Duke of Cambridge attended in his stead at the Queen's command. He was present at some of the festivities and at the laying of the foundation stone of the Free Library and Museum. This noble structure, the envy of other Lancashire boroughs, was designed by Mr James Hibbert, the architect of several other redeeming features of the town.

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

MOVING ON – Towards the end of 1967 I was handed a vacancy list by District Foreman Bill Lean saying 'there's a job on here for Mechanical Foreman at Heysham Harbour, and TB says you ought to apply for it'. TB (Tom Buckley) was Divisional Maintenance Engineer at Ladywell House. I was obviously flattered to be thought of as a possible candidate for the job, but in two minds as the job would entail moving home and I was extremely happy there and in my position at Butler Street. Consultation with my wife ensued and I was persuaded to apply. I attended an interview with Mr Buckley, and the Resident Engineer Heysham, Mr Smith. I was successful and took up my post in January 1968, moving from Wages Grade to Salaried for the magnificent sum of £1105 per annum. After three months of lodging I moved to Torrisholme, and with this move began the next 27 years of a happy Railway career !

LATER YEARS – I was only based at Heysham for two years. A reorganisation (where would BR have been without them) saw the Marine Dept take over all Harbour maintenance and we were moved into ex- C&W premises next to Morecambe Promenade Station in 1970. Facilities there were a bit basic and in 1977 we moved to a newly constructed Depot in the Goods Yard at Carnforth across from Steamtown. 1989 brought me back to Preston P&M, due to yet another reorganisation and promotion to a higher grade. An enjoyable three years ensued with some of the staff who I'd left 21 years previously, but now away from Butler Street, due to the building of Fishergate Centre, in a new building off Corporation Street, across the tracks from County Hall.

In 1992 I was appointed Plant Manager North West, and found myself back at Carnforth, in a portakabin. After barely a year there another reorganisation (what else) caused by the coming Privatisation of the Railway saw me transferred to the Civil Engineer's Dept, bringing me back to Preston for a third and final time, this time in Ladywell House.

And almost inevitably, yet another reorganisation saw my position amalgamated with that of the Crewe area, and faced with having to move home I accepted early retirement in 1995. I enjoyed my Railway career but I have to say that I got most pleasure and job satisfaction in those first eleven years, in overalls, on the tools !

By Robin Bamber

Images of Preston Shed courtesy of Preston Digital Archive.



Remains of Preston Shed 1967 Courtesy of 70023venus2009

THE BLACK PRINCE OF DEEPALE

In the wake of Preston North End's historic play-off victory at Wembley against Swindon Town and Jermaine Beckford's magnificent hat trick I'd like to recall my first ever trip to the old Twin Towers in 1964 to follow my hero another goal-scoring machine – Alex Dawson 'The Black Prince'

In Issue 22 I recalled the journey from Round 3 to the final itself in 'The Road to Twin Towers'. The 'jury' is, and always will be out as to whether players of yesteryear could do the business in today's superfit, robot-style game. Well, in my humble (and biased) opinion a bloke who could kick equally well with both feet and head a ball harder than some of the lily-livered strikers of today can, then yes he could. Dawson's mobility was a talking point of the 60's but when you had wingers the calibre of Dave 'Tug' Wilson and Dougie Holden, later followed by Ernie Hannigan (who sadly died recently) and Frank Lee to deliver perfect crosses on a regular basis you didn't have to move very far.

You could even challenge the goal-keeper in those days and there were many memorable battles with opposing 'men in green' particularly between the Black Prince and Eddie Hopkinson of Bolton Wanderers. 'Hoppy' wasn't tall by

goalkeeping standards but he was a hard, stropky bleeder, who could look after himself and was good enough to play for England.

Alexander Downie Dawson was born on February 21st, 1940, in Aberdeen, Scotland. He started his career as a trainee with Manchester United helping in a small way for the club to win the old 1st Division title in 1957. However, but for a twist of fate, the young Dawson could have been another victim in the Munich air-crash disaster less than a year later. Man Utd were due to fly out to play Red Star Belgrade in a European Cup Tie and Dawson was asked to take his passport to Old Trafford along with Mark Pearson. Having played a central league game against Wolves that afternoon both players were told that they weren't required to travel as Geoff Bent had been chosen to cover for Captain Roger Byrne who was carrying a slight injury. As there were no substitutes in those days only 12 players travelled. Had the



tragedy happened today a whole squad of players could have perished. As it was, Bent was one of the unfortunate players who lost their lives.

Having scored 54 goals for the Red Devils, the 5'10" striker then found his first team opportunities limited after the club signed David Herd from Arsenal. He duly signed for Preston North End in 1961 and the rest is history. Due to his dark swarthy looks he was christened 'The Black Prince' and did what came naturally for him, score goals, and plenty of them! All in all, he scored 114 goals in 197 games for the Lilywhites.

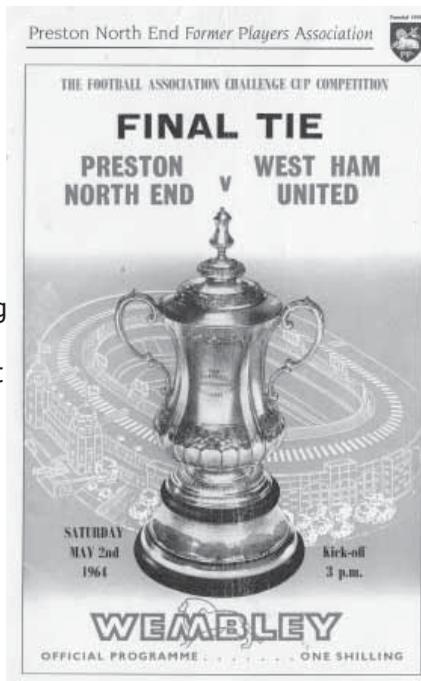
His best ever season was in 1963-64 when he scored 36 goals in league and cup culminating in the FA Cup Final at Wembley where despite putting Preston in the lead 2-1, he eventually obtained a losers medal as West Ham hit back to beat the gallant Lancastrians 3-2. His goal, a powerful header was described in one newspaper thus 'Dawson rose like a giant stag and a moment later the ball rested snugly in the net'. That description could have described many of the goals scored by the 'Black Prince of Deepdale'! Having just missed out on promotion as well behind Sunderland and Leeds, the class of 64 never ever reached those heady heights again. The team started to be slowly dismantled but it came as a huge shock when Alex Dawson was allowed to leave and go to Bury in 1967, (deep down I don't think I ever forgave PNE for that). He was only 27 and still had a few good years left in him as he later proved. In his short spell at Bury his record was 21 goals in 50 games.

He later joined Brighton Hove Albion (and big buddy Nobby Lawton) where it was 26 goals in 57 games. He was loaned out to Brentford where in 10 appearances he hit 6 goals.

He finished his career in non-league at Corby Town in 1973.

Alex Dawson's total record in professional football reads 394 appearances, 212 goals, the majority of which came at Preston North End. I last saw the 'Black Prince' at the FA Cup Final Reunion at the Pines in 2004. I told him that as a school-boy I was scared of asking him for his autograph, as he made his way from the training ground on Lowthorpe Road back to the ground. He found that highly amusing and the smile that appeared on his face was the same one he used to produce on barging some unfortunate keeper into the back of the net at Deepdale ! Powerful in the air with two good feet – Could he play in today's footballing circus ? I know what I think – what do you ?

Tony Billington



PRESTON CATHOLIC COLLEGE LATE 50'S

I collect back numbers of The Preston Magazine from an Aunt, who lives in Preston, on the rare occasion that I visit my home town. I was interested to see two articles about Preston Catholic College, by Keith Coles and Tony Billington. I would like to add my two pennerth' if I may.

I passed the 11plus at St. Walburges and went to "The College" in 1954, until 1959. I also found it a culture shock moving to a Grammar School environment, but you learn to cope. I was streamed in the 1C,2C classes, but then went into 3M,4M,and 5M, (M being for 'Modern'). The school Headmaster in those days was Fr. Carty, and the move to an 'M' stream was revolutionary. The M teacher was Louis Caton, a truly inspirational teacher. His lessons in Technical Drawing and Mechanical Science, not to mention Metal Work stood me in good stead for the rest of my life. Another inspirational teacher was Joe Smith, the music teacher. I owe him my lifelong love of classical music. By coincidence, his picture appears in the third page of Issue 20.(The Lay Teachers of the Catholic College). He is on the right hand end of the front row.

One presumes the teacher behind him is holding a starting pistol!



As for the Jesuit Priests, like them or loath them, they were dedicated teachers, and stood no nonsense from the unruly rabble they were trying to educate. I was on the receiving end of Fr.(Dicky) Birch's ferula, or strap, on two occasions. I'm sure I deserved it for talking in class, and it did the trick.

Tony Billington was right about the Report Cards. They were handed out on Friday and they had to be back in, signed by a parent, on Monday. I used to follow my Dad around on Sunday night, with a pen, until he had signed it. Not doing so was a hanging offence.

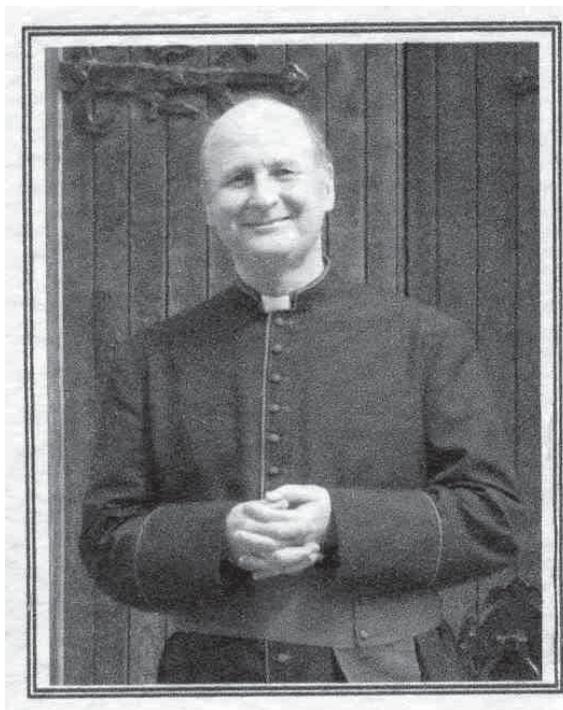
I was hopeless at field sports so I spent long dreary hours fielding at the boundary in the Factory Lane Sports field. But- The College had its own swimming pool- and it was free--fantastic. I used to go for a swim, sometimes three times a day, Lunchtime, Lesson time, and afterschool at night. Albert Clarkeson, the pool manager, was another inspirational member of staff. Does anyone remember Canon Klomp throwing money into the water on Swimming Gala Night?? What a scramble to retrieve it!

Tony mentions Altar Boys. I volunteered and became a regular altar boy at St. Wilfrids Church. It was preferable to sitting squeezed into the benches for hours waiting for Thursday mass to start.

I've attached a copy of a photograph I've had for 60 years. It shows "The College" from the air. It shows Mount Street at the bottom, and Chapel Street at the top. I couldn't finish this letter without mentioning my friend and class mate, Ted Gould. He went on to become Monsignor Edward Gould. Sadly he died a couple of years ago, and I have attached his picture here. He was well known in the Preston area.

My thanks to Tony Billington and Keith Coles for re-igniting old times. For my part I am very grateful to "The College" for giving me a good education. I left at 16 to take up a 5 year Student Apprenticeship at English Electric, but when the TSR2 was cancelled by the Harold Wilson Government in 1964, I left EECo and spent the next 35 years building and operating Nuclear Power Stations.

Gerard Kelbrick
June 2015



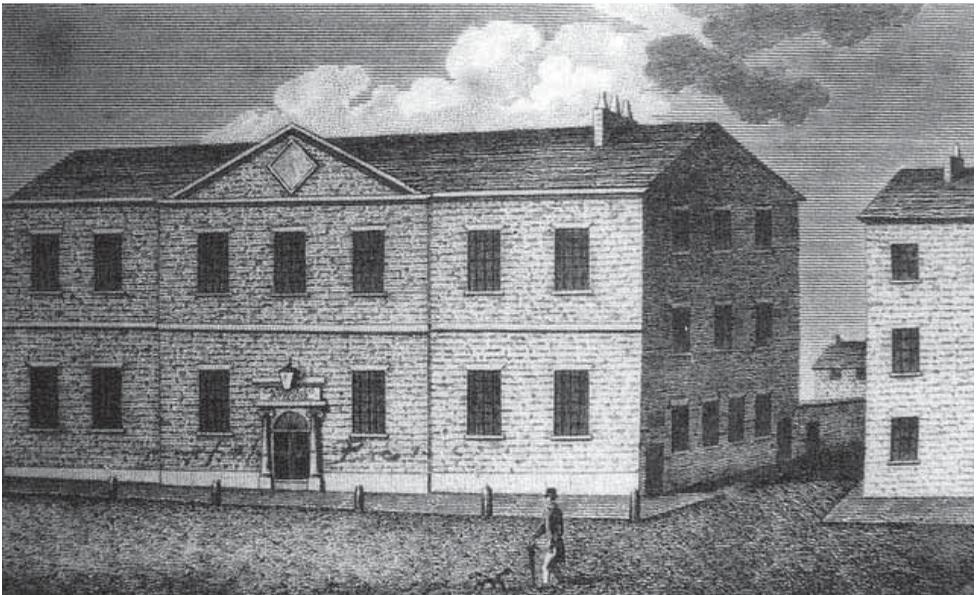
Daddy Dunn, Preston Pioneer of Gas Lighting

Part Two

Father Postlethite delivered a lecture in the Assembly Room of the Black Bull, in Preston, and at that gathering the same night the Preston Gaslight Company was formed, leading gentlemen of the town subscribing over £2,000 on the spot. Mr John Grafton, a pupil of Mr Samuel Clegg, of Manchester, was the first engineer of the Preston company, and the first trustees were the Rev. Joseph Dunn, Isaac Wilcockson, Thomas German, James Mounsey and William Taylor. John Walmsley was the first clerk. A difficult task. Evidently the pioneers had a hard row to hoe. Overcoming popular prejudice, superstition and suspicion was no mean task. If all had been plain sailing Preston might have been the first town in the Empire to adopt street lighting, for the Preston company was formed about the end of 1811 or early 1812, and it was not until the last day of 1814 that public gas lighting was introduced in London streets.



There were many obstacles in the way in Preston, and it was not until the passing of the Town Improvement Act in 1885, giving the Town Commissioners powers of watching, cleansing, lighting and other improvements that the way became clear for the public adoption of gas lighting. There is abundant evidence that the Gaslight Company had not been asleep in the meantime. A 'Treatise on Gas Light' by Frederick Accum,



operative chemist, published in 1818, contains in a preface dated November, 1815, a report of recent improvements in apparatus and says – ‘New methods of purifying gas and economising fuel in the production of it have been pointed out by Mr John Grafton (late pupil of Mr Clegg) and are now being carried into effect under his direction in the lighting up of the town of Preston, in Lancashire’.

Hardwick’s History of Preston says ‘Preston has the distinction of being the first provincial town in England into which gas has been introduced for public consumption. ‘Its old Parish Church was the first structure devoted to religious services lighted with gas, not excepting those in the Metropolis, and the first Government Barrack which adopted the improved form of illumination is the one at Fulwood.’ ‘The Preston Gas Company was formed in 1815, chiefly through the instrumentality of the Rev Joseph Dunn. The works were in operation early in 1816 and so rapid was their extension that the original stock of £2,000 has, in the short space of forty years become augmented to £87,000’. Date Mystery – Garrulous Peter Whittle in a glowing account of the new gas-works, opposite Pleasant-street, on the road leading to Avenham Walk speaks of Fr Dunn as the first promoter of the company and a ‘capital of eleven to twelve thousand pounds’. Peter was writing this in 1821, and striving to advocate a great display for the new light for the Guild of 1822. In the same issue he speaks of the central gateway of the Parish Church, with its lofty double Tuscan pillars ‘being mounted with a lamp into which a burner is inserted diffusing a gaseous blaze from a number of jets, producing a tense brilliancy of clear white light’.

These gates were erected in 1808’ says he, but neglects to say when the gas burners were inserted. Later, he says of the Parish Church: ‘The gas has been introduced in the church, and gives a brilliant solemn effect during the evening services, which is performed on Sunday and Wednesday evenings by our worthy vicar, the Rev Roger Carus Wilson, MA., and the Rev. M Mark, the curate’. He neglects to mention the date but it must have been after August 4th, 1812, when the old vicar, Rev. Humphrey Shuttleworth died.

The same mist as to the exact date seems to shroud the first use of gas in St Wilfred’s Catholic Chapel, but the probabilities are that gas lights were used there long before they were introduced into the streets of Preston, and that both St Wilfred’s and Fox-street schools were lighted by gas before it was introduced into the Preston Parish Church. Closely associated with Father Dunn in the early days of gas was Isaac Wilcockson, printer and journalist, who bought up the old ‘Preston Journal’ and started the ‘Preston Chronicle’ in 1811.

This paper was amalgamated with the ‘Preston Guardian and was the parent of the ‘Lancashire Daily Post’. **P.W.B.**

A Preston Lad Volume Two by Arthur Eric Crook (1917-1997)

In the early thirties there were not a lot of cars or carriers on the roads, there were still plenty of horse drawn traffic about and you could play football in the streets in the evenings with complete safety. We used to chalk wickets on the Lively Polly wall near the Hob Inn at Bamber Bridge and play cricket all evening. If you hit the ball and it went in the River Lostock you were considered out ! At least you didn't need a stumper (wicket keeper). Life moved at a leisurely pace, yet everything got done, and you still worked on if it rained. I'm pertaining to the outside worker, of course, and if you stopped so did your pay. In sombre moments I always used to look on life or myself as a fireplace. Queer idea but it seemed to fit. Fires were like people, fitful. It could match my moods accordingly. Poor coal, like steam coal produced a a dull sullen nature, a smoky cold effect. Damp wood, a cold sulky brooding manner. If the wouldn't draw it got poked and cursed. If some good Yorkshire coal was used a bright and cheery outlook was evident. If the fire burnt glee (ideal for toasting). A satisfied smug effect was excuded yest I think a fireplace exemplified my life at least, perfectly! The trouble was my fire had a fair share of poor coal and wet wood. I think that mode of thinking would be called philosophy nowadays. Working on my own such a lot gave me a lot of time to think, but when you get to thinking its generally when things are going wrong and you wonder where that silver lining is. Plenty of dark clouds around and I don't think that Ive cracked it yet. Very elusive that silver lining. Putting it plain and simple you are either lucky or not and by the hell I'm not ! (lucky that is). Still when you are between the fifteen and twenty or even five and twenty, if you are down it does not take long to get up again off the floor. 'Shake off dull sloth' as the hymn goes and everything is alright again. God is in his heaven and alls right with the world. 'Where are we going tonight!' – 'Will it be a good picture!' 'Will she turn up!' 'Will my mate give me the tanner he owes me!' 'I hope its not windy, the it wont spoil my hair!' 'Is that a yellow spot on my face!' God, where's my comb!' 'Oh hell, I've forgotten my button hole!' Hey presto, life's back on an even keel. Sod the expense I am having two pennorth of chips and a twopenny college pudding in Fitchetts chippy tonight. I'm worng it's a twopenny mixture, chips and peas, then the pudding, and I'll scrounge a Capstan off Eddie after. Yahoo!. Such were the happenings and incidents around the year 1937-8. A highlight now and again – the lads would stay local and Jenny Ingram and Farington would stroll past and try to look nonchalant, but in reality they had come looking for us, spiced the night up, because two of us had to walk them home. Well, as far as the street end because of Ingram's mother (we never used her first name, when discussing her). Ingram's mother would be stood with folded arms if she was late, they were akimbo, a veritable dragon, still that's how caring mothers behaved in those slightly puritanical days. Six words they hoped they would not hear their daughters say 'Mum, I've got something to tell you!' Words of doom, indeed. One Saturday night out ended in a rather gruesome fashion, we had been to the Picture Palace, and as usual we were walking home. As we set off on the bridge over the Ribble at Shawes Arms we heard an almighty crash. A car had smashed through the railings and finished up in the dark waters of the river. The tide was up and we could see the headlights of the car shining under the swirling waters. It transpired that a local farmer and cattle dealer, whose farm was only a few hundred yards from the pub was the victim. His name was Frank Entwistle, in his forties, I think, he was a regular habitu e of the Shawes Arms and was always worse for the amber liquid when it was time to go home. I think the farm

was called Shawe Green Farm or maybe Wrea Green Farm, but like most of the farms in the Amounderness it no longer exists. We stayed watching, already affected with the adult affliction 'morbid curiosity'. Frank had left the pub, got into his car and failed to negotiate the sharp left hand downhill bend, carried straight on and smashed through the iron railings to a watery death. It stunned the village as he was a well known personality, sympathy expressed, but a lot of quiet 'I was not surprised' and 'I knew something would happen' etc., as everyone knew of his drinking habits and his fondness for the bottle, needless to say it was a six rather chastened boys would winded their way homeward on that tragic Saturday night. I never heard of the River Ribble overflowing its banks or the village flooding in my younger days. I cant say the same of the River Darwen when the river was in spate, the Ribble I mean, it would effect the Darwen and people in the Walton Green area was inundated with flood water quite often. I slept at Number 6 one weekend and woke up with my pal Eddie Turner, his brother Bill, his mum was still asleep, so we decided on an early breakfast, eggs and bacon, with doorstep slices of new bread. We went downstairs in our nighties and finished up knee deep in slutchy smelly river water. Oh what a mess it leaves, all the cinders in the fireplace are were washed out and deposited on the submerged carpets, shoes and newspapers floating about, and the smell, phew! It takes weeks to get straight and it happened quite often. All the market gardens on the other side of the river flooded and their crops were ruined. Lettuce, radish, potatoes, celery, etc., Knackered ! Thank Goodness the powers that be eventually widened the river banks and a wall erected on the riverside edge of the cottagers gardens so now the river can take much more volume and the wall settled any further doubts the 'Greeners' might have had. Walton Green is a picturesque little backwater and the local council endeavours to kept its Victorian look, flagged pavements and lamps to match the old fashioned cottages built by one of the baronets of the 'De Hoghtons' consequently the cottages are now in high demand and their market value has soared. A little further down the lane once stood Walton Hall, one time residence of the next in line to the Baronelty and we were allowed on the lawns when the village had its Field Day there. It stood empty for quite a while then the demolishers moved in. Descreators would be a better word, as anyone can evince when they witness how Preston town has suffered at their hands. It glibly called the march of progress. I hope the ghosts of the Edwardian and Victorian architects haunt their long forgotten dreams of the wreckers. Preston is a town without a soul now, and still it goes on, although not as on as made a scale – Preston Council is trying to regain some of their town's past glory, as can be seen on the former Flag Market and surrounding area. Pity they cant pull down that horrid Crystal House monstrosity, most most hideous erection built on the hallowed ground of the former Town Hall. I would hang, draw and quarter those greedy men and the council that allowed it to take place. Proud Preston, indeed, Poor Preston would be more suitable. At least I and my boyhood and teenage pals knew of the Preston of old and we can glory in the fact that we strolled through Miller Park when it was in its glory and knew the lovely buildings in Winckley Square and area. I would enjoy inflicting personal injury on those who robbed us of the old bandstand and the drinking cup in Avenham Park. Of course, the modern curse of mankind in partly to blame and there does not seem to be a cure for it, its called vandalism. Still, at the time I am writing of all this had not happened the Park Hotel looked proudly at the parks and river and that other monstrosity next to it had not become a warped brainchild of some idiot planner. Admittedly our halcyon days were soon to end. 1938 and the Royal Ordnance factory was being built at Euxton, war clouds were looming, but in our teenage innocence we put it all down to sabre rattling. We were a group of boisterous youths, enjoying life to its full.

To be continued

Going Home

I'm goin' 'ome to Blighty—ain't I glad to 'ave the chance!
I'm loaded up wiv fightin', and I've 'ad my fill o' France;
I'm feelin' so excited-like, I want to sing and dance,
For I'm goin' 'ome to Blighty in the mawnin'.

I'm goin' 'ome to Blighty: can you wonder as I'm gay?
I've got a wound I wouldn't sell for 'alf a year o' pay;
A harm that's mashed to jelly in the nicest sort o' way,
For it takes me 'ome to Blighty in the mawnin'.

'Ow everlastin' keen I was on gettin' to the front!
I'd ginger for a dozen, and I 'elped to bear the brunt;
But Cheese and Crust! I'm crazy, now I've done me little
stunt,
To sniff the air of Blighty in the mawnin'.

I've looked upon the wine that's white, and on the wine that's
red;

I've looked on cider flowin', till it fairly turned me 'ead;
But oh, the finest scoff will be, when all is done and said,
A pint o' Bass in Blighty in the mawnin'.

I'm goin' back to Blighty, which I left to strafe the 'Un;
I've fought in bloody battles, and I've 'ad a 'eap of fun;
But now me flipper's busted, and I think me dooty's done,
And I'll kiss me gel in Blighty in the mawnin'.

Oh, there be furrin' lands to see, and some of 'em be fine;
And there be furrin' gels to kiss, and scented furrin' wine;
But there's no land like England, and no other gel like mine:
Thank Gawd for dear old Blighty in the mawnin'.

**Taken from 'Rhymes of a Red Cross
Man' written by Robert William Service who
was born in Preston 16th January 1874.**

**'To the memory of my brother, Lieutenant
Albert Service
Canadian Infantry, Killed in Action, France,
1916.**





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