

Bilton Historical Society Newsletter

If you need to get in touch or have something to offer, please come to the Community Centre on Tuesday morning or contact Keith Burton on (01423) 569907 or email yourbhsnews@gmail.com

Dear Sir

We wanted to write and thank you for organising the talk by Sir Thomas Ingilby on Wednesday. As was pointed out by Isabella, we are virtually neighbours with the Nidderdale Greenway giving a direct link to the Castle and it is good to know more about the neighbours. What a lot of history the castle has seen. It has encouraged us to try more of your society's talks.

Thank you

Derek and Sue Couldwell

This was an email that we received after one of the three talks from October to December. Though it referred to just one of the talks, all three were of a very high standard and the variety of subject was excellent. It is always very satisfying to know that we have produced something of interest — so many thanks to Mr and Mrs Couldwell.

In October we visited Nidderdale in the company of David Aldred through photographs and postcards, particularly around the dams above Pateley Bridge. The story of the Inglebys/Ingilbys of Ripley Castle was given to us in November by Sir Thomas, with both humour and depth. This was followed by Richard Willis in December, telling us the History of Canals and Aqueducts particularly those in Yorkshire. He illustrated this with many photographs and some wonderful stories.

Isabella works hard to ensure a good and varied programme and I have enjoyed them all, even though the topics for some were not ones that I would have normally expected to be of interest to me.

We would always welcome more people coming to the lectures on the first Wednesday of the relevant months, so I hope that you will be inspired to come to at least one of the three remaining lectures from February to April. February will be on Pompeii and given by Gillian Hovell. In March we will hear of The Life and Times of Charles Dickens from Isobel Stirk, and the April one is the AGM with a presentation of the Study Group's works.

Also we are approaching the end of the society's year, so I am sure that our Membership Secretary, Shirley Dunwell, would love to hear from you with your subscription.

Woodside Farm History

In the few years since we came to live at Woodside Farm I have been researching its history. It has seen many changes over the last 250 years, and many hands have left their marks. Who were these people?

Above the door of the oldest part of the building there is a stone lintel, with the letters S.L. and the date 1749 carved within the outline of a shield. These initials are mentioned in "*Thorpe's New Illustrated Guide to Harrogate & District, W H Breare, 1891*" - a Victorian Guide Book - but written as S.I. My search has not yet revealed the identity of the builder although I would like to think that it was a member of the Layton family. William Layton, of Knaresborough, owned the land when he made his will in 1758 leaving his estate in Bilton-cum-Harrogate to be shared between his two nephews, James and Charles (the sons of his sister Rebecca and her husband William Brown). On a map of the area dated 1778 the brothers are shown as owners of a large amount of land in the area, and interestingly, there is a point to the rear of Prospect House marked 'Layton's Folly'.

Until the 1950s another property - Canterbury House - (*photo courtesy of the late Dorothy Fieldhouse*) stood on the



opposite side of the bridle-path on Surr Lane (now completely obliterated) with a lintel with the initials W.B. 1692 (William Brown maybe?), see also *Thorpe's Guide*, as above.

From that time onwards the cottage (as Woodside Farm was then) would most likely have been tenanted. The Brown brothers were developing land in Leeds and making their fortune, and in the early 1800s their holdings were broken into lots and sold off. The cottage became part of the Nidd Hall estate, purchased, either by Benjamin Rawson, or by the Trappes family prior to their sale of the whole estate to Benjamin Rawson, a rich, Bradford wool merchant. Rawson demolished the old Manor House at Nidd and finished Nidd Hall around 1830. After his death, the estate passed to his daughters until 1890 and the death of Elizabeth Rawson, when it passed to Henry Edmund Butler, the 14th Viscount Mountgarret.

I have not been able to discover who lived in the house in the early years of the 19th century, but know that sometime between 1885 and March 1891 the Nettleton family moved in. The census of 1891 shows Samuel Nettleton, a stonemason, his wife Ellen Louisa, and six children living in the house, which was then addressed as 'Bilton Fields'. Their youngest daughter, Caroline, aged 3 months, was no doubt born in the house. Another daughter, Ethel, wasn't at home on census night, but with her grandmother, Caroline Marsingall and Aunt Sarah, at a cottage on Bilton Lane. The Nettletons lived in the cottage for more than 15 years. It seems



to have been re-named 'Woodside' towards the end of this time. The cottage saw the children grow up and marry.

By 1913 the Harrogate Street index showed that the Nettletons had moved to Bilton Grove Avenue and Woodside was occupied by Matthew Price. Matthew had previously lived in one of the cottages on Bilton Lane. This may have been one of the railway cottages as his occupation, when he married at Nidd Church in 1907, was given as 'Signalman'. His wife was Annie Hutchinson (nee Pattison) – they were both widowed with children. The Price family continued to live at Woodside until around 1937. Matthew died in 1939 in Harrogate General Hospital and his stepdaughter Florence Hutchinson registered his death (giving his address as 68 Bilton Lane). Florence's sister, Mary Ann Hutchinson, was 30

when she married a widower, Nonus Percy Gardner, a nurseryman, (known as Percy) on 3rd December 1921 at Bilton Church. She gave her address as Woodside, Old Bilton. No doubt after the wedding Percy moved in. In 1946 Percy's daughter, Doreen, aged 19 and in the Land Army, married Arthur Wilfred Atkinson, a fruiterer – 21 years her senior. Percy Gardener, I am told, grew cacti in glasshouses, and continued to do so until he died in August 1966, aged 75. I believe his widow continued to live in the house.

The house had fallen into disrepair, as the 17th Viscount seemed to have been a reluctant landlord when it came to modernisation. Harrogate Borough Council issued a demolition order – the property was referred to as Woodside Cottage - and a note attached to the property deeds dated 31 Oct. 1967, declared that "upon vacation by the present tenant the said premises shall not be used for human habitation until they have been rendered fit for that purpose".

Since then, the house has seen many changes and improvements, each set of occupants leaving their mark. Kenneth and Shirley Blakey in the 1960s and 70s worked hard to improve the property, gradually purchasing adjoining land, adding stables, a new bathroom, and a flat-roofed extension. They changed the house name to Woodside Farm and one of their sons left his personal graffiti above the barn door "Blakey woz here" for posterity. In 80s and 90s the Duggleby family made further improvements, including building work, lay-out changes, creating a landscaped garden and planting over 1,000 trees. The Whiteleys followed and their little girls left hand-prints in the concrete of a garden wall as a permanent memorial. Since Paul and I moved in we have continued to make changes and no doubt will leave our mark too.

My research into the history of Woodside Farm is a 'work in progress', and any additional information that anyone can provide would be greatly appreciated.

Kath Martin

Some Memories of a Railwayman's Daughter

Geoff Deighton

At our Tuesday study group we were examining a new book which had been published on the subject of the railways around Harrogate when one of our lady members exclaimed with delight "that was my dad's engine". The engine was named "The South Durham" and the lady was Kath Thrower.

The engine was a D49 Hunt class which was based at Starbeck for periods in the 1940s and 1950s. Kath's father, William Brown, was one of a few dedicated drivers of the engine when he worked at Starbeck loco shed. Kath recalls that the engine was kept very clean by her father and his colleagues and the photograph confirms this. The engine used to work on passenger and freight traffic in the area. Passenger work was mainly in the local area of Ripon, Leeds, Church Fenton, Selby and York. One of Kath's memories was of the duties her father had with the engine, double heading freight trains from Bilton Junction. During the war very heavy armament trains had to be hauled up the gradient to Harrogate and beyond and Starbeck engines were used for this duty. A regular destination was Barnbow munitions factory in Leeds.

Part of the time Mr Brown worked at Starbeck, Kath and the family lived in a "railway house" in Starbeck. The house was very close to the shed sidings where goods wagons were sorted.

Kath also remembers that when the Queen came to the area the royal train was parked in a siding now known as Station Road near Sainsbury's.

Starbeck shed was closed in 1959 and drivers and staff were transferred elsewhere to place such as York and Teeside. Mr Brown worked on diesels for a while before he retired.

"The South Durham" was eventually scrapped but it has been learnt from another source that the nameplate was offered to the drivers for a paltry sum. What would it be worth today?

Kath spent some of her formative years at Pilmoor as her father was based just up the line at Thirsk before he moved to Starbeck. Pilmoor was a small junction on the main line from York where the branch to Boroughbridge and Harrogate turned off. It was (and remains today) a remote and rural area and in the 1930s and war years mains power and services were a thing of the future. Kath has memories of "collecting water for her Gran" from a water pump next to the railway. The remoteness of the area was of use to the military. Kath recalls piles of bombs stored on the grass verges of country roads in the area. Generally no effort was made to conceal them; sometimes they were covered by a sheet. A short distance away is Brafferton Spring Wood which was called "gas wood" by locals as military gas canisters were stored there. Thankfully it never became necessary to use them!

Whatever happened to Peckett?

Peckett of Bristol built HARROGATE in 1944 for the Harrogate Gas Works Railway, better known to us as the Barber Line after one of the directors of the Gas Company. The locomotive was ordered to replace two existing locomotives which were past their sell-by dates. It was joined in 1949 by a Baguley Drewry diesel. The limited clearance of the tunnel on the line meant that the loco, which ran unnamed at the time, was originally built with a low profile cab not much taller or wider than the saddle tank.

Gauge	Wheel Arrangement	Builder	Works Number
2' 0"	0-6-0ST	Peckett & Sons, Bristol	2050 of 1944

Following closure of the line in 1956, HARROGATE was sold to the Ffestiniog Railway where it was unofficially known as VOLUNTEER. Although gauging trials were carried out in the mid-1980s, the FR ultimately decided that their motive power policy should be principally based on locomotives with a historical association with the railway, so HARROGATE was sold to the Bredgar & Wormshill Railway. At the B&WR, restoration was completed, including the addition of a traditional style Peckett cab and plates bearing the name HARROGATE. It was subsequently purchased by Graham Lee's family and arrived at Statfold, near Tamworth in Staffordshire, in time for the opening of the field railway in 2005.



Peckett, now known as HARROGATE, in the livery of the Statfold Barn Railway

What is a grandparent?

Taken from papers written by a class of 8-year olds and provided by David Coates

Grandparents are a lady and a man who have no little children of their own ... they like other peoples'.

A grandfather is a man and a grandmother is a lady.

Grandparents don't have to do anything except be there when we come to see them. They are so old they shouldn't play hard or run. It is good if they drive us to the shops and give us money.

When they take us for walks, they slow down past things like pretty leaves and caterpillars.

Now I know what my grandchildren think of me. Oh dear!

Ever Wonder ...

Why the sun lightens our hair, but darkens our skin?

Why women can't put on mascara with their mouth closed?

Why you never see the headline "Psychic Wins Lottery"?

Why abbreviated is such a long word?

Why it is that doctors call what they do 'practice'?

Why lemon juice is made with artificial flavour, and washing-up-liquid made with real lemons?

Why the person who invests all your money is called a broker?

Why the time of day with the slowest traffic is called the rush hour?

Why sheep don't shrink when it rains?

Why they are called apartments when they are all stuck together?

If flying is so safe, why they call the airport the terminal?

Correspondence *Our front page picture elicited a speedy response. We are very grateful for Alan's interest and efforts on our and your behalf.*

Almost immediately I recognised the area shown in the photograph on the front of the October newsletter, having twice each Sunday for three years and at other times walked past that door as a steward for Bilton Area Methodist Church, formally Bar Methodist Church on Skipton Road.

The picture shows the back entrance to the church which leads directly into the minister's vestry. The "decorative stone" mentioned in the text is actually a decorative air brick so that air can circulate in the cavity wall. Our forefathers seemed to enjoy placing decorative items into walls of buildings. Nowadays air bricks are plain, about the size of two bricks and often have square holes in them. One is usually found at the bottom of a wall whilst the other is much higher up, thus allowing air to circulate in the cavity wall. (Are we doing the correct thing these days by using cavity wall insulation? Air is supposed to be an insulator.)



The back entrance to Bilton Methodist Church (formerly Bar Chapel) courtesy of Alan Oliver

The lady on the left of the picture is balancing against metal railings, to the left of which are steps leading down to the church's boiler room. Directly behind

the same lady is a window which at some time has been modified, leaving only the three small panes at the top. I'm sure the large panes would have been removed to spare the minister's blushes as the small room behind the window is now the minister's toilet.

I don't recognise anyone in the photo or know when it was taken, but it is possible the people shown had been clearing up after the builders had completed one of the many extensions the church has had built over the years.

Alan Oliver

2 more stories from History without the Boring Bits...Ian Crofton.

Courtesy of Isabella Ladigus

circa AD50

The Body in the Bog

In 1984 the well-preserved body of a man was found in a peat bog at Lindow Moss in Cheshire. At first it was thought he might have been the victim of a recent murder, but carbon dating placed his death at some time between 2 BC and AD 119. The man, thought to have been an ancient British nobleman from the care with which his hair and nails were trimmed, had suffered three blows to the head, a cut throat and strangulation by means of a knotted cord. He may have been the victim of a ritual execution, or just possibly a human sacrifice.



Lindow Man © British Museum

(Isabella wrote a paper on Lindow Man whilst studying Archaeology. The body is now held at the British Museum.)

AD 77

On the Iniquities of Soap



This year saw the publication of Pliny the Elder's *Historia Naturalis*, in which he disapprovingly noted the use of soap among the German and Gallic tribes – especially the men. The Romans considered the stuff only good for a hair pomade, preferring to cleanse their skin by rubbing it with olive oil, and then scraping off both oil and grime with a special metal implement.