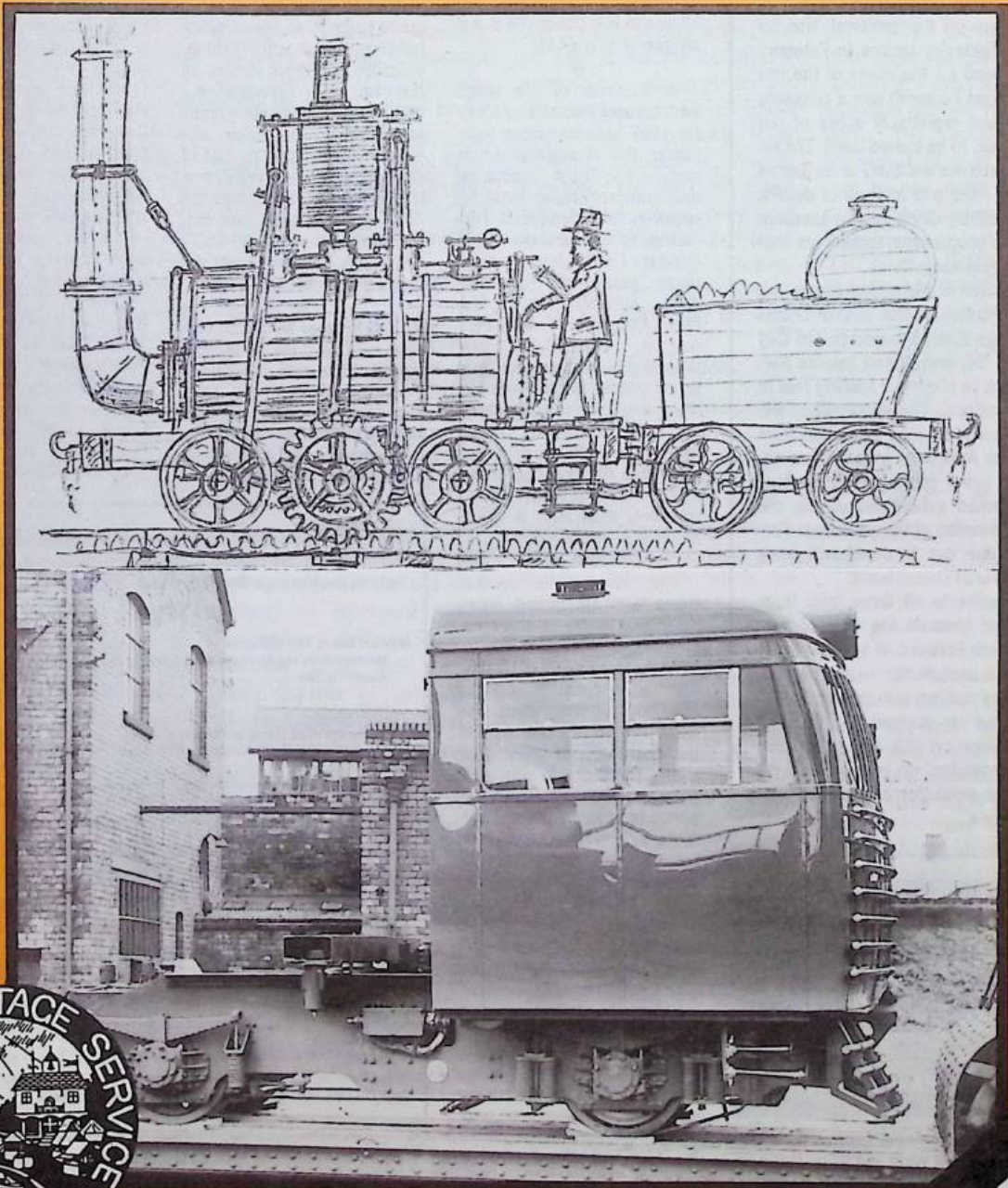


# PAST FORWARD

ISSUE NUMBER SIX

SPRING 1994



*The Newsletter of Wigan Heritage Service*

**FREE**



## From the Editor

THIS 6th issue of Past Forward has a strong industrial history theme. It focuses particularly on Lancashire's first steam locomotive and on the world-famous Wigan engineering firm of Walker Bros. My thanks in particular to Messrs. Richard Daglish and Geoff Jones for their contributions in this issue — and indeed to all those readers who have sent in written contributions. My apologies to those whose articles I have not had space to include — I will do my best next time.

As you will read, 1994 has already been a busy year for the Heritage Service. As I write, no fewer than five publications are at the printers! The Sir Thomas Tyldesley lecture in February (he appeared on the cover of the last issue of Past Forward) was a complete sell-out, and regrettably some of our regulars had to be turned away. The remaining lectures are likely to be just as popular — see p12 for further details. And the History Shop has an excellent exhibition programme to take us into 1995 — again see p12.

A number of the above events are our contribution to the Year of Drama (Manchester has been designated City of Drama '94, and Wigan Leisure Services Dept. is playing a leading role in the celebrations). The History Shop will host a George Formby exhibition from the end of April, and preparations are currently being made for three more drama-themed exhibitions during the last four months of the year. Past Forward 7 (due out in June) will be a special Year of Drama issue.

My thanks to all those who have contributed towards the cost of producing Past Forward. If you have not yet made a contribution — and particularly if you are on our mailing list — then please do support us. You will find a coupon on p15. And, of course, we are dependent on your support for our lecture, exhibition and publications programmes.

All comments and correspondence should be addressed to:  
**Editor, 'Past Forward',  
Wigan Heritage Service,  
Market Suite,  
The Galleries,  
Wigan. WN1 1PX**

## FIVE NEW PUBLICATIONS IN TIME FOR EASTER!

THE Heritage Service proudly presents no fewer than five new publications in time for Easter!

The ever-popular *Those Dark Satanic Mills*, published back in 1981, has been reprinted for the third time! Unfortunately, the price has had to go up — for the first time in 13 years! But this is still a real bargain at only £4.95.

A facsimile of the Leigh and District Postal Directory for 1885 has now been published. This is without doubt one of the most fascinating and comprehensive local directories ever produced. Predating as it does the Leigh Charter of 1899, it is arranged under townships — namely Astley, Atherton, Bedford, Culcheth, Kenyon, Lowton, Pennington, Tyldesley and Westleigh. All streets are listed within each township, along with numbers, residents and their occupations. The Directory also contains a fine selection of local advertisements, some of which are attractively illustrated. A splendid buy at only £4.95.

The other three publications are all brand new. Nicholas Webb has complemented his 'Standish — Eight Hundred Years of History' with a pictorial history of neighbouring Shevington. This has been brought out to mark the centenary of Shevington parish council (which has given a generous grant towards production costs). Interestingly, Shevington and Haigh are the only parish councils within the Wigan MBC area.

In 1989, Yvonne Webb mounted a fine exhibition, 'Wigan at War', to coincide with the 75th and 50th anniversaries of the outbreak of the two World Wars. Now, as we approach the 50th anniversary of D-Day and, next year, of the end of World War II, Yvonne and Dawn Whitwham have

produced a book from the exhibition, which will evoke memories for many. 'Wigan at War: Life on the Home Front in Words and Pictures, 1914-18 & 1939-45', and the Shevington book represent excellent value at only £3.95 each.

The final publication is a guide to popular genealogical holdings, which will prove invaluable for many users of the Heritage Service's documentary collections. Family historians in particular will have at their fingertips lists of research material available in the History Shop, and also the Archives and Leigh Local History Services. At only £1.95, this is an absolute must for many of our researchers.

As with Heritage Service publications 1 - 6, all these publications are available from the History Shop, the Archives and Leigh Local History Services and other selected outlets. The History Shop also operates a mail order service — for details ring 0942 828128.

## Heritage Service featured on TV and radio

THE Heritage Service has featured prominently on television and radio in recent months. In November, the Heritage Services Manager and Education and Outreach Manager were interviewed for Cable Television during a programme on Wigan Pier.

In January, BBC Radio 4 used an extract from a diary held by the Archives Service in their new series of 'Dear Diary'. The diary belonged to Ethel Clementi, an English amateur violinist at the turn of the century, and gives a fascinating account of her musical life in London and Dresden. Miss Clementi, then in her early twenties, records her impressions of performances by some of the leading musical figures of the time, such as the violinist Ysaye, Henry Wood (founder of the London 'Proms'), Cecil Sharp (the folk-song collector), and the great pianists Busoni and Paderewski.

In February, the Heritage Services Manager was interviewed for BBC Radio 2's Arts Programme, on the History Shop and Wigan's heritage.

For those readers who have not seen a previous issue of *Past Forward*, or have mislaid it, here once again is a list of those behind the Heritage Service, and where we are all based.

### At Wigan:

<b>Market Suite, The Galleries—</b>	
Heritage Services Manager (and Editor of Past Forward) Alistair Gillies .....	(0942) 827375 Fax (0942) 827371
<b>History Shop—</b>	
Visitor Services Manager Philip Butler .....	(0942) 828124
Education and Outreach Manager (and Local History, West) Bob Blakeman .....	(0942) 828020
Collections Development Manager Yvonne Webb .....	(0942) 828123
Heritage Officer (Industrial History) Mike Haddon .....	(0942) 828121
Heritage Officer (Social History) Dawn Whitwham .....	(0942) 828124
Heritage Assistant Hilary Fairclough .....	(0942) 828122
Heritage Assistant Barbara Miller .....	(0942) 828122
Heritage Assistant Stephanie Tsang .....	(0942) 828122
<b>Wigan Pier—</b>	
Technician Denise Whitter .....	(0942) 828564
Technician Roy Wareing .....	(0942) 323666

### At Leigh:

<b>Archives, Town Hall—</b>	
Heritage Officer (Archives) Nicholas Webb .....	(0942) 872421 ext. 266
Senior Technician Len Hudson .....	(0942) 872421 ext. 265
<b>Leigh Library—</b>	
Heritage Officer (Local History) Tony Ashcroft .....	(0942) 604131
If you have an enquiry, and are not sure who the most appropriate person is to contact, please ring the History Shop (0942 828128).	

Cover: Two examples of Wigan built railway motive power, separated by over 120 years. The famous 'Yorkshire Horse' is depicted here in a sketch by Ken Turner, using original details given by Robert Daglish (see Richard Daglish's article on p6).

Below is a Walker Bros. (Wigan) Ltd. built meter gauge diesel railcar power bogie with cab, ordered by the Antosagasto (Chile) and Bolivia Railway in August 1939. It is seen in the works yard on a low loader, ready for transportation to the docks for export. In the background can be seen part of the Douglas Bank East signal box which for many years stood opposite Walker's Pagefield Works and which now resides inside Wigan Pier Heritage Centre.



# Aspull recalled . . .

DURING the 1926 strike, when I was seven years old, I was engaged, with my Dad, digging for coal, or 'OUZLE'. This was situated at Gorses Rook. The hole was dug to a depth of about five or six feet until we came to the seam. When darkness came it was my duty to guard the hole by candle light to ward off any would-be trespassers. During my duty, Dad would carry a full bag home — a distance of about 1½ miles — returning around two o'clock in the morning and then grovelling until dawn. The quality of this so-called coal was such that, during the burning process sparks and splinters were splattered around the kitchen, making the pictures rattle on the wall. Of course, we were not alone during our escapade. One person who stands out in my memory was Nellie Meadows who could work as good as any man. She carried bags of this coal on her back, taking just one rest on the way home, 1½ miles away. It must be true that hard work killed nobody because my Dad lived to be 100 years old.

When I was about 10 years old I became very rich! I was outside playing near my home when I found half-a-crown (12½p). This I kept a secret and hid the ransom under a stone. I decided I would treat myself — I bought a ha'pennyworth of sweets and put the change back under the stone. This I did for several days until I had just a few pennies left. So at that point I decided to treat my mother and bought her half a pound of sausages from Joe Young's shop in Scott Lane, near the Moorgate Inn. I told her that I had been saving my spending money. Of course, all was revealed in later years!

The happier times, as children, we used to play on the moorland which has now

been swallowed up with property. During the summer months, the larks were singing and one could hear the call of the cuckoo in the distance which helped to create the beautiful world we live in. Our village, in Aspull, was a village of friendship, no matter what creed or belief.

On leaving school at the age of 14, I started work at Blackrod Mill, learning weaving for the substantial sum of 2/6 (12½p) per week. When I arrived home with my first wage, my mother decided to have false teeth, paying her instalments with my weekly wages. The dentist came from Chorley and paid her a visit every Friday evening until the treatment was complete. Believe it or not, the practitioner had only one arm and

was quite big in stature which scared the life out of her!

Now, back to the moorland in Ratcliffe Road. Opposite the fish and chip shop there was a pond on which were geese, belonging to Billy Knowles who kept a grocer's shop. On our way to school we had to make a detour past the pond because the geese would chase us. Monday's washing was strung out up and down the moor, pigeon coops were in plenty. At the junction into Haigh Road there was a railway level crossing manned by Neddy Lowton. He had a cabin which was always cosy and warm, burning the coal from wagons. During winter months we were allowed in to warm our hands on the way to school.

I remember quite well

joining the choir at St. David's, Haigh, at the age of nine. Christmas came along when we, the choir, were invited to sing carols at Haigh Hall, Lord and Lady Crawford and family being in residence at that time. Little did I ever dream of having the task, aged 13, of cleaning every window, inside and out, numbering around 40 in all. I was paid 3/6 (17½). The job in hand took two days to complete. Of course, I wasn't alone. I was assisting the late Wilfred Hibbert, the local window cleaner. I handed my wages over to my mother who gave me, in return, 3d to spend.

This I have now spent!!!  
**THOSE WERE THE DAYS, MY FRIENDS.**

*Harold Seddon is a member of Aspull & Haigh Historical Society.*

## I remember when . . .

It was possible to book a railway excursion from Wigan N.W. station on the old LNW railway to Blackpool Talbot Square for a shilling (5p) on a Saturday night, and for an extra sixpence (2½p) it was also possible to buy a ticket at the railway booking office to either Blackpool Tower or the Winter Gardens.

The train would leave Wigan at 6.10 p.m. and arrive at Blackpool before 7 p.m. so that even with the short walk from Talbot Square, (even shorter if it stopped at Blackpool Central) we would be inside the Tower by 7 p.m., where we would go straight up to the famous Tower Ballroom, and dance the night away to Reg Dixon at his Wurlitzer organ until 11 p.m.

As the return train didn't leave Talbot Square until 12.10 a.m. we had plenty of time after the dancing for a walk down the promenade to sample the fish and chips from any one of the

many takeaways as they now call them, although our little gang found a little cafe where we would sit down and be served by a waitress with steak pudding, bread and butter, chips and a cup of tea for 1s. 1d (6p). We would then saunter our way back to Talbot Square to board the empty train already standing at the platform to carry on the good natured banter in darkened coaches.

When I reminisce about these Saturday night excursions I find it difficult to realise that it was possible to travel 64 miles (32 each way) by train, have a night's dancing in the Tower, a meal afterwards and still only spend under 3s. (15p).

Several of us, whilst not completely teetotal, wouldn't drink, although some would, probably spending another 1s. (5p) on drink; half a pint cost 2½d at that time, so they would have four halves for 10d (4p) which helped the atmosphere on the journey home, especially if our

journey was delayed for any reason.

Sometimes we would be shunted into a siding, if anything had gone wrong on the main line, and although it was only about 40 minutes journey by scheduled trains, I have known it when we didn't get back into Wigan until 3 a.m. or even later. Not that it mattered to us teenagers, on a night out, as after dancing for three or four hours and walking about Blackpool, most of us had to be wakened up when we arrived back at Wigan — then we had another half hour's walk home!

It's worth recording, I feel, that even though we were a bunch of happy-go-lucky teenagers we never got into or caused any trouble. How times change!

© Ernie Taberner. Ernie's book, 'A Lancashire Upbringing', which was reviewed in *Past Forward 5*, is available from the History Shop.



# News from the Archives

THE conservation of records is very important to the efficiency of an archives repository, since documents that are unfit to be produced for study are bound to remain inaccessible unless they can be repaired. Paper and parchment are vulnerable to damage by water, fire, damp and dirt, and to attack by insects and vermin. For every sheaf of paper that has survived for two or three centuries in near perfect condition, an equal quantity of papers of equal historical importance will have perished through physical decay. Document repair is, however, an expensive business, and items in need of treatment (of which there are very many), must be put into a strict order of priority before the limited budget available for this purpose can be used.

## Grimshaw Papers

One group of records to have been tackled in recent years is the Grimshaw Papers. This archive comprises the official and working papers of Thomas Grimshaw (1794-1864), a Wigan attorney whose practice was later absorbed into the King Street firm of Wright and Appleton. Grimshaw was, for the best part of two decades, a powerful figure in the local government and civic affairs of the borough. Succeeding his brother Roger as Town Clerk in 1818, Thomas was also Clerk of the Peace, Clerk to the Magistrates and de facto Coroner. When the borough constitution was reformed under the Municipal Corporation Act of 1835, the town clerkship ceased to be a Crown appointment for life and Grimshaw was deprived of his office. His subsequent claim for compensation (which is documented by surviving items amongst the Grimshaw Papers), led to the town council appointing a committee to settle it. In 1844 this committee recommended a settlement of £251. 2s. 6d. Grimshaw had, incidentally, attempted to obstruct the work of the commissioners upon



'New Town Hall', Market Place, Wigan. This photograph, dating from shortly before the demolition of the building in 1882, shows the row of shops or shambles that occupied the ground floor from the time the town hall was rebuilt in 1720. The Grimshaw papers contain several leases of these shops granted by the Corporation between 1764 and 1806.

whose report the Act was based. Apparently when they visited Wigan in 1832, he claimed that the chest containing the borough charters and records could not be opened because the lock was broken. The Commissioners had to insist on having the chest opened by force!

## Water-damaged

The records were discovered in a badly water-damaged condition in a solicitor's basement in 1974, and were transferred to the archives office. Since then they have been steadily cleaned, repaired and sorted, and are now largely available for study. Amongst the notable items are the following:

- Lists of alehousekeepers' recognizances 1807-1835: these give the names of licensees and their house signs.
- Leases of shops beneath the Town Hall, 1764-1806.
- List of militiamen's families in receipt of alms, 1811.
- Papers of Wigan Indigent Clothing Society, 1811-1822.
- Transcript of the Wigan burghess lists, 1694-1832.
- Writs of election for Wigan Members of Parliament, 1603-1831.

Contract for making a common sewer in Hallgate, granted in 1822 to a Wigan stonemason called John Birchall.

Papers concerning the riots of 1831 during the period of the Parliamentary Reform Bills and elections in Wigan.

Wigan poor rate assessment, 1702.

The last of these appears to be a complete rate assessment for the old borough, and apart from the Hearth Tax documents of the later 17th century must be one of the earliest lists of Wigan householders, although paupers and other non-ratepayers would have been excluded. The document is arranged according to the old streets and districts: Market Street (60 ratepayers), Wallgate (59), Hallgate (52), Scholes (97), Millgate (66), Standishgate (94), and Woodhouses (28); plus 20 rated for land only in various parts of the town. Occupations are only given in a few cases, although these could no doubt be obtained from other contemporary sources. Three of Wigan's pewterers are identified as such: James Wood, who had property in Market Street and Scholes, William Bancks in Millgate, and

James Langshaw in Standishgate.

## Curious Entry

There are one or two entries identifying particular buildings in the town. In Market Street, 'the general Receiver of Excise' was rated at 1s. 6d. This is, I think, the earliest reference to an Excise Office in Wigan. In Millgate, Mr. Bancks was rated for a 'mill, house and ground,' and another mill belonging to a Mr. Leatherbarrow is also listed. Pepper Mill, then a water corn mill and later in the 18th and 19th centuries an important brass foundry, is listed separately under 'occupiers of lands' and rated at 9d. In the Woodhouses section, the occupiers of 'the Hermitage' were rated at 1s. 6d. This building is not known from another source, although there was apparently a pre-Reformation hermitage in Wigan. Another curious entry is for 'Shoemaker Hall' in Millgate, rated at 9d. This may have belonged to the company of shoemakers or cordwainers, which is listed as one of Wigan's trade companies from at least 1666 to the early 18th century.

N.W.

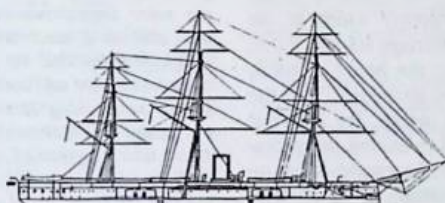


**FRANCIS MERRYMAN**, an ex member of Atherton District Council, Leigh Board of Guardians and former landlord of the Rope and Anchor Inn, Atherton died in May 1899. Although only in his fifties, Merryman had been fortunate to live as long, because he had been a seaman on the ill-fated H.M.S. Captain.

H.M.S. Captain, a masted turret ship, was the seventh ship so named. Of the earlier six, the best known was the third which had 74 guns and flew Nelson's commodore pendant at the battle of Cape St. Vincent in 1797. The latest Captain was built by Lairds at Birkenhead. Launched on 27 March 1869 and completed in January 1870, it capsized off

## FRANCIS MERRYMAN AND THE CAPTAIN

Cape Finisterre on 7 September 1870 with a loss of 500 lives. All the ships officers perished and only one warrant



HMS Captain (1869)

officer (i.e. a boatswain, gunner or carpenter) and 17 seamen (including Merryman) survived. Captain Wilson, H.M.S. Bristol, sent the Admiralty a telegram which read:

Corunna, 9 September 1870 — 'One warrant officer and 17 seamen of Captain survived at Corcubian on 7 September.'

*A copy of the report of the naval disaster in the Leigh Reporter of 17 September 1870, together with more technical information about the ship, is available for reference at Leigh Local History Library. If anyone would like to read this, or if any members of the Merryman family have further information about Francis, please contact Tony Ashcroft (0942 604131).*

## F. P. STURM: A literary Leigh doctor

FRANK PEARCE STURM, the eldest of three children, was born to William and Bessie Sturm at Long Sight, Manchester on 16 June 1879. Sturm's father was a shipping merchant who had lost everything at the time of the Boer War. Sturm himself was schooled at Didsbury and then apprenticed to a Manchester chemist for two years before entering university.

He entered Aberdeen University in 1901 at the age of 22 and began a course of medicine which took five years to complete. It is possible that he decided on Aberdeen as the Sturms had been connected with this institution since the times of James Sturm, son of Alex Sturm, and later a London merchant who had founded two scholarships of £30 each in 1869, tenable for five years by a native of Mortlach, and who had erected a stone in the churchyard of that village to the memory of his parents.

### Wrote poetry

By the time he had arrived at Aberdeen, Sturm had taken a keen interest in mystical occult philosophy and literature. He wrote poetry, and met W.B. Yeats with whom he corresponded over a long period

of time. On 30 May 1904 he married Charlotte Fanny Augusta Schultze who had been born in Poland on 30 June 1884, the daughter of Max and Johanna Ewald Schultze. Her father was a man of small capital, a widower with two small children who had settled in Peterhead in 1885-6 in order to escape Prussian militarism. Charlotte in fact was one of the first women to take up the study of medicine at Aberdeen at the age of 16.

### Moved to Leigh

In 1909 Sturm and family moved to Leigh, where he assisted Dr. A.M. Auden in his practice at Birch House. They moved in to 91 Church Street, where Sturm began to write articles for medical journals. In 1911 he successfully submitted a thesis for a degree of Master of Surgery at Manchester. By 1915, at the age of 36, he had become a Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine. Sturm then bought his own practice at Brunswick House from a retiring physician. The family moved to a drab 'corner house' near the railway station where Charlotte continued to share her husband's work.

The outbreak of World War I broke the Sturm's routine. On 13 March 1915 the

Army list indicates that Sturm was commissioned as a Lieutenant into 2/1st North Midland Field Ambulance RAMC(T) and that by 15 September 1916 he had been created a Captain. The 2/1st NMFA became part of the 59th (2nd North Midland) Division attached to the 177 Brigade at Luton in February 1915, and Sturm was presumably posted there. The whole division was then transferred to Ireland between 25 April and 17 May 1916, returning to England in January 1917, before crossing to France in February where it served at Ypres, Cambrai and the Somme.

Charlotte in the meantime had left Leigh with her son when her husband entered the army. She worked with Professor McWilliam at Aberdeen University as prosector and assistant in the Dept. of Anatomy and Physiology. She stayed in Scotland until 1917 when her husband, then attached to No.6 General Hospital at Le Havre and Rouen, was gassed at the front and hospitalised at Amiens. She left her child with her family in August to join the Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps, serving as Recruiting Medical Controller at Cardiff, London, Bristol and Manchester until early 1919.

Eventually Frank and

Charlotte returned to Leigh and made many friends, including the Unitarian minister, Rev. Frank Bullock (father of the noted historian and academic Lord Bullock). During his time spent in Leigh in general practice and as a consultant at Leigh Infirmary and to the Leigh Maternity and Child Welfare and School Medical Service, he wrote numerous articles for the medical journals. He also corresponded frequently with the great Irish poet W.B. Yeats. He commented on Yeats' publication 'A Vision', frequently correcting mistakes, and it is possible that without the help of this 'doctor in the North of England' it would not have been published. In a letter to 'Oliver Shakespeare' Yeats records that "Apart from these young men - who will only glance at a 'A Vision' - I shall have a few very devoted readers like a certain doctor in the North of England who sits every night for one half hour in front of a Buddha lit with many candles."

### Heart attack

In 1937 Sturm had a severe heart attack and entered a nursing home in North Wales, where his condition was found to be incurable. Sturm was forced to give up his medical prac-

tice. In April 1938 he retired to Southport with Charlotte. They stayed at the Royal Hotel before moving to a small private hotel in Albert Road where Charlotte died of cancer on 18 November 1940.

Unfortunately for Sturm his rooms were commandeered by the Ministry of Health in July 1941, forcing him to find alternative accommodation at 3 Alexandra Road. Unable to take care of himself, he was taken to a local nursing home where he died some weeks later, on 23 February 1942, of a cerebral haemorrhage. He was buried beside his wife in the C of E Division of Birkdale Cemetery, Southport.

It is interesting to note that in the 'Oxford Book of Modern Verse 1892-1935', edited by Yeats and published in 1936, there is a poem by Sturm entitled 'Still Heart'. A small publication entitled 'Umbrae Silentis' by Sturm is available for reference at Leigh Local History Library, as is a book about him written by an American, Richard Taylor, which includes details about his life, letters and collected works.

Anyone interested in further information about this interesting man should contact Tony Ashcroft at Leigh Library (0942 604131).



# THE STORY OF THE

## An early photograph?

My interest in early steam railway locomotives was kindled by a faked photograph in a typescript book of notes on my family's history, compiled by a great-aunt. The snapshot purported to show a locomotive built in 1812 by my ancestor Robert Daglish for John Clarke's Orrell Colliery, near Wigan. In fact it was of a model made over a century later by a retired miner, as will be described later (*Past Forward* 7).

## Memoir

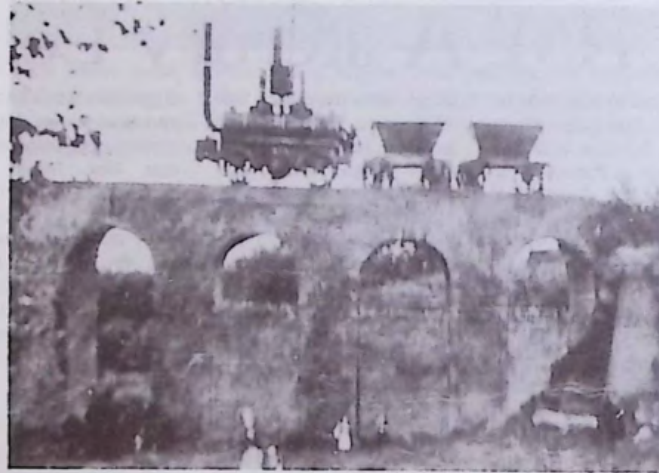
Daglish was a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers and, after his death late in 1865, their published 'Proceedings' included a memoir, from which the following is an extract.

MR. ROBERT DAGLISH was born on the 21st December 1779. He settled at Wigan in the year 1804, as Engineer to Lord Balcarres, the father of the present Earl, where he managed for his lordship the engineering establishment now known as the Haigh Foundry and Brock Mill Forge. He there constructed the Arley colliery engine, and many other pumping, winding and blast engines, which were celebrated in their day as improved and efficient machines. After some years' experience at these works, Mr. Daglish took the management of the Orrell Colliery, near Wigan, and whilst there he constructed the railway in connection with it. He at once appreciated and applied to this railway the then novel invention of the locomotive steam engine of Mr. John Blenkinsop of Leeds, in which the power was applied by means of a large cog-wheel working into a rack laid down beside the ordinary line. By arrangement with the patentee, Mr. Daglish constructed a locomotive of this description in the year 1812, and started it on the railway in 1813. It was known as the Yorkshire Horse, and was long looked upon with interest by all concerned in the advancement of engineering science. Under Mr. Daglish's management, the Orrell Colliery became a most successful undertaking, and 'Orrell coal' in that district has become the equivalent for the 'Wallsend' of the north.

## The employer

The Lindsay family, Earls of Balcarres, owned estates in Scotland and had acquired the Haigh estate, near Wigan, when Alexander, the sixth Earl, married the heiress to this Haigh estate which had belonged to the old-established Lancashire family of Bradshaigh. Alexander had served in the army with distinction during a period of continuous threat of invasion by the French. He commanded the forces in Jersey, holding the rank

of Major-General, and from 1794 to 1801 served as Governor of Jamaica. He then returned to his Lancashire property which at the time of his marriage he had found in a sad state; the house in ruins, the coal mines abandoned and the farmlands in decay. He had put plans in hand to exploit the potential wealth of the estate; these included the setting up of an iron furnace at Leyland Mill with the Brock Mill Forge on the bank of



The faked photograph, as mentioned at the beginning of the story.

the river Douglas and close to the new Leeds & Liverpool Canal. A partnership between the Earl, his brother James Lindsay and a local ironfounder James Corbett was struck in 1788. Lindsay, who had acquired wide experience during service with the East India Company, had to shoulder much of the responsibility for the works after Corbett's death and by 1790 'The Hon Robert Lindsay & Co' were advertising their services in a Liverpool newspaper. 'Having engaged Engineers and able workmen, they are enabled to undertake the complete construction of Fire Engines of every kind.' Lindsay seems to have withdrawn from active participation soon afterwards, not wishing to be tied to Haigh. Other managers were appointed, but a study of the Ironworks by Alan Birch contains no reference to

Daglish as a manager, even though Birch had access to the Earl's family and estate papers. Birch does, however, include the following passage:

Nevertheless, there was associated with the firm one engineer who must have brought some profit to the concern. This was Robert Daglish (1777-1865), who settled with a relative at Wigan as engineer to the works. Perhaps under his management the engineering side flourished. Certainly the elder Daglish showed considerable skill as a mechanic. It was at Haigh foundry that the first Lancashire locomotive was constructed, this being the Walking Horse, made on the model of Blenkinsop's Yorkshire Horse which worked at the Middleton Colliery near Leeds. This was the beginning, it appears, of a successful venture in locomotive building, which continued until 1856...

A note of the wages paid at the foundry during 1808 names John Daglish senr and Robert Daglish under the heading of 'carpenters and engineers'. I suspect that John senior was the father of Robert. This John earned £1 16s 0d for 12 days work at three shillings. Robert had 3, at 5 shillings a day. Of the 33 men listed for the 'casting concern', including moulders, blacksmiths and boiler-makers, the total of 33 men's wages for two weeks came to £70 15s 0d. The highest rate per day was 5s (Robert and two others); the lowest was 10d. Robert's exact employment is thus difficult to define, as is the timing of his departure from Haigh and his engagement at the Orrell Colliery.

## Colliery Manager

In 1789 John Clark, a Liverpool

by  
Richard Daglish

Reprinted from THE  
JOURNAL OF THE RAILWAY  
& CANAL HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY, JULY 1993,  
Vol.31, Pt.3, No.155

banker, entered into partnership with William Roscoe, also of Liverpool, and two local coalmasters to work collieries at Gathurst, near Orrell. Clarke and Roscoe, with others, took leases from landowners in the area and in the early years of the 19th century had extensive interests. Mr. Donald Anderson of Parbold, who has researched and written extensively about the industry, puts Daglish's employment by Clarke as his manager as 'about 1810'.

As Anderson states, although the colliery was going well, calamity overtook the banking side of Clarke's business early in 1816. The bank failed, and all Clarke's estates were put up for sale, including coal offices at the Liverpool terminus of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal and his house Orrell Mount. The coal business was carried on under Daglish's management, the profits eventually liquidating all Clarke's debts. Clarke died in 1821; his vault at UpHolland is on the opposite side of the chancel to that of his manager Robert Daglish.

In 1812 there was a ready market for coal in South Lancashire with the expansion of industry: spinning and weaving, salt and chemicals. Keen competition on the price of coal had already spurred men to great deeds such as the development of canal systems. Years of war in Europe had taken their toll in the price of fodder for horses, in the supply of animals, and of men. In the coalfields steam power had been successfully used for winding and pumping for many years but steam locomotion was in its infancy.

## Locomotives

At Middleton Colliery, near Leeds, a coal viewer named John Blenkinsop had patented his form of locomotive in 1811 (no. 3431), and in conjunction with the engineers Murray, Fenton and Wood,



# YORKSHIRE HORSE

built their pioneer engine and put it to work in 1812. Word of its success in hauling coal from the pit head to Leeds spread rapidly and before long Blenkinsop was in negotiation with others who sought to use his patent. Daglish was one of those to take up the rights, on behalf of John Clarke who appears to have declined to pay the sum asked by Blenkinsop for exclusive rights within Lancashire. Years later Daglish wrote his account of the operation of his own locomotive, but did not say whether it was called *Yorkshire Horse* or *Walking Horse*. Others who wrote about his engine gave one name or the other. 'Yorkshire' no doubt derived from the Middleton origin of Blenkinsop's version. It is interesting that Blenkinsop, Daglish and George Stephenson were all Northumbrians by birth.

The Archives Department of Leeds City Council holds some papers relevant to Blenkinsop and the Middleton Colliery locomotive, including a report book which contains copies of letters. On 25 January 1813 Blenkinsop wrote to Mr. W. Bevan Jun, M/s Lockwood & Co., Morriston, Swansea, with an estimate of the savings obtainable by operating a locomotive in place of sixteen horses and eight men, and giving specifications for rails etc. He wrote to Bevan again on 10 March in greater detail, and offered to meet him in Swansea; this refers to Mr. Alex Ruby of 'Lenilly near Swansea', with whom Blenkinsop appears to have been dealing over another engine.

There are references in the report book to his experience with locomotives at Middleton and Kenton, and copies of correspondence with interested parties elsewhere. In one of his letters Blenkinsop confirms that his locomotives (which in places he describes as 'steam machines') could travel on public roads from London to Edinburgh, but points out the inconvenience of going through large towns.

The Middleton report book includes the copy of a letter from Blenkinsop to John Clarke at Liverpool. The first sentence is about the expense of 'laying road' [i.e. rail]. It continues:

*In conversation with Mr. Holding and Mr. Daglish [sic] I stated I had proposed terms to you for the adoption of my invention at your works and if you thought the premium too much I would accommodate you at*

*one of your concerns for merely an acknowledgement you surely cannot have made the proposal of £500 for the whole county of Lancaster with any serious expectation of my accepting it—that I shall certainly never do, but with a view to its adoption upon your own works, I will wait upon you at Wigan or Liverpool any day the latter part of this week or the beginning of next if you drop me a line to say what day suits your convenience.*

*I am sir your humble servt John Blenkinsop 22 Feby 1813*

A year later, a letter from John Blenkinsop to its editor appeared in the *Monthly Magazine* for March 1814. After a description of the locomotive at Middleton the final paragraph reads:

*Any gentleman wishing to see the performance of the steam carriage will be much gratified by visiting Middleton Colliery, Leeds, Yorkshire; Orrell Colliery, Wigan, Lancashire; or Kenton and Coxlodge Collieries, Near Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where they are daily at work*



*Model of the Yorkshire Horse as seen at Blackpool Miners' Convalescent Home*

## Ten years on

An article in a weekly magazine, typical of its time, shows that even ten years later the Blenkinsop/Daglish locomotive was something of a wonder. Its patentee's vision of a wider application than colliery hauling had by now been taken up by others. *The Kaleidoscope*, or *Literary and Scientific Mirror* printed a front page article headed 'Representation of the steam-carriage at Middleton, near Leeds' which gives an engraving of a locomotive, with toothed drive-wheel and the rail fitted with cogs. The remainder of the page and two-thirds of the next are devoted to a description of the steam-carriage at Middleton and refer to the third edition of 'a small volume entitled *Observations on a general Iron Rail-way*'. No credit

is given, however, to Thomas Gray, its author. The article quotes from the *Liverpool Mercury* of 3 July 1812—ten years earlier—which itself had quoted the *Leeds Mercury*, but no date is shown for this latter item. There is a full account of the experiment of the 'machine' constructed by Fenton, Murray and Wood, under the direction of John Blenkinsop, the patentee.

The final paragraphs of the *Kaleidoscope's* article read as follows, under the cross-heading 'The Walking Horse':

*The following description of another machine cannot be introduced more appropriately than on the present occasion:*

*The engine which conveys coals from the Orrell pits drags twenty waggons, each containing upwards of a ton. The people in the neighbourhood emphatically call it the 'walking horse', and certainly, from the description of a friend, it bears no little resemblance to a living animal. The engine being on the high pressure principle, the superabundant steam is emitted at each stroke with a noise something similar to the hard breathing or snorting of a horse—the escaping steam representing the breath of his nostrils, and the deception altogether aided by the regular motion of the engine-beam, and the rapidity of motion which precludes minute observation. In the ascent, the rate is about four miles an hour, and, on level ground, from five to six.*

The following week's edition of the *Kaleidoscope* included a letter to the editor from Benjamin Hick, himself an engineer of repute, who wrote from the Union Foundry, Bolton, on 30 September 1822:

## STEAM CARRIAGES

*Sir, In consequence of the great inaccuracy of the concluding paragraph of your 'Scientific Records' of last week, I take the liberty to send you the following short but correct description of the machine which your friend calls the 'Walking Horse'; though with what greater correctness the resemblance of an animal can be traced in it than in the one you have described in the neighbourhood of Leeds, I am at a loss to conjecture; as it is similar in principle to that, as well as to many others which are at work in many other parts of the kingdom; and as the subject of Steam-engine Rail-ways for the general conveyance of goods at present occupies so much of the public attention, particularly in this neighbourhood, it will not be uninteresting to its advocates, to be in possession of the fact that not the slightest accident has occurred during*

*the whole time this mode of drawing coal-waggons has been adopted at the Orrell Colliery, near Wigan, where there are three travelling steam-engines. Two\* of these have been regularly at work for upwards of eight years; one of which is used to convey the coals up an inclined rail-way, half a mile in length, and varying in ascent from seven-eighths to one inch per yard. It draws, at one time, twelve waggons of fully three tons each, at the rate of three miles per hour, besides its own weight, which, when at work, is six and a half tons, and would draw ninety tons at the same speed on a level road. (Mr. Daglish, at the colliery states, they occasionally run it from four to five miles per hour, and that one engine performs the work which formerly required fourteen horses.) When it arrives at the summit, the waggons are disengaged, and it returns with the same number of empty ones previously brought by the other engine, which now takes them forward, down a similar incline of about the same length, towards the canal [Leeds & Liverpool], where the coals are put into vessels. These engines are on the high pressure principle requiring no water for condensation (the steam acting by its elasticity in proportion as it exceeds that of the atmosphere) and perform their work at three miles per hour, when the pressure is equal to thirty-two pounds per square inch. Each Engine has two cylinders, eight inches diameter, with metallic pistons that require no packing, the rods of which are attached by cross-bars and connecting rods, to cranks placed at right angles with each other, to allow the full effect of the action of one at its greatest horizontal length of lever, when the other is passing the top or bottom centre, where, of course, it can have no power in propelling the engine; no beam or fly wheel is used, the shafts on which the cranks are fastened have each a small pinion working into a spur wheel on another shaft passing under the engine framing, on one end of which is a wheel, with cogs of a coarse pitch working into the cogs on one side of the rail-way, similar to the engraving in your last number.*

\* By having a spare Engine, a great convenience is obtained in allowing the boilers to be regularly cleaned, and their alternate use allows them to be kept in complete repair.

Gray's 'Observations' included the graphic description of the Orrell locomotive quoted by the *Kaleidoscope*. He refers to it as being known locally as the 'Walking Horse' or 'Yorkshire Horse'.

● To be concluded in the next Past Forward (Issue 7).

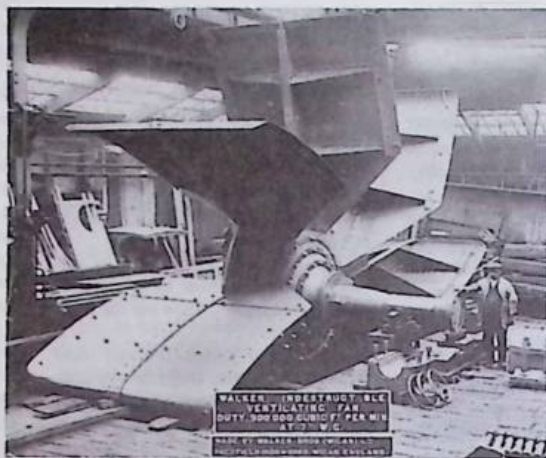


# Remembering Walker Bros. (Wigan) Ltd.

In March and April two events organised by Wigan Heritage Service will revive memories of one of the area's most celebrated engineering concerns, Walker Brothers of the Pagefield Ironworks. The firm, which was taken over by paper making machine manufacturers Walmsleys Ltd. in c. 1947, can trace its origins back to 1866 when John Scarisbrick Walker, formerly a draughtsman at the Haigh Foundry, took over a small foundry in Queen Street, Wigan, and started manufacturing items for local collieries. The initial product range was extremely modest, nothing more spectacular than bolts, nuts, pit tubs, etc. In 1869 brother Thomas, a qualified mining engineer, joined the firm and soon more complex equipment such as coal cutters, rope haulages and the like were being supplied.

The Queen Street Foundry was situated alongside the London & North Western Railway's Wigan North Western Station. The latter, however, being constructed on a large embankment, was at a considerably higher elevation than Walker's works, a topographical situation which led to a very strange event in the early hours of Saturday 2 August 1873. For some reason which was never satisfactorily determined, an overnight Scottish express became derailed as it passed through the station; one of the carriages crashed through the boundary wall and literally dropped through the roof of Walker's works, killing a lady occupant in the process.

Soon after this strange happening Walkers moved to a new 'greenfield' site west of the town centre on a strip of land sandwiched between the Southport railway line and the Leeds & Liverpool Canal. The name of the particular field concerned was Page's Field, hence the new works was christened the Pagefield Ironworks; this was to be the place where several generations of Wiganers would practise their engineering skills until Walmsleys closed down their Wigan operation in 1983.



From the very start Walker's main business was as a supplier of equipment to the mining industry. At one time they would make virtually any equipment that a colliery required; their design and manufacturing, however, was of such quality that their ventilation systems and compressors became particularly sought after, and to some extent they specialised in these products, which were supplied worldwide.

Their ventilation expertise was not entirely limited to the requirements of the mining industry. When the Mersey Railway commenced running trains under that famous river in 1886 the smoke from the steam locomotives originally used was dispersed by Walker ventilation fans. Forty eight years later, when the first road tunnel under the Mersey was opened, the same type of Walker equipment was still considered to be the best way of extracting motor vehicle fumes: The huge 28 foot diameter fans are still giving faithful service and there is no reason why they should not continue for another 60 years.

Variations on the air compressors to pump or compress gases meant that Walkers also received considerable orders from chemical companies.

Steam was of course the

built steam powered machinery and did not recognise its coming obsolescence until the bottom had dropped out of their order books, Walkers kept up with technological developments and increasingly, as the 20th century progressed, their mining equipment was electrically powered.

One of the fascinating aspects of this family run firm was their willingness to use their engineering expertise to diversify into completely new product areas.

The most notable example of this was the establishment of a motor department in 1907. Initially the Directors considered building motor cars but then decided commercial vehicles would be a better proposition; this paid off when, with the outbreak of hostilities against Germany in 1914, over 500 lorries for military use were ordered by the Government. In addition to normal lorry and bus chassis Walkers also developed a range of refuse collection vehicles, which continued in production up to the 1950's, including a "wheelie bin"

predominant power source for both mobile and stationary traction purposes when Walkers were expanding their activities in the latter half of the 19th century. At this time their colliery winders, ventilation fans and compressors were exclusively steam powered. The firm also produced steam shunting locomotives in the 1870's and 1880's. Walkers even continued building steam plant under Walmsley ownership into the early 1950's.

Unlike many firms that



Members of staff of Walker Bros Ltd. stand alongside their first diesel railcar to vian Corporation in May 1936 for use on its line between Paika on the Pacific (this and subsequent railcars for Peru could be tested on local railway lines prior to line tracks are about to embark for a trial run to Southport and back. Part of Corporation ordered 19 railcars or cabbled powered bogies for use on a number



Beloit Corporation and the decision was taken to concentrate UK production at the Company's modern factory in Bolton. Thus came about the end of a tradition, with over a century of putting Wigan on the engineering map of the world.

Wigan Heritage Service, in addition to having saved various items of Walker built machinery for display at Wigan Pier, is fortunate enough to possess a large archive of the Company's drawings, photographs and brochures, which provides a very useful research resource for those interested in mining engineering and transport history. Opposite is an article by Geoff Jones of Abram on how he has become involved with researching Walker Bros following a request to him by a railway preservation society in Ireland for information on the railcars. Geoff's quest has led him to tracking down several former employees and has been of great assistance to Mike Haddon, the Heritage Service's Industrial History Officer, in adding further material to the archive.

Geoff and Mike soon became aware that former Walkers employees had a great pride in the work carried out at the Pagefield Works and in the friendships made there, so they decided

it was appropriate to organise a reunion for ex-employees, not only to gather further information about the company but also to hopefully provide an opportunity for old friendships to be renewed.

The reunion has been arranged to take place at The History Shop, Rodney Street, Wigan, from 1.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. on Friday 25 March 1994. Any former Walkers or Walmstays employee is most welcome to attend together with their spouse or other guest, and if they can bring along any mementoes of the factory or its products for copying or donation, it would be greatly appreciated by Geoff and Mike.

*In order to get an idea of the numbers likely to attend, ex-employees are invited to write or telephone Mike Haddon at the History Shop (0942 828121).*

*For those readers who are not ex-employees but are interested in Walker Bros and their products, Mike Haddon will be giving an illustrated lecture on the Company at the History Shop on Wednesday 13 April 1994, commencing at 7.30 p.m., admission £1 (includes coffee). As the lecture room seating capacity is limited it is advised that anyone wishing to attend should purchase ticket(s) in advance from the History Shop. (0942 828128).*

# A FRIEND IN NEED

## or from little researches do reunions grow . . .

THAT'S how it all started. A few casual remarks during a rather expensive telephone conversation with a friend in Ireland, just over a year ago. He is a member of a railway preservation society which is attempting to re-open a section of the former County Donegal Railway. The railway closed down in the '50s, but had been a good customer of Walker Brothers of Wigan for many years. Walkers manufactured a series of railcars for the railway, which were ideal for sparse, rural services, being able to stop anywhere to pick up or set down passengers. The railcars, when complete, resembled an articulated truck, the cab housing the driver and engine compartment, the trailer being a passenger coach.

My friend, and the railway society, are intent on rebuilding such a railcar from its current 'Henhouse' appearance, back to an operational vehicle. The telephone conversation went something like this:-

"You live in Wigan, don't you?"

"Yes."  
"Walker Brothers factory was in Wigan, wasn't it?"

"Yes."  
"Do you think you can find out if their records still exist for our railcar?"

"I'll do my best."  
Little did I know then what frustrations, pleasures and delights that agreement was going to lead me into! I began to consider the options, and then remembered that several years before, I had wandered into the then Reference Library to look up some details of a local mining disaster. I was quite impressed with the archive material available and the knowledgeable staff who guided me through it.

Back to the phone book, but the place had a new title now — The History Shop. On contact, I was kindly referred to Mike Haddon, the Industrial History Officer, so off I trundled to meet him there. Mike showed me the information they already had and told me something of the other products that Walker Brothers had made. What a litany of engineering — Compressors, Ventilation Fans, Steam Locomotives, Mining Equipment, Refuse Vehicles, Mobile Cranes — the list seemed endless, and I was hooked.

With joint agreement, we decided it was time to put Walker Brothers under the floodlights. Perhaps I would be able to find the information I wanted, and at the same time bolster the details already in the archives. I was amazed that such a forward thinking company had bloomed, wilted and died without what appeared to be a murmur. The firm may have died, but I was to find it very much alive, in the minds of its former employees.

I began by writing a short request for information, via the local press, not least the Wigan Observer, which made quite a spread on the subject. No sooner had the papers gone on sale, when my phone began to ring .... and ring .... and ring! Overnight my wife and two daughters became secretaries, busily taking messages and noting down

information. The response was astounding. I began to visit people who had kindly offered to talk to me, former engineers, draughtsmen, designers, coachbuilders, foremen, clerical staff, etc., all keen to tell me of their former work, and show me photographs and mementoes, most of which they were agreeable to let the History Shop copy. It really is a pleasure to share their memories, and their hospitality. One very pleasant 'spin-off' from all of this is that it has enabled former workmates to get into contact with each other after a great many years.

So local knowledge was growing. What about further afield? Walker Brothers had exported significant amounts of equipment. Time to pick up the pen again! Letters followed to places as far apart as Australia (including Tasmania), Peru, Bolivia, Ireland, Brazil and Switzerland. It is amazing that so many people are willing to assist, such as the British Embassy in Lima, Antofagasta Holdings, a librarian in Tasmania, and a former employee who has made his home in Australia, to name but a few.

Equally amazing too is that quite a lot of equipment made by Walker Brothers is still in existence today, and in some cases is fully operational. Next time you drive through the older of the two Mersey Tunnels, spare a thought for the Walkers Ventilation Fans which are still keeping the tunnel free of exhaust fumes, 60 years on!

I am sure you can imagine that all the above co-operation has swelled the archives and has given me a great deal of fun in the process. As a thank-you to all involved, the History Shop is holding a reunion in March for all former Walker Brothers employees and associates.

But this isn't the end. The quest continues and I still have to find details on that Irish railcar. Maybe I should start again! .... Was that my wife who groaned?

Geoff Jones



... supplied to a railway outside the British Isles. The car was ordered by the Peruvian Government for the inland town of Piura. As this line was to the British standard gauge, the car was modified for export. It is thought that the gentlemen standing perilously close to the main Walker's Pagefield Ironworks can be seen in the background. In all, the Peruvian Government ordered 100 of its lines.



The last issue of Past Forward contained the first part of an article submitted by Mrs. Gladys Carson entitled 'Migration from the Land'. This issue concludes the fascinating account of how Mrs. Carson traced the background of her late husband's grandmother, of whom she saw a photograph by chance during a visit to the History Shop.

# Migration from the Land

## *The Cawley's of Cheshire*

Cholmondeston, Cheshire was the birth place of Thomas Cawley in 1793. This village, along with Aston juxta Mondrum and Worleston, had once been within the Forest of Mondem which, together with Delamare Forest, had been used for hunting in earlier days, but later had been cleared for agricultural purposes.

At the time of his marriage to Mary Barnett of Aston in 1826, Thomas was shown as a servant, but by 1863 he was shown as a farmer living at Worleston, where his son William was born in 1841. Wil-

liam arrived in Lancashire some 20 years later and took employment as a servant at the Royal Oak Hotel in Chorley. The ostler (stable-man at an inn) at the Royal Oak at that time was Thomas Casson, who had previously been employed as coachman at Haigh Hall, Wigan. More of his story follows shortly.

On 28 March 1863 William married Elizabeth, the second daughter of Thomas Casson and his wife Sarah (nee Richardson) at Wigan Parish Church. The couple were married by licence as both were under age; the licence refers to William as a 'coachman' as by

that time the Royal Oak was providing coaches for hire.

The 1871 census tells us that William had become a cab driver in Wigan and was living at 5 Rowbottom Square with his wife and four daughters. They were Mary J., born Chorley, 7 years, Sarah Annie, 5, Martha Emma, 1 and Elizabeth Alice, 3 months.

Of the eight houses in the area, three were occupied by cab drivers. By 1880 horse-drawn trams were to be seen in Wigan, but prior to their appearance there would have been a heavy demand for the horse-drawn cab.

Reference has already been made to Sarah Annie's marriage to John Morris in 1891 at St. Thomas's Church; later in the same year her sister Martha Emma married John Lowe, also at St. Thomas's Church. He became a Councillor, then Alderman with Wigan Town Council; the couple were Mayor and Mayoress of Wigan in 1927.

## *The Cassons— Farmers of the Fells*

Our last family is undoubtedly the most rural. The Casson's occupation of Hawes farmhouse, high up on Dunnerdale Fells, can be traced back to the mid 1600's.

Broughton-in-Furness was the nearest town to Hawes farmhouse, perhaps some four miles distant. In 1825 Broughton was shown as a market town and chapelry in the parish of Kirby Ireleth, some 30 miles north of Lancaster. Weekly markets were held on Fridays, and there were three annual fairs. The first, in April, was for horned cattle

and a hiring fair; the second, in August, was for horned cattle and finally in October, a fair for horned cattle, mountain sheep and hiring of servants.

The area appears to have been quite prosperous; woolen spinning eventually gave way to the making of brush stocks and hoops, the latter to use the vast quantities of coppice wood grown in the Furness fells. Considerable quantities of slate, iron, grain, malt, oak, hoops etc. were shipped out from the navigable River Duddon and corn and general merchandise were brought in.

Thomas Casson was born at the farmhouse on 18 May 1821 to John and Mary (nee Cole), the fifth of their seven children. Thomas's parents had married on 27 February 1802 at St. Mary Magdalene Church at Broughton, Mary coming from Hobkinground, a farm on the eastern side of the Lickle Valley, near Broughton Mills.

Some time prior to 1836 Thomas had arrived in Wigan and had become coachman to the 7th Earl of Balcarres and 24th Earl of Crawford at Haigh Hall. His employment with the Earl was to last a number of years, and it had been shortly after taking up this post that Thomas had married the housekeeper at Haigh Hall, Sarah (nee Richardson), the sixth daughter of William Richardson, shoemaker of Bishop Auckland, Co. Durham, and his wife Dorothy (nee Thompson). As coachman to the Earl, Thomas would have experienced many changes, both in environment and life style. Thomas and Sarah are known

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*The Eagle and Child and Royal Hotel, Standishgate, Wigan, c. 1826. In recent times the site has been occupied by Woolworths and latterly John Menzies.*

to have lived on the estate and in 1841, when Sarah was 23 years of age, she was known to have a seven month old daughter, Mary.

Until the coming of the railway to Wigan frequent journeys to London, by coach, were obviously made. The Earl had become Member of Parliament for Wigan, which required him to be at Westminster; later, on the death of his father, he entered the House of Lords. On these occasions the Earl, together with his servants, would stay in his London house in Berkeley Square. The 1841 census shows Thomas, with seven other servants, as residing in London.

Details from the Haigh Estate papers are of particular interest. They show the coachman's half yearly wage as £14.3s.6d, while Mrs. Casson's wage for a similar period was £6.1s.0d. Thomas was also allowed expenses when undertaking a journey, presumably for bed and board when an over-night stop was necessary; he would also have had to arrange for stabling the horses, etc. In February 1842 £7 was paid, covering expenses to Leamington. In April 1844 another entry mentions "the coachman's journey to London £10". In 1850 a gift of £5

was made to the coachman's wife.

With the coming of the railway to Wigan it is not surprising to learn that by 1850 Thomas had left his Lordship's employment and had become ostler at the Eagle and Child and Royal Hotel in Standishgate, Wigan. The name is derived from the Arms of the Stanley family, which can be seen in the sketch on the wall to the left ('brid and babby'). This hotel was the main coaching inn in the town, and was used for important meetings and dinners; on occasions the upper rooms were used for theatrical performances.

While at the above hostelry Thomas continued to receive £3 annually from the Haigh estate for attendance to the Earl's horses. Two separate items worth mentioning are: "For a whip – ten shillings" and "for singing a mare ten shillings and six pence". (50p and 52½p respectively).

From the Cawley story we know that Thomas later moved to Chorley to become ostler at the Royal Oak Hotel, and that a marriage took place between the two families. Thomas Casson, my husband's maternal great, great grandfather died at Chorley in 1868, aged 56 years.

### *To Conclude*

Much additional information could have been added to these sketches, but would really not be relevant to the Wigan story. If I have digressed somewhat it has merely been to give some background knowledge to the various families, which I think must be of interest.

## Family History Workshops

The History Shop's second series of family history workshops has now come to an end. Len Marsden, Derek Horrocks and Carol Littler – all members of Wigan Family History Society – dealt with 57 enquiries in all, most of which came from beginners.

Thanks to Len, Derek and Carol for their time and effort, and we look forward to welcoming their students as regular users of the History Shop.

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## '94 LECTURE PROGRAMME

THE second year of lectures in the History Shop is proving a great success. With some fascinating topics lined up for the remainder of the season, and restricted seating in the Meeting Room, it is recommended that you obtain your ticket in advance from the History Shop (0942 828128), and arrive in good time. Lectures begin at 7.30 p.m.

### 9 March

'Postcards from the Western Front, 1914-1918'

*Carol Littler*

### 13 April

'The History of Walker Bros., Engineers of Wigan' (see p8)

*Mike Haddon*

### 11 May

'The George Formby Story', told and sung by *Stan Evans*

## THE GEORGE FORMBY SOCIETY

REGULAR re-runs on TV of George Formby's most popular films have kept his memory fresh more than 30 years after his death, introducing new generations to a unique brand of humour.

A George Formby Society was founded soon after George's death and now has groups throughout the country. Many of the members learn to play the ukulele or the ukulele banjo and to sing the songs that George Formby wrote. However, it is not essential to own or play a musical instrument to be a member. The society also publishes a magazine, and we look forward to welcoming its editor, Stan Evans, to the History Shop on Wednesday 11 May, at 7.30 p.m. Stan will tell the George Formby story and sing some of his songs, in conjunction with the George Formby exhibition.

Anyone interested in joining the George Formby Society should contact Stan at 'The Hollies', 19 Hall Nook, Penketh, Warrington. WA5 2HN (0925 727102).

## YEAR OF DRAMA 1994



## EXHIBITIONS IN THE HISTORY SHOP

THE History Shop is maintaining a programme of varied temporary exhibitions to complement the excellent 'Founded on Coal'. Either side of Easter, visitors will have another opportunity to see the popular Heritage Service exhibition, 'Standish As It Was'. Standish has a fascinating history, which is vividly brought to life in this splendid exhibition. It is accompanied by Heritage Service publication No. 5, of the same name — this is available from the History Shop @ £3.95.

\*\*\*



The house, no. 3 Westminster Street, Wigan (since demolished), where George Formby was born in 1904. From a painting by Gerald Rickards, based on original photographs.

The History shop's contribution to the Year of Drama begins at the end of April with an exhibition on that famous son of Wigan, George Formby. Born in the town in 1904, his show business career covered 40 years, and he became one of the world's most popular and highly paid entertainers. His engagements took him all over the world, particularly during and after World War II, when he entertained many thousands of troops and civilians. In recognition of this service he was awarded an OBE in 1946. He died in 1961 and is buried at Warrington.

\*\*\*

During the summer



there will be an opportunity to view some of the magnificent Crawford collection of Napoleonic political cartoons.

\*\*\*

For the remainder of 1994 we return to the Year of Drama theme, with three separate exhibitions. More details in the next Past Forward (due out in June), when the focus will be very much on the Year of Drama.

### 14 March - 16 April

'Standish As It Was' — 800 Years of History.

### 29 April - 5 June

'George Formby'

### 24 June - 27 August

An Exhibition featuring the Crawford Collection of Napoleonic political cartoons

### Sept. - Dec.

A Celebration of Theatre

## GRAND VICTORIAN EVENING

Wigan Leisure Services Department's Year of Drama celebrations will culminate on Thursday 15 December at Haigh Hall, with a GRAND VICTORIAN EVENING.

Guests will enjoy a sumptuous Victorian dinner, based on the menu used for Lord Crawford's eldest son's Coming of Age in 1893. Entertainment will be by the Wigan Pier Theatre Company.

There will also be music, carols and much, much more.

For further details, contact Alastair Gillies, Heritage Services Manager (0942 827375)



## Aspull & Haigh Historical Society

The Society meets in the Village Centre, Bolton Road, Aspull, on the second Thursday of the month, at 8.00 p.m. (One member who never misses a meeting comes all the way from Halifax).

### 10 March

Annual Meeting

### 14 April

'Thomas Tyldesley'  
Mrs. I. Jones

### 12 May

'The Postal Service, 1768 to the Present Day'  
Mr. S. Appleton

### 9 June

'Coins' — Part 2  
Mr. V. Prescott

For further details contact Mrs. Dorothy Dootson, 5 Stancliffe Grove, Aspull, (0942 831204)

Mrs. Dootson writes,

"Members are busy recalling past incidents and stories of interest in the past. Mrs. G. Griffiths is hoping to put it all in book form. This will be our second book, the former one being 'Memories of Haigh Brewery'. Our thanks to you for Past Forward. I send them to Australia, Cheshire, Mawdesley and Manchester".

# SOCIETY NEWS

## Atherton Heritage Society

Meetings are held in Atherton Library on the second Monday of each month at 7.30 p.m. The programme for the first part of 1994 is as follows:

### 14 March

'Titanic!'  
Mr. Rigby

### 11 April

'William Morris — A Man Before His Time'  
Mrs. Madden

### May

Atherton Festival — see local press for details.

### 13 June

To be announced  
Mr. J. Keith

For further information contact Atherton Library (0942 873369)

## Leigh Civic Trust

For information contact, Roy Thomas, Secretary (0942 606723/492457)

## Tyldesley and District Historical Society

### 17 March

'George Ormerod, Cheshire

Historian'. A talk on the nephew of Thomas Johnson, founder of Tyldesley.

Mr. Hess

### 21 April

'Tripe, A Most Excellent Dish'. A fascinating talk on a Lancashire delicacy.  
Mrs. Houlihan

### 19 May

'Museum of Transport, Manchester'. A visit to one of the largest collections of historical vehicles in the country representing 100 years of local road history. Besides vehicles (over 70 in all) the museum contains much else of interest. Guided tour. Cost £1.60 each.

ALL WELCOME Meetings are held at Tyldesley Pensioners Club, Milk Street, Tyldesley. Meetings start at 7.30 p.m. Entrance is FREE

For further details contact the Secretary on 0942 893241.

## Wigan Archaeological Society

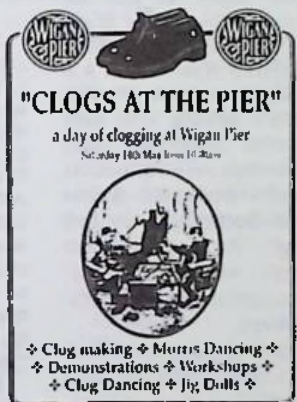
For information, contact Sharon Varley (0257 52986)

## Wigan Civic Trust

For information, contact Anthony Grimshaw, Secretary (0942 45777)

# Clogs at the Pier

Following the success of last year's inaugural event this year's Day of Clogging — Saturday 14 May — will be even bigger and better! Once again all aspects of clogs will be represented — from making them, to writing about them, to dancing in them etc. There are over twelve hours of events this year with workshops, dance displays, clog making demonstrations,



competitions, an evening ceilidh and much more besides. Wigan Pier makes an ideal setting for this event — and you'll also be able to visit The Way We Were Heritage Centre or see the world's largest working mill steam engine.

For further details ring 0942 323666.

## Wigan Pier Theatre Company 1994

The company are already fully committed to a variety of projects for the first part of this year as part of The Greater Manchester City of Drania celebrations. Last Christmas the company premiered 'The Adventures of Smart E pants', an original children's show which will be performed to primary school children at libraries and community centres throughout the year. During the February half-term, The Wigan Pier Youth Theatre was launched successfully, offering young people interested in drama the opportunity to work with professional actors. The Youth Theatre will continue at Easter and every school holiday thereafter. Projects in the pipeline for the first part of this year include 'Those Were The Days', a reminiscence piece aimed at the elderly in the community, and 'Blind Date', a contemporary comedy written for the company and performed in the evenings in the Formby Theatre - the Palace of Varieties - in Wigan Pier Heritage Centre.

For further details contact Ed Applewhite (0942 323666)

## ASTLEY GREEN COLLIERY

FORTHCOMING events include:

### 24 April

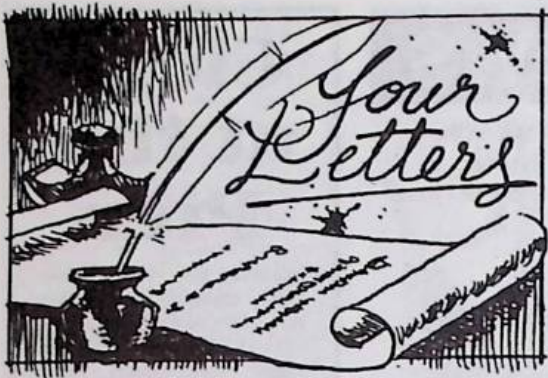
Red Rose Steam Society  
Crank-up — a vintage engine rally

### 6,7 August

Trans-Pennine Run  
(engines gather on the Saturday and leave for Harrogate early on Sunday morning)

Members of the public are welcome at the above events. Astley Green Colliery is also open Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1.00 - 5.00, and Sundays 11.00 - 5.00. Schools and party visits by arrangement.





# Scholes Windmill—early history

In response to your item in Past Forward No. 5 I enclose a note on the early history of the Scholes Windmill. Most of this information comes from old solicitors' documents in the Leigh Archives (James Lamb was my great-great-great-grandfather's brother).

James Spencer's mill at 119-123 Scholes, also mentioned in your item, is almost certainly the Scholes Steam Mill, a little lower down on the opposite side of Scholes (just below Vauxhall Road). This is clearly shown on the 1847 large-scale Ordnance Map.

The Lamb's mill was on the left hand side going up to Scholes (even numbers). According to the 1884 Wigan Directory Windmill Yard was between 132 & 134 Scholes, Boys Well Lane was between 118 & 120, the "White Swan" pub was No. 120, and the "Windmill Tavern" was No. 138. Also the "Shovel & Broom" was No. 20.

These three pubs existed with the same street numbers continuously from about 1860 until at least 1925.

David Lamb  
79 Windermere Park  
Windermere  
Cumbria LA23 2ND

p.11, Ed.] to dispose of the assets of William Baldwin, a bankrupt, James Lamb bld £380 for lot 1, a property in Scholes, just above Boys Well Lane, comprising a farmhouse (Birley House), three cottages, farm buildings and an orchard of about 1/4 acre. James then erected his windmill on the orchard and continued his trade as a miller. In 1804 he paid 3s. 3d. Land Tax on the messuage, 3 cottages, windmill and croft (about 1 rood).

James and Mary had nine children between 1787 and 1804, the eldest, William, having been born in Sutton in 1787 before the family moved to Wigan.

James Lamb died in 1805. His estate was valued at £300 and in his will he left his stock-in-trade and personal effects to his wife Mary, and his real estate, including the windmill and its implements, to his father Daniel Lamb of Sutton, in trust for the benefit of his wife and thereafter to be equally shared between his children as soon as they had all attained the age of 21 years. Six of their nine children were still living when James died (William 18, Betty 16, Daniel 14, Ruth 12, John 7 and Hannah 1).

After James' death it ap-

peared that his widow Mary carried on the business with the help of their eldest son William. In 1807 William, aged 20, married Alice Waddington whose father Jonathan Waddington was a fustian cutter and also landlord of the "Shovel and Broom" public house nearby in Scholes.

William was clearly an enterprising man and began buying properties in Scholes and elsewhere, as and when the opportunity arose. He also gradually bought out his brothers' and sisters' shares in the Scholes windmill. In 1817 he paid £130 for Daniel's share, in 1824 he bought John's share for £125 and he probably acquired Betty's share on her death in 1821. Their sister Ruth had married Isaac Mills in 1809 and they had mortgaged their share of the windmill in 1823 for £100. After Ruth's death in 1831 Isaac Mills sold their share of the property to John Clough for £210. John Clough was probably already involved in the milling or flour dealing business and had married the Lamb's younger daughter Hannah in 1824. The Cloughs thus acquired two shares in the windmill which they sold to

William in 1832 for £450. Thus William became in effect sole owner of the Scholes windmill. Some time earlier, probably in the 1820's, James' widow Mary had converted the mill to steam power. When she died in 1837 she left the steam engine and associated equipment to William, who by this time had acquired all the shares in the windmill.

William, however, was already diversifying more and more into coal production and merchanting, and it appears from census and church records that his brother-in-law John Clough probably took over the actual running of the mill.

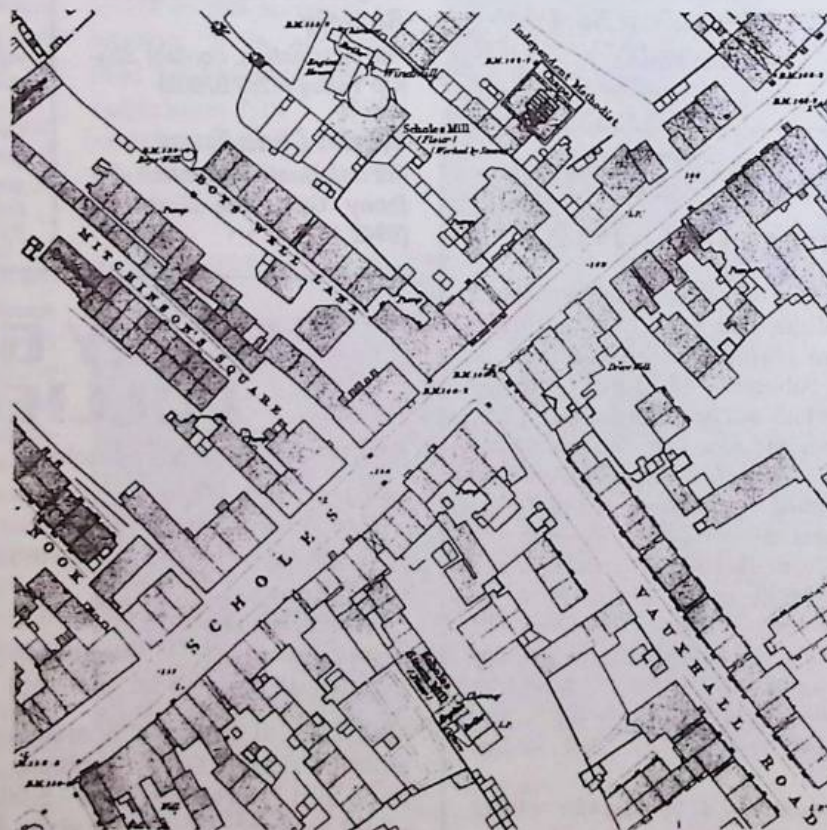
In the 1851 census John Clough, now living in Boys Well Lane, was still described as "master miller" whereas William Lamb and his son Jonathan were by now described as "coal proprietor" or "coal merchant".

The windmill is clearly shown on John Mather's 1827 map of Wigan, just above Boys Well and next to a field named Mill Croft. It is also marked on the 1845 6" OS map. On the large scale 1847 OS map [as illustrated on this page] the windmill is shown immediately alongside "Scholes Mill (flour, worked by steam) - presumably Mary Lamb's converted mill. A third flour mill (Scholes Steam Mill) is shown a little further down Scholes on the opposite side.

The windmill presumably ceased operated when Mary Lamb's steam mill began functioning, but the building remained for many years. In about December 1897 the Wigan Examiner published a letter in which the following sentence occurs:

"Many of your readers will recollect the wind corn mill which was situate in Scholes a little higher up than the White Swan. It belonged to the late Mr. William Lamb."

In *The History of Wigan*, published by John Grady in 1899, it states "in 1816 there was a windmill for grinding corn in Scholes (in Windmill Yard between Greenough St. and Boys Well Lane). The ruins were still remembered (in 1899) by many Wigan folk".





# Jogging Memories

As I leave the house and jog along the busy road, I gulp down the fume-filled air. Just beyond our row of Victorian, terraced houses an ultra-modern residential development has burgeoned; four and five bedroomed, detached properties with double garages to house the inevitable two cars, deep freeze units, tumble-dryers and mountain bikes. 'For Sale' signs festoon the forecourts....

I'm jogging now towards my 'Mecca': the well-equipped, multi-track athletics stadium, of which the local authority is justly proud. I have done this three times a week since my last job folded.

Passing the high-security, new Territorial Army building makes me wince at the adornments necessary for survival in these troublesome times. The Hi-Fi showroom, with its outsize satellite dish and plush interior, contains all the latest in 'state of the art' equipment. Outside the Sub Post Office the aged of the area queue expectantly, in the drizzling rain, for this week's pension which will ensure another week of riotous living — though it's unlikely to start a stampede for the Hi-Fi shop.

The morning shift of cleaner-women nod as I pass and shake umbrellas as they enter the fun pub and the psychedelic club next door. Cleaning won't take long this morning — there isn't a lot to do — business isn't good — and it wasn't Karaoke last night.

I'm not a long-distance runner and I don't feel lonely but my mind wanders just the same. I think about my membership of the sports club and what it means to me, it has become the focus of my life. The sport and the friendship fill my days with interest and enjoyment. As I pass the little upholstery workshop, where the owner's stubborn stand against recession is an inspiration to us all, I read, for the millionth-time: 'Top Quality Workmanship' and I am once again reminded of Grandad's oft-told tales: he spent a happy childhood in this district

and regularly reminds me of how things have changed in sixty years. The focus of his youth was 'Oh, so different'. His 'Mecca' was this little upholstery workshop. This was where his future life took shape. All the members of his family 'did time' within those walls. No, it wasn't a furniture-making family, the building had another purpose then. In Grandad's day it was a Primitive Methodist Chapel.

That little chapel was Grandad's second home; he attended three times on Sunday and several times during the week. Concerts, socials, tea-parties and slide show, with harpsichord accompaniment, amused and entertained them. They made friends with chapel folk from other parts of town at the frequent and popular circuit events. There was about six or seven chapels on each Methodist circuit served by one minister and volunteer preachers and officials. Grandad claims that his childhood was happier and more active than mine, he boasts that he had more opportunities than me for 'chatting-up' the girls; that's how he and Grandma met and married and recently celebrated their Ruby Wedding.

He tells me that this area once had six pits within walking distance — now there are none. The dominant feature of the landscape was the colliery slag heaps standing grey and stark behind the miners' cottages and it was on and around those 'mountains' that the lads devised their own 'Olympic Games'. The pubs were busier in those days and there was nothing psychedelic about the club which was proud of its affiliation to the Working Mens' Association. The club committee organised an annual trip for the members' children. Grandad, being a 'Methody', went to Southport with the rival group, the Rechabites, the tee-totaller's answer to the pubs and clubs.

Tramcars trundled leisurely along, what was then, a cobbled roadway and on the canal, which runs parallel, gaily-painted barges, pulled by

strong horses, glided smoothly by with their precious cargo of 'black diamonds' to the port of Liverpool. Occasionally, the barges were witness to the exciting spectacle of a 'private' dog fight and, sometimes, reluctantly dispensed first-aid to the bleeding protagonists. Such uncivilised behaviour, according to Grandad, became too risky in the 1930's.

I'm almost there, but Grandad's word pictures are still vivid in my mind's eye and I can feel myself hustled by the crowd of cloth-capped ghosts going to the dog track which was thriving 60 years ago. 'Pitch and Toss schools' abounded in every nook and crannie and the ubiquitous Bobbie on his bicycle made sure of a few 'cops' each week.

Things around here have certainly changed but, come to think of it, folks don't change much, they still want a job, a roof over their heads and three meals a day.

• *Fred Hughes Naylor is author of 'Lord Crawford's Other Acre', which was reviewed in Past Forward 4 and is available from the History Shop.*

# "A Girl like Wigan"?

I was interested to read your piece in Past Forward about the Forster and Thornton "connection" and your appeal for any further contributions. Please find enclosed, albeit on a rather lower literary plane, the intriguingly-titled novel *A Girl Like Wigan* by John F. Leeming (Harrap 1961), which I picked up at a charity book stall down here.

Apart from the title it has no discernible connection with Wigan, but the source of the title may be of some bizarre interest to Past Forward readers. An Italian character in the story is flattered by the belief that the British and Americans, by using the name Florence for Firenze, are comparing the city to a "lovely girl", or vice versa. He seeks to return the compliment by comparing the American woman he is in conversation with to a beautiful town. After some head-scratching he recalls a British place he read about in a newspaper and announces: "You, signora. Yes, you are a girl like Wigan".

As might be expected, the reference is evidently intended to be the author's

little joke, evoking the irony of comparing a beautiful girl to Wigan of all places (ho, ho). But it raises three issues, to my mind. The first is to what extent anyone has collected, or studied, examples of this use of the name "Wigan" as a symbol evoking a particular type of town or community or way of life or character (The Road to Wigan Pier being a prime example). Second, how many books, other than specifically local history books, can readers name with "Wigan" in the title (I've named two but are there any more?) And third, if someone really said that a girl was "like Wigan" what would readers of Past Forward take this to mean — that she was ugly, beautiful, grimy, clean, industrious? What is "a girl like Wigan" really like?

I hope this provides some food for thought. Keep the book for your files or your fire?

Mr. G. Kemp  
63 High Street  
Haddenham  
Ely  
Cambs. CB6 3XB

If you would like to receive future editions of 'Past Forward' through the post, please complete the coupon (unless you have already sent one previously) and post to:  
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Wigan Heritage Service, Market Suite, The Galleries,  
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METROPOLITAN  
**WIGAN**

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*No prizes for identifying this photograph! I imagine it will bring back memories for many readers. For those who do not recognise it, Lil's Cafe was situated on the A49, about a mile north of Standish. The photograph was taken in 1963.*

**If you can identify these photographs, please contact Len Hudson in Leigh Town Hall (0942 672421 ext. 265).**



The mystery photographs in *Past Forward 5* were obviously not the easiest to identify. The large photograph, however, would seem to be of auxiliary nurses taken outside Billinge Hospital nurses' home during World War II.



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