

The Mourholme Magazine of Local History

2011 No.1, issue 61



*Mourholme Local History Society (Charity Reg. No. 512765)
Covers the Old Parish of Warton containing the Townships of
Warton-with-Lindeth, Silverdale, Borwick, Priest Hutton,
Carnforth, Yealand Conyers and Yealand Redmayne*

The Mourholme Magazine of Local History is issued by the Mourholme Local History Society for the study of the history of the ancient Parish of Warton, with its seven constituent townships; Borwick, Carnforth, Priest Hutton, Silverdale, Warton-with-Lindeth, Yealand Conyers and Yealand Redmayne.

The Society is named after the Manor of Mourholme, the home of the medieval Lords of Warton, Their seat, the Mourholme Castle, stood on the site now covered by Dockacres.

Yearly subscriptions are £10.00 (£18.00 for family or school membership) and include evening lectures, copies of the Mourholme Magazine and access to the Society's archival material.

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Contributions to the magazine – articles, letters, notes – are invited. Please send them to the current editor Jenny Ager, 51 The Row, Silverdale, Carnforth, LA5 0UG (01524 701491 jenny_ager@btopenworld.com)

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THE MOURHOLME MAGAZINE OF LOCAL HISTORY

2011, No.1, issue 61

Price 75p

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SILVERDALE 200

Jenny Ager

In 2011 Silverdale is celebrating two hundred years of history. To explain why this date has been chosen, we need to find out what was happening two hundred years ago and why that is significant. On the 21st May 1811 an Act of Parliament entitled “*An Act for inclosing and embanking Lands within the Township of Warton with Lindeth and Silverdale, in the Parish of Warton, in the County Palatine of Lancaster*” was passed.¹

As part of the enclosure process the commissioners appointed to carry out the work involved with putting the Act into operation, gave notice that they were going to

“INQUIRE into the BOUNDARIES of the commons and waste grounds, within the said township of Silverdale intended to be divided and allotted; and the Boundaries of the parishes, manors, hamlets, and districts adjoining thereto”...

The commissioners also stated that they intended “*to perambulate and view the said Boundaries*” they also stated that if the boundaries were “*not sufficiently ascertained and distinguished*” they would “*ascertain, set out, determine, and fix the same respectively*”.² In 1811, therefore the boundaries of parts of Silverdale were identified and mapped.

At the time of the Norman Conquest it is thought that Silverdale was part of an estate administered from Beetham and held by Tostig, Earl of Northumberland, brother of King Harold. This estate included Yealand, Silverdale, Borwick, Farleton, Preston Richard, Heversham, Hincaster and Levens. When land was again divided in the years between 1066 and 1086, Roger of Poitou, the son of a Norman was granted the Beetham estate. Later it was part of the Barony of Kendal, but by the sixteenth century was recognised as a manor in its own right.³

The Warton with Lindeth and Silverdale Enclosure Act was one of a large number of similar Acts of Parliament being passed during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It was concerned with enclosure of the commons and wastes, the uncultivated lands on the edge of the community.⁴ The more fertile ground was used for arable crops during the summer and grazed by livestock during the winter months, in Silverdale this “*ancient inclosed land*” was described in the Inclosure Award of 1817.

Land owners saw advantages in the enclosure of the commons. Farmers could have more control over their livestock and over land use.⁵ In the Lancaster Gazette in 1810, Lord Glyndwr gives a comprehensive scheme for managing waste lands. He cites some of the advantages,

“England and Scotland have enclosed much ... yet we hear of gentlemen in each country, now living to reap the

fruit of their labours, and at this day are receiving immense returns for their cultivated wastes and plantations of timber. These accounts should animate every man that has it in his power to cultivate their wastes, and to drain their bogs; villages will naturally rise, population increase, and the face of the country be completely changed. But many gentlemen are unacquainted with the intrinsic value of their estates, not knowing the rudiments of agriculture...”

He goes on to give details of how to plant 100 acres with trees, so that after 30 years a profit of £136,868 15s. 0d could be realised. Today that would be the equivalent of almost £4,700,000.⁶

In 1810 the solicitors John Higgin and James Wilson, put notices in the Lancaster Gazette announcing that applications were to be made for an Enclosure Act, for Warton with Lindeth and Silverdale.⁷ While the King held the manor of Warton with Lindeth, rather less exalted people were also interested. Daniel Wilson was the lord of the Manor of Silverdale and together with John Bolden, Thomas Strickland Standish, Robert Inman, Thomas Mashiter, James Kellett and several other persons, had rights and interests in the commons, mosses waste grounds and tracts of land and were:

*“desirous that the same should be
inclosed embanked and recovered
divided & allotted...”*

Commissioners were appointed to put the Act into execution, Silverdale’s commissioners were William Miller of Preston, described as a gentleman, and Richard Mount of Silverdale, a yeoman.⁸

The commissioners were to divide and allot the 592 acres of Silverdale Common and to hear and judge any disputes concerning the allocation of land. The enclosure Act did away with common rights but granted land allocations in proportion to the landowners’ rights.

A meeting was held on 1st July 1811 in the School House in Silverdale for the commissioners to meet with the owners of Silverdale Moss, Clayholes Moss and Hawes-Water Moss to assess the value of their common rights.⁹ Provision was to be made for public quarries so that material was available for building and repairing houses, outbuildings and walls; for making and repairing roads and for lime burning, but only for use within the township.

Public watering places were specified with the provision for *“sufficient public Ways & Roads to the said several Watering Places”*. The Lord of the Manor, Daniel Wilson was to have the exclusive right of fishing in Hawes Water, but had to allow the inhabitants of Silverdale to fetch water and to water their cattle. The Act also gave details of drains to be maintained and kept clean, Silverdale Moss and Myers Dyke.¹⁰

The Enclosure Award of 4th November 1817 gives the details of the commissioners' perambulation of the boundaries of Silverdale Common, undertaken on 30th July 1811; it began and ended at Slackwood Barn.¹¹

At that time Lindeth was still part of the township of Warton-with-Lindeth, only becoming part of the ecclesiastical parish of Silverdale in 1871 and part of the civil parish in 1935.¹²

Two hundred years later the current inhabitants of Silverdale will repeat that perambulation on Saturday 21st May, this time including Lindeth, now part of Silverdale, as they Beat the Bounds of their village, enjoying and celebrating the beautiful place where they live.

¹ Public Local & Personal Acts George III 1811, cap. 121.
Clerk of the Peace for Lancashire. Vol. 2. pp. 2421-2466.

² Public Local & Personal Acts George III 1811, cap. 121

³ Margaret Clarke, "The Ancient Parish of Warton, A Background View", *The Mourholme Magazine of Local History*, issue 1, Autumn 1982, Vol.I, No.1: 2-7.

William Farrer & J. Brownbill eds. *A History of the County of Lancaster, Vol.8* (Victoria County History, 1914), 180.

⁴ David Hey ed., *The Oxford Companion to Local and Family History* (Oxford University Press, 1996), 254.

⁵ Michael Wright, "Silverdale's Commonlands and Gates", *The Mourholme Magazine of Local History*, issue 37, 1999-2000, No.3: 13-18.

⁶ *Lancaster Gazette*, June 2nd, 1810.

⁷ *Lancaster Gazette*, September 15th, 1810;
Lancaster Gazette, September 29th, 1810.

⁸ Public Local & Personal Acts George III 1811, cap. 121.

⁹ *Lancaster Gazette*, June 15th, 1811;

Lancaster Gazette, June 23rd, 1811;

¹⁰ Public Local & Personal Acts George III 1811, cap. 121

¹¹ Silverdale Inclosure Award 1817.

¹² Roger J.P. Kain & Richard R. Oliver, *Historic Parishes of England and Wales* (Colchester: History Data Service, 2001), 199.

**ARNSIDE SILVERDALE AREA OF OUTSTANDING
NATURAL BEAUTY AND LANDSCAPE TRUST
LECTURE AND EXHIBITION
Thursday 17th March 2011**

The Mourholme Local History Society was invited to contribute to the exhibition which accompanied the talk by Professor Ian Whyte entitled *Through Valley and over Fell: Boundaries in the Landscape of N.W. England*. The following information and article was part of the exhibition along with photographs of some of the boundary stones of the old parish of Warton, with a map showing their positions.

BOUNDARIES

Clive Holden

Lucas (the historian) approved of boundaries. He praised provident nature which had plentifully supplied the parish *“with Stones for the Building of Walls, but also with several Sorts of Trees and Shrubs ... to make both quick and dead Hedges or Fences ... “*

(From “How it Was: A North Lancashire parish in the Seventeenth Century” Mourholme Local History Society 1998).

“Warton (in the 17th Century) was a multi-township parish with a mother church in the central township of Warton-with-Lindeth ... The total parish area of 11,100 statute acres was a fairly large one, with a boundary of roughly twenty-two miles in circumference ... “

(From “How it Was: A North Lancashire parish in the Seventeenth Century” Mourholme Local History Society 1998).

17th Century field strips were not fenced, but were divided by lines of “merestones”, or boundary stones. Temporary fencing might be used, but permanent fencing would have interfered with the common rights of pasture.

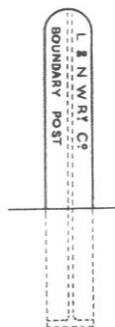
(From “How it Was: A North Lancashire parish in the Seventeenth Century” Mourholme Local History Society 1998).

Boundary walls were not necessarily permanent. For example, the walls of a group of old farms were dismantled by Robert Inman after he bought the Hill House estate in Silverdale. *“The elimination of walls ... to create larger fields was seen as one of the agricultural improvements necessary to transform farming in Lancashire”*.

(From “Warton 1800-1850: How a North Lancashire Parish Changed”
Mourholme Local History Society 2005).



Railways used boundary posts to mark the limits of their property. Examples of iron Midland Railway and L.N.W.R. (London and North Western Railway Company) posts are shown. A different type of L.N.W.R. boundary post is to be found at Bolton-le-Sands near the canal, which became railway property. Do you know of any Furness Railway boundary posts?



BOUNDARIES OF WARTON MANOR

Ann Bond

Parish boundaries were not always exactly recorded; in former times they were often “beaten” by the inhabitants, using prominent features – a tree in a hedge, a large stone – as landmarks.

However, the Warton parish manor boundaries were the subject of a formal royal inquisition in 1609, at which three of the older inhabitants made sworn depositions. The document is in Preston Record Office, (LR2/220), and was transcribed by the Mourholme Society in 1982. This document seems at first sight enigmatic, and hard to interpret. Recent (2011) discoveries about prominent landmarks have clarified several points, but some queries remain.

Robert Houseman’s deposition read:

“The bounders of Warton begyn at Meares Becke, from thence going upp midd K(eer) to Over Keer Bridge, from thence to Juitt-Well, from thence to Pearson’s house and thence to the Trough of Trowbarrow, from thence to the stonye Forde from thence to () Mill from thence to Bearte Well.”

This deposition is the only one of the three that appears to cover the entire route, from coast back to coast. **Robert Weathman** only describes the Lindeth part of the

boundary. **Thomas Wawen** – who was aged 90 – is complementary to **Weathman**, but his ending is problematical. An earlier deposition by **Kytson**, quoted in 1609, only starts at Juitt-Well. All except **Weathman** go anti-clockwise.

Their statements are tabled in the accompanying grid chart. It is fairly clear that **Wawen's** route crosses the high ground and the Moss along the present Warton boundary, but it is hard to be sure which way **Houseman** and **Kytson** describe; the landmarks that they mention can no longer be identified. The problem centres round the Trough (Trowbarrow); a boundary can only reasonably touch this if it approaches by the route along the Yealand Conyers / Redmayne boundary. The whereabouts of the Stoney Forde is also uncertain.

Some recent thoughts and discoveries about place-names appear under the grid, but we hope that anyone with knowledge or suggestions as to the identity of the place-names shown with an asterisk (especially Pearson's House) will tell us!

Deposition of 1609 Boundaries of Warton Manor

Location	Wawen	Weathman	Houseman	Kytson 1583
Meresbeck	✓		✓	
Mid Keer stream	✓		✓	
Over Keer bridge	✓		✓	
High Cross at Borwick Lane	✓			
Juitt-Well	✓		✓	Start here
Hedge between Juitt fields and Yealand fields				✓
Dawes Park*				✓
Holmes Miers Yate				✓
Waynbreak stone*				✓
Pearson's house*			✓	✓
Great stone near Haddes*				✓
High Lynde*				✓
Rough glade*				✓
Shawe Wood*	✓			
Weates Bower*	✓			
Over the Moss	✓			✓
Trough (Trowbarrow)	✓		✓	✓
Stoney Ford	End here		✓	✓

Location	Wawen	Weathman	Houseman	Kytson 1583
Ryding stone of Burnbarrow		End here: <i>“and so to top of Burnbarrow”</i>		✓
Healding stone above Holte Pott Head		✓		
Hareapple tree*		✓		✓
Burnte Hall*		✓		
Timberslack Butt		✓		
3 stones/sandbank				✓
Bearte Well		✓	✓	✓
Mid-Kent channel		✓		✓
Unidentified *		Read upwards!		

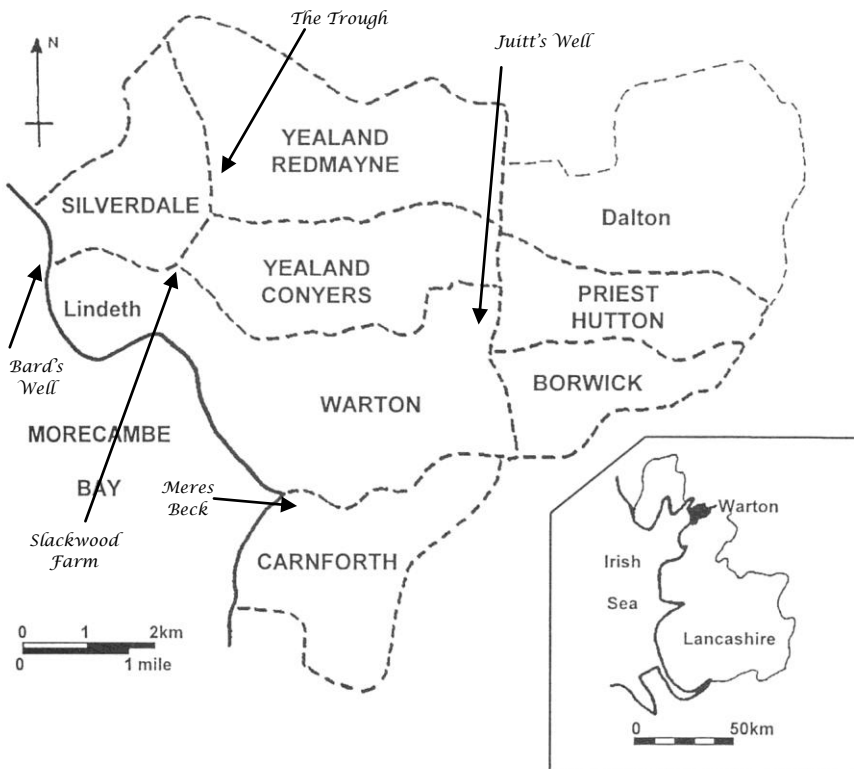
Notes:

- **Meresbeck.** Possibly a small tributary of the Keer, or a vanished farm / settlement.
- **Juitt Well, Juitt fields** Juitt = Tewit = peewit (lapwing). The well has been located at Greenlands farm, Tewitfield.
- **Holme Miers Yate** = Holmere gate / road.
- **Over the Moss** Two boundaries cross the Moss – one (Warton / Yealand Conyers) going NW from the present Crag Foot; the other (Yealand Conyers / Yealand Redmayne) going W from near Deepdale to the foot of the Trough.
- **Burnbarrow** = just possibly Warton Crag – the Barrow where a Beacon burns?

The following are mentioned in the 1811 perambulation
(for the Enclosure Award):

- **Ryding stone.** Ryding = clearing (O.E.). Or just possibly a stone marker where three townships met, e.g. at Slackwood Farm, on the analogy of the Yorkshire Ridings.
- **Timberslack Butt** was near the present West Lindeth House in Silverdale.
- **Holte Pott Head** appears as Hall Pot.
- **Bearte Well** = Bard's Well on Silverdale shore.

Warton Parish showing certain boundary points



BETTY BOAK
LIFETIME RESIDENT OF CARNFORTH
Sheila Jones

Betty Boak was born Betty Birkett in 1922 in Blackpool, but moved to Carnforth, her mother's home town, as an infant, and has lived here ever since. The little family moved in with her Grandfather Stodd "*down Hill Street*", her grandmother having died. Her two brothers were both born there and her Aunt Lou also lived with them. It was an end terrace with three bedrooms, plenty of garden to play in, and a cellar. Her mother did the washing in the cellar, and they had their Friday night baths there in a long tin bath with water heated up in the boiler – the same water for them all with the cleanest going in first. The used water had to be carried by the bucketful up and out to the garden for disposal.

Betty's father worked for his father, John Birkett, at this time. He had a chemist's in Morecambe and was once the mayor. At some point her father trained as an electrician and opened his own electrical retailer's and repair shop on Scotland Rd. where Dyno-Start is now. He had a separate, curious enterprise: in the corner of the car park of the Carnforth Inn there was a stone shed where he fixed up a wireless and would charge people to go in and listen!

The family lived above the shop, but her father was a poor businessman, "*lax at taking money from people*", and went bankrupt. He took work as an electrician while Betty's mother turned the establishment into a sweetshop for which her father made ice-cream. There is a photograph

of Betty looking “*wan and weary*” sitting outside the shop with an ice-cream she had been allowed to have on account of a sore throat. Buses on the Lancaster to Kendal run would stop outside the shop (all stops were request stops then), and Betty’s mother or Aunt Lou would run out with a jug of tea for the driver. On the return journey the jug would be brought back ready for filling up again. Betty remembers the policeman on point duty there at the square.

She went to the church school in what is now the Top Hat Club, but does not believe it was very good. There were three infant classes downstairs and four seniors upstairs. Standards four and five were in a huge room divided by a curtain. For standard seven they went to the headmaster which does not sound to have been very profitable for his wife would sometimes come to pick him up to go golfing, and the eldest pupil would be left in charge. Betty attended this school until she was fourteen but knows her mother was not happy with it and would have preferred the children to have gone to the state school. She was a churchgoer and had bowed to the persuasion of the vicar, Mr. Mercer.

One teacher whom Betty liked was called by her own future married name of Boak. In her class Betty would sit and pray for the end of the day when Mrs. Boak would tell stories brilliantly, “*putting so much of herself into them*”. She said old Mrs. Boak said it was a treat to read to Betty because she responded so fully, and Betty still has a book, *Little Bluebell* that she took to school for her teacher to read. She remembers an anecdote from another class. The

pupils were supposed to look up some sums on a particular page in their text. One boy, unable to find them, put up his hand and asked, “*Where’s ‘em at, sir?*”. The teacher had him repeat the question and then responded, “*There’s a mat down here but you’re supposed to be looking at sums!*”

The sweetshop had folded in its turn and the family rented Rose Cottage in Crag Bank where the owner kept a tiny section at the end for himself. It was a beautiful home with a big garden, and then the fields and the village green as space to play in, but it was very hard work for her mother. Betty was ten by now and can clearly remember the lack of running water or electricity, and the toilet down the garden “*with ashes*”. They had to get drinking water from a pump in the garden, and Betty recalls walking down there and the ground being a mass of white violets. Her mother had to clean the oil lamps, and blacken the huge grate once a week. She lit the boiler to do the washing in a Dutch barn, an open-sided structure in the garden, having collected rainwater in dolly tubs. There were raspberry canes, and in season they had to pick them and make them up into punnets. Betty hated delivering the orders at a few pence each. Rose Cottage is still there, and was done up after the Birketts moved out to another Crag Bank address with more conveniences.

The Carnforth of Betty’s childhood had many shops, the largest of course being the Co-op, with its two separate establishments, at the top of Market Street with the drapery and kitchenware departments, and at the top of New Street. There you shopped at various counters and

paid at the end. Mrs. Birkett's "*divvy*" number was 965 and every now and again they would draw money they had accumulated from the Co-op bank.

In what is now the bookshop were a wool shop, Weeks' newsagent, and a chemist on the corner. There was the watchmaker with a huge clock hanging outside, a fishmonger's, butchers, a greengrocer's on New Street as well as a confectioner's, and a further greengrocer's on Market Street. This was run by a little old lady called Miss Dixon, and was not very clean with its sacks of potatoes on the floor. She wore a black floor length dress, her hair in a bun, and had a sacking apron.

Further down was a shop that sold kitchen equipment and paraffin which smelled lovely. On the top of Scotland Road was a sweetshop run by the Misses Minnie and Annie Carr. Betty and her friends would call for a pennyworth of broken biscuits on the way to school, naming the ladies Kind Annie and Skinny Minnie because the one was generous with her servings and the other was not. These ladies too wore black dresses to the floor, their hair tied back, and spotless white aprons. Betty had little need to go to Lancaster and went rarely with her mother, trips being especially infrequent as she used to be sick on the Dallam Tower buses. A mortifying occasion was when she was sitting opposite another passenger and was sick into her lap.

When Betty was young she and her friends went to the "*tuppyny rush*" in the Roxy cinema, in what is now the Co-op. This was on a Saturday afternoon and "*we used to*

kill to get in". As they grew older they were "*too posh*" for this and used to take fivepenny seats in the gallery. They saw wonderful films, and Betty continued to go right up to when her own children were small, she and her friend leaving their husbands to babysit. Some time thereafter, it became a bingo hall.

As a teenager she went to dances at Bolton-le- Sands in a school that is no longer standing. She told a poignant story about an accordion player, Danny Griffiths, who played there. As a boy he had found a grenade in the area of Crag Bank used for target shooting. He took this to a man who lived opposite Betty and who was an official of some sort. This man said it was dead, so as he was leaving the boy threw it up and caught it, blowing both his hands off. Mr. Birkett ran out and applied tourniquets, and Betty's little brother, who witnessed the accident, still talks about it. Danny had artificial hands and learned to play the accordion after that. Betty describes him as a positive man "*from a family that would do their best to overcome things*". As she told the story, she and I were both somewhat incredulous because of the fingering needed on an accordion, but it is the story as she remembers it. The dances were traditional, such as the St. Bernard's Waltz, and were well attended, with refreshments being offered too. When they finished at 10.30 the crowd would walk home to Crag Bank, carrying their good shoes and mulling over the evening.

About thirteen or so years ago Betty and her daughters were looking for a good nursing home for her husband, Jack, who had come to need full care. They were happy to

find one on Cannon Hill in Lancaster, but as Betty was touring round she kept saying that she knew the place. Finally she realized it was where she had worked as a “*tweenie maid*” on first leaving school, and while it was still a private house. She had no say in whether or not she would take the job: her mother had been told of the opening by another maidservant and there Betty was sent. They were very kind but the job was not congenial to her.

Fortunately, it was only a temporary position, and she then began work at Jackson’s confectioners and cafe on Market Street in Carnforth, where they made their own bread and cakes in a bakehouse “*across the back*”. Betty worked there for three years until her mother became bedridden with rheumatoid arthritis and she had to stay home to look after her. Jackson’s could not keep the job open, so Betty’s next position, after her mother’s recovery, was with Lansil on Caton Road in Lancaster. She would take the bus to town and remembers the walk from the bridge to Lansil as onerous, especially in the rain. They made lock-knit silk for vests, amongst other fabrics, and Betty was in the department that packaged up orders. It was a happy, sociable workplace.

It was while she was working there that Betty met Jack. She had had one or two boyfriends before him. He lived in Crag Bank too, and everyone used to congregate in the middle of the village by the post office of an evening. She and Jack started going for walks and would sit on a seat down Crag Bank Road and he would sing to her, “*Take a pair of sparkling eyes and a pair of ruby lips*”. It was lovely, and thus was she wooed. He was in the

R.A.F.V.R., and these volunteers had used to meet in Lancaster where they learned “*knots and star signs and things like that*”. They were married in 1942 before he went overseas for three years in Africa, then to the former Yugoslavia. She heard from him regularly. In Bulawayo, he met his old next-door neighbour from Crag Bank, and he occasionally did the church parade with Dick Francis!

Betty went to work in the office of the western shed of the Midland Railway – a red brick building on the flats. Apart from the cleaner, Mrs. Lancaster, who became a friend, Betty was the only woman, and the men were warned not to use rude words or swear. When the new Midland shed was built by the station they moved there. Betty, still living with her mum, would cut down at the railway bridge on her way from Crag Bank, and very often she had a lift from a shunting engine to work!

After Jack came home they continued living with her parents and then with his until they got a flat on New Street over Dr. Caraher’s surgery. Betty used to help cleaning, and she describes him as “*odd*”. He had the waiting room on the main floor and the surgery in the cellar. Sometimes at night he would come back and burn papers in the cellar stove, leaving wisps floating about, or he would forget and leave the tap on, and Betty would come down to a dreadful mess. However he was a good doctor and people would queue for hours to see him, never giving up their place in the queue once gained, and staying even till eleven o’clock at night. Dr. Caraher sometimes had to give up because of ill health, and they would have a locum.

There was a further period of living with either set of parents until Betty's first baby was due. They were given a council house six weeks before the birth. The council house had a back-to-back stove in the living room behind the fire but it did not generate enough heat so they bought a gas stove. The back-to-back was a good place for drying nappies! Jack grew vegetables in the back garden and was very helpful with all three children, getting up in the night for them and mixing milk, even washing nappies when he came home from work, though Betty always hung them out. Then a very enterprising young man started coming round the estate in a van with twin tub washing machines you could hire for a few hours.

Betty had always been involved in amateur dramatics. They would put on plays in the Co-op hall in New Street before it closed, in Warton, and in Bolton-le-Sands. At Warton they put on "*Priscilla Parkin*" in which the wicked squire was to carry off the innocent girl to have his way with her on the daisy bank. He was to hoist Betty onto his shoulder, but he had been to the pub before the performance and exuberantly threw her right over so that she banged her head badly. The audience laughed uproariously, and Betty carried on "*with a headache*". Everyone pitched in with scenery and furniture. One of their number, with whom Betty still participates along with four others in doing readings in each other's houses now they can no longer act, was an excellent seamstress. She made most of their costumes, even for an Elizabethan play.

Jack, as his courtship of Betty hinted, had an interest in musicals, and appeared often with Morecambe Operatic and Dramatic Society at the Winter Gardens.

Betty and her friend worked for several years at the post office over the Christmas period to earn a bit of money. She had one final job, and loved it with all her heart. After her youngest daughter began at the council school Betty became a non-teaching assistant there. The headmistress thought highly of her, even leaving her in charge of classes. She wanted her to train as a teacher, but having left school at fourteen she would have had too much ground to make up.

Interviewing Betty, who is a vibrant and sociable woman, always beautifully turned out despite her fair share of health problems, I was most struck by the number of choices she (and then, I suppose Jack, whom I never knew) built into her life. There was never a sense of having been constrained either to do, or not to do, things – with the small exceptions of the raspberry selling and of her maid's job. Without an education, with never more than sufficient money, Betty seems to have regarded life as full of possibilities. There is no sign of the strait-jacket women are supposed to have worn before the sixties and Betty's positive outlook is with her to this day.

HARRY BENNETT 1902 – 2000

MEMOIRS CONTINUED

“I was the fortunate one in our family – the youngest, born at the right time: too young for the Great War and too old for the Second – yet living before, during and perhaps after great changes.

My elder brother Tom left school at the age of 13, just before I was born and eventually left for Canada in 1911. Until Tom left for Canada there were ten of us at home – father, mother, four boys and four girls.

Pace Egging in Millhead at the beginning of the Twentieth Century

As Eastertide drew near we made preparations for making our pace eggs. Large families were the rule and there was a competitive spirit about this as in most things. First, the collection of materials, which began with large, white shelled hen eggs. Fortunately, it was before people preferred brown eggs. As one I knew said “*The colour of the shells don't matter to me as I only eat the insides*”. Our purpose was to dye the shells to make them as attractive as possible. The sin of envy never occurred to me.

Gorse petals, the outer thin brown skins of Spanish onions and scraps of brightly coloured cottons were our basics. Some used dye powders but my mother was adamant against its use on health grounds. Old white handkerchiefs were invaluable in which to tie our eggs. But first we must write our name on the shell using a candle as a

pencil. On each piece of clean white cloth, we laid a layer of colouring materials. On this was placed an egg. Rolled up and tied securely, the eggs were now ready to be hard-boiled very slowly and very hard. All this would be done a day or two before Good Friday. Excitement grew as it got nearer to seeing our eggs unveiled. It was not uncommon for each child to have as many as six eggs, so I have known of pans being full of them. The result was largely guesswork with browns, yellows, reds and blues mottled all over the shell except where the candle wax had taken.

I am sure no art gallery had as excited viewers as we had in Millhead. The time was early Good Friday morning. Our houses had sash windows and even before it was light, someone in each house would display them along the middle sash. From about 1910 to 1914, that I personally can remember, there would be hundreds on show. Comments were freely given and mostly fair.

Egg-rolling

Pace-egging or egg-rolling was used indiscriminately by our gang. The venue was Hartley's Field, a grassy hill, the first field on the footpath to Warton. Alas, it no longer exists as it consisted of gravel and sand left there at the end of the Ice Age, but removed in the twentieth century to make concrete for roads.

On Easter Monday afternoon we set off with our pace eggs and a screw of paper and salt. There was no skill required and no prizes. In twos we lined up a few feet away and each with a pace egg. We had to hit each other's egg and

stopped when enough damage had been done. I have never been keen on hard-boiled eggs so when I had eaten all mine, perhaps as many as six, I felt I had enough until the following Easter Monday. One year about a dozen mothers and us offspring traipsed all the way to the Potts on Warton Crag and there in a lovely dingle covered by short velvety green grass we performed this ancient ceremony. It was never repeated. Perhaps washing day and the long traipse was too much for our mothers, or perhaps it was the Great War which ended this, as well as so much more.”

Editor's note

The word “pace” seems to be derived from “pasche” (Middle English) and “pascha” (Latin) meaning Easter. These words in turn are derived from “pesach” the Hebrew word for Passover.

The derivation of the word “Easter” seems to be controversial. The Venerable Bede (672-735 A.D.) noted that the Anglo Saxon word for April was “Eostremonath” named after the goddess of Spring and fertility, Eostre. As pascha often occurred in April, Christians began using the word “Easter” for the festival commemorating the resurrection of Jesus.

Other opinions site many other similar names for deities celebrating new beginnings and fertility found in ancient cultures around the Mediterranean and further afield.

INDEX TO THE MOURHOLME MAGAZINE

Ann Bond

Last autumn, when Jenny Ager invited me to join the Mourholme committee, she also asked if I would make an index of the magazine contents. Some work had already been done on this by Sheila Jones, but an in-depth, page-referred research index seemed to be envisaged, and so I set to work.

I had no professional experience of index-making, apart from one for my own harpsichord book, but it soon became apparent that the different methods of identifying issues imposed a cumbersome obstacle to progress. For example, Vol. II no 2 (winter 84), 1990/91-I, 2001-2 no.3! To use such identifications would mean a messy index text and a potentially unreliable tool, as it is only too easy to get confused (I know!). I therefore consulted the Committee about introducing a serial numbering, as is done in Keer to Kent. They approved, and after I had searched around fairly thoroughly for possible missing numbers in the gaps, I arrived at a consecutive numbering from 1 to (at present) 60. So the Archive copies have been renumbered, and references will always be in the uniform simple format - issue: page e.g. 17:32. A conversion chart will be alongside to help users.

Making the index naturally involved reading all the issues, which proved absorbing, as I am a newcomer to so much of the material. My parents had lived in Dudley, in the Black Country, and so I was fascinated by the history of Millhead (Dudley) and its ironworks. Then there are

accounts of the big families– the Inmans, the Middletons, the Burrows – but also of the humble poor. There are trades and crafts; buildings and animals; politics and piety. Of many distinguished individual contributors, I might single out Dr. Findlater, who thoroughly explores the topics of population, disease, and public health, and has documented medical practice in the area from the sometimes gruesome activities of his forebears, via the notorious old Dr. Jackson, to the modern complexities of NHS Ash Trees. In addition, he has contributed a notable series of Oral Histories made from tape-recordings of local people of all kinds.

Within the past decade, a trend has emerged to write up the content of our evening lectures as a summary. As these summaries now occupy as much as a third of the total pages, it seemed reasonable to give them a mention when they cover local topics, even though the text may well be available elsewhere.

A picture emerges, too, of the wanderings of the Archives (now finding a home at Bleasdale House) and of the venues for the MLHS meetings themselves. The Society has obviously managed to survive robustly in spite of these incidental trials, and the magazines represent a rich body of research material which it is hoped the Index will serve. I will close by echoing the plea of many an Editor – please will YOU add to this material? We are all ‘local history’!

REPORTS OF EVENING MEETINGS

March 24th 2010 - Thomas Mawson, landscape architect

Mrs Elizabeth Kissack talked about the life and times of Thomas Mawson, landscape architect, her talk beautifully illustrated with slides.

Mawson was able to take advantage of the trend for industrialists and businessmen to build country houses in the Lake District in the late Victorian and Edwardian eras. If they had grand houses, they also required grand gardens, and Thomas Mawson and his company were able to provide these. Although born in Scorton, Mawson worked in Windermere, and when the company grew, had his headquarters in Lancaster at No. 2, High Street. He is mostly famed for his gardens, with their characteristic terraces, balustrades and ball finials, but he did also design some houses, including his own at Hest Bank, hence "architect". He was responsible for the gardens of many houses in the Lake District, including Brockhole, Cragwood, Langdale Chase, Blackwell, Rydal Hall, and the rose garden at Holker Hall. He also worked for Lord and Lady Leverhulme, and designed the garden for Bailrigg House, the whole of Westfield War Memorial Village in Lancaster, and Blackpool Park.

His work was not restricted to this country. After World War I, the King of Greece invited him to redesign Athens and Salonika, both badly damaged. He was also in demand in Canada and the United States. He died at Hest Bank in 1933, and is buried at Bowness. Some readers

may recall that Mawson was highlighted on a recent Gardeners' Question Time on BBC Radio 4, so it can be seen that his fame was countrywide.

April 28th 2010 – The seven martyrs of Kendal

The last talk of the 2009/10 season, following the AGM, was given by Derek Longmire on the subject of the Martyrs of Kendal. He began by pointing out that there were no monasteries or priories nearby, so Kendal parish church was the sole place of worship in Kendal. There is evidence that “protestantisation” did not happen immediately in Kendal. Chantry chapels survive (Parr and Stickland families) from the Middle Ages and were not destroyed, which shows that the idea of Purgatory did not die out, and traditional Catholicism continued in the area well beyond the Pilgrimage of Grace, an uprising triggered by Henry VIII's split with Rome, in 1537.

Mr Longmire pointed out that there was strong resistance to Protestantism in the north of England, and that local clergy did not do very much to further this cause, so, with little persuasion from the pulpit, things did not change very much. Catholicism, in any case, was a cultural as well as a religious way of life, with all the seasonal festivals and saints' days, the celebrations of which people clung on to. It was not until after the Gunpowder Plot in 1605 that things really changed. Then catholic adherents were seen as traitors, not heretics. The Kendal martyrs, John Mason, Thomas Sprott, James Duckett, Thomas Somers, Thomas Tunstall, John Duckett and Thomas Pickering, were executed for treason, not heresy. They are known as the Kendal Martyrs because they were all born

in or near Kendal, though their subsequent careers and executions took place elsewhere, including Tyburn in London.

September 22nd 2010 – Country houses in our area

In the absence of Jenny Ager, Sheila Jones presided over the meeting on 22nd September, commencing with a minute's silence as a mark of respect for our late treasurer, Brian Ager. Sheila then introduced John Champness, a former conservation officer, whose topic was *Country houses in our area*, richly illustrated with slides.

Appropriately enough the first slide was of Warton Old Rectory, now a ruin, but typical of medieval houses. Working his way through, in more or less chronological order, John talked of other medieval structures, such as Burrow Hall, Beetham Hall, Middleton Hall and Yanwath Hall, explaining how their owners would have to own at least a thousand acres to produce sufficient revenue to afford such luxury. This was only relative luxury, because the prime consideration was not comfort, but security against potential enemies such as marauding Scots.

As time went on landowners were able to think more of comfort than security, to have more ornamentation such as beautiful ceilings, coats of arms and paintings of family groups, often with details symbolising their loyalty to the sovereign rather than to the Pope. It was the mistrust of Roman Catholics that accounts for the relative scarcity of country houses built in the seventeenth century, when many landowners were Catholics. There was also reaction

against French influence, giving rise to the adoption of Italianate or Palladian style in architecture.

With the nineteenth century and the industrial revolution, came the *nouveaux riches*, anxious to show that they too were important and not to be outdone, resulting in many more impressive country house built in a wide variety of styles.

In an hour and a half we saw an amazing number of our area's country houses, so many that it seems almost impossible that any could have been omitted.

October 27th 2010 – Attitudes to religion

Members and friends of the Mourholme Local History Society enjoyed fascinating insights into the lives of local working people as they listened to tape recordings illustrating aspects of their lives concerned with *Attitudes to Religion*. This was the title of the talk given by Dr Elizabeth Roberts at the Society's October meeting.

Dr Roberts conducted her research during the 1970s and 1980s; she collected information from people in Barrow, Lancaster and Preston, concerning many aspects of family and social life, with memories and reminiscences stretching from the latter part of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century. This oral history archive is held at Lancaster University.

People remembered that all the parents in their area sent their children to Sunday School; this reinforced home teaching of learning right from wrong. In her research in

Preston, Dr Roberts also found that Sunday School was not just for children and there were thriving adult groups, actively carrying out Bible study and collecting money for good causes. Peer group pressure was important, Saturdays were for football, Sundays for Church. Religious belief sustained people through hard times, such as the loss of children. Religion provided social activities in a life that could be narrow and culturally poor. People remembered with pleasure, badminton, concerts, dances, hot-pot suppers, Sunday School outings and Whit Walks, with new clothes for the children and processions through the town.

Often religious allegiance influenced marriage partners, and even politics, but Dr Roberts found little sectarian conflict, with neighbours remaining friendly and loyal to each other, whatever their particular Christian denomination. Some people discontinued religious practice, some becoming disillusioned and finding the material divisions between the rich and poor incompatible with Church attendance; some men fell away from their religion after their experiences during the World Wars and others gave up after reading and intellectual consideration.

Dr Roberts' more recent research, concerning the period between the 1940s and the 1970s found that despite competition from the increased range of social activities available such as cinema, radio and television, people still valued and retained their connections to their religious beliefs.

November 24th 2010 - Wrecks and drownings in Morecambe Bay

John Harman started the evening by telling an unusually large audience about the many shipwrecks in Morecambe Bay, most of them off Walney and Fleetwood. So many wrecks have there been that only a select few could be dealt with in detail, but these were enough to emphasise the perils which mariners encountered, and the difficulties of apportioning blame in cases of collision. Rescues by lifeboats and provision of lighthouses were also described at some length. One instance which surprisingly provided local interest was the sinking of the *Ocean Monarch* off Anglesey in 1848, some of the drowned bodies from which were washed ashore near the mouth of the River Keer, some seventy miles distant.

Dick White then took over with the story of drownings dating back to 1243, many of them found in the pages of parish registers. Whole families of fishermen could be lost in rough seas; pleasure boats could account for even larger numbers of drownings (seventeen drowned off Aldingham in one double-booked and therefore much overloaded boat), while the sinking of larger vessels could bring even greater death tolls, such as the twenty five lost off Silverdale in 1895. For those crossing the bay by coach or on foot, fog and quicksands are ever present dangers, and some of the newest safety measures to counter them were described.

Although largely a story of doom and gloom the evening was not without its lighter moments, and the large attendance may suggest that, though we may not like to

admit it, we are all keen to know of the misfortunes of others.

December 9th 2010 - Members' Evening

Maybe it was the weather which kept the attendance down, but those who managed to get to the village hall enjoyed an evening of varied entertainment, mostly with a Christmas theme.

Awena Carter got the ball rolling by reading an appropriate extract from *Cider with Rosie*, by Laurie Lee, and this was followed by a local history quiz of twenty questions compiled by Clive Holden. Sheila Jones then read a fascinating account of her childhood memories of Christmas in a Northumberland village, after which we were able to enjoy light refreshments, take the opportunity to look at a display of items from the Society archives, and attempt to identify twenty locations in a pictorial quiz compiled by Jenny Ager. Jenny then brought proceedings to a close with selections from Helen Escolme's diary about Christmas in Yealand many years ago.

January 26th 2011 - Lesser known traditional houses and buildings open to the public in Lancashire

Kevin Illingworth, with his experience as a builder, paviour and waller to add to his enthusiasm for architecture, was well qualified to hold the interest of a well attended meeting. The speaker did not limit himself to buildings in Lancashire, but made the occasional foray into Yorkshire and Cumbria, with illustrations of and information about a score of buildings which are open to the public, some on a regular basis, others on only rare

occasions. Some of the buildings dated back to the 14th century, such as the defensive tower adjoining the 17th century Ormside Hall, near Appleby, and none was later than mid 18th century if one discounts later additions and alterations.

Some of the properties were built for well-to-do families, such as the 18th century Standen Hall at Pendleton, home of the Aspinalls, while of more humble origins is the birthplace of Sir John Barrow at Ulverston, shown with his Hoad monument in the far distance. Of similar humble origins is the remote farmhouse at Cowside, Langstrothdale, which lay derelict for many years, but has recently been restored and is now a holiday let. Another farmhouse, originally with tin roof but now thatched, is the late 17th century Scotch Green near Inglewhite. Nearer to home is the Cottage Museum at Lancaster, which, though it now celebrates Victorian times, was built in 1739. Other buildings now open as museums are the Church Cottage Museum at Broughton (near Preston), which dates back to the 16th century and is now in the grounds of a primary school, and the South Ribble Museum at Leyland of similar vintage, which served as a grammar school until 1874.

Should you care to visit Manchester, not too far away are the 15th century Clayton Hall, surrounded by a deep but now dry moat, and the part-timbered Baguley Hall at Wythenshawe, once threatened with demolition.

Much nearer to home are Parrox Hall at Preesall, The Stork at Conder Green (once a coaching inn and still a

hostelry), 22 Main Street at Heysham and The New Inn at Yealand, all dating from the 17th century. Also near at hand are Heysham Old Hall, built in 1598 but with a 19th century date stone, The Smugglers' Den at Poulton (i.e. Morecambe) with its distinctive cobbled walls, and Scale Hall, allegedly of about 1700, where Kevin discovered an apparently previously unnoticed date of 1737 on a gate post. It was obvious that he considered exploration and discovery as important as reliance on the findings of others.

For those who wish to explore further the speaker recommended “The Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings”, “The Historic Houses Association”, “English Heritage” and even pubexplorer.com.

For those were there, can you remember:

- a) what is a fire window?
- b) where would you find a bressumer beam?

What! Forgotten already? Tut,tut.

February 23rd 2011 - The origins of Lakeland dialect

Jean Scott-Smith, a Cumbrian born and bred, disabused us of the idea that dialect is another word for slang. It is discourse or a way of speaking which is dependent partly on accent and partly on vocabulary.

The influence of the Celtic period, which lasted until about the eighth century, is still evident north of Ullswater. From then on a more Germanic influence was introduced by the influx of Norsemen, arriving as settlers from

Western Norway via Ireland. By contrast, the Norman invasion had little effect on dialect in this part of the country. Many examples were given of words in current use which originate from those far distant times, some with surprising connections such as Haverthwaite and haversack.

Although a few books were written about dialect and meetings were held at Carlisle, a dialect society, now with a membership of about three hundred, was not formed until 1939.

The speaker went on to show us some of the books about dialect, and read amusing extracts such as the tale of Bill and Mabel and a bit of binder string, and a free translation into dialect of a passage from the Book of Ezekiel. The latter was from a service held at Levens, such services being held biennially on different themes at different churches. We also learned that dialect plays were performed at Grasmere from some time in the nineteenth century until 1937, but were not revived after the war.

From the question and answer session at the end we learned that there is no definitive Lakeland dialect, because of the slight differences in vocabulary and considerable differences in accent in different parts of the region.

Were you wondering about Haverthwaite and haversack? 'Haver' means oats; 'thwaite' means a clearing; and 'sack' (wait for it!) means a sack.

March 23rd 2011 – Ships' chandlers

Commander John Altham, with sixty years experience as a ships' chandler, gave an illuminating talk about the well known Morecambe family firm. John's forebears started a farm shop in 1856, and the family is still involved in the butchers' trade. Further evidence of their enterprise was the setting up of the *Morecambe Visitor*.

He explained that ships' chandlers deal in all sorts of shipping equipment, though the name is derived from the tallow which they used to supply for chandeliers. The decline of ports such as Workington and Heysham has affected the firm, but the Morecambe Bay gas platform provides business, and there is much foreign trade. Very good trading relations were established with the Dutch and Norwegians, and the Russians were also very hospitable, providing caviar and chips!

John also told us of his earlier years, when he served as a Midshipman during his National Service, and remained in the Naval Reserve for a further thirty years, which involved periods of fourteen days reservist training, including a spell on HMS Leander as a Lt. Commander. One of his duties, when it was discovered that he was a magistrate, was to serve on a court martial.

Among the interesting people met during a long career were Admiral Harwood, who commanded the British cruisers at the Battle of the River Plate in 1939; and one of the three survivors from the sinking of H.M.S.Hood in 1941. Many were the amusing anecdotes which Commander Altham had to tell, such as of his meeting

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with a German business associate who, when John mentioned that he lived near Lancaster, said that he knew nothing of Lancaster, but he certainly remembered Lancasters.

Clive Holden and Jane Parsons

MOURHOLME SUMMER OUTING PENDLE HERITAGE

Clive Holden

The Mourholme Local History Society Summer Trip took place on 27th July 2010. This was arranged slightly differently from the two previous trips, in that we booked the coach ourselves, and hired a guide, Mr Ian Burton. Our first stop was at the Pendle Heritage Centre at Barrowford, where we watched a video describing the practice of witchcraft in the area in the 17th century. It explained how the remoteness and isolation of the settlements led to superstition. The witches may well have believed that that's what they were, and local people were often convinced that they or their animals had been bewitched. There was certainly also a political aspect to witch trials, arising out of government fears of recusancy and possibly treason. After coffee, we had time to explore the Heritage Centre, an interesting ancient building with evidence of the different centuries in which it was used and added to, and the walled garden.

En route to Clitheroe for lunch, we stopped at the church of Sts. Peter and Paul, at Bolton by Bowland. It has a fascinating interior, in particular the memorial to Sir Ralph Pudsey (who restored the church in the fifteenth century), his three wives and twenty-five children! The church also has a fine tower, rather in the style of Somerset churches. This is said to be because Henry VI stayed nearby, and had previously been impressed by the towers of Somerset churches.

Clitheroe was an excellent choice for a lunch venue, having plenty of places to eat or buy a snack. The castle was well worth the effort of climbing up to.

In the afternoon we were driven through several Pendle villages, passed both Sawley and Whalley Abbeys, and Stoneyhurst, now a public school. The weather cleared up too, so we were able to admire the whole of Pendle Hill (which, by the way, is a tautologous name, meaning “hill hill hill”), which, in the morning, had been shrouded in cloud.

Ian Burton was an extremely knowledgeable and interesting guide. Fortunately we were not tested on the information we had been given!

Congratulations are due to Jenny Ager for organising the day.

NOTES AND QUERIES

Carol Millar is researching her family history. Her great, great, great grandfather was John Brayshaw, he lived in Priest Hutton and worked as a weaver. Carol found an article in the Lancaster Gazette for July 1865, which reports how John Brayshaw's body was found.

“DEATH BY DROWNING. – On Saturday morning last intelligence was received at the County Police Office, Skerton, that a hat and walking-stick had been found floating in the canal, near to the turnpike-road bridge at Beaumont. Superintendent Clegg, accompanied by P.S. Wilson and P.C. Smith, immediately went to the place indicated, and at the first cast of the drag drew out the body of an old man, which was at once recognised as that of a man who had been seen passing through Skerton towards Slyne about six o'clock on the previous evening; he was then leaning on two sticks, and had three stone-breaker's hammers slung with a string round his neck. The body when found had three hammers tied in the same way, and one stick was firmly grasped in the hand. There were no marks of violence found on the body nor were there any marks of a struggle having taken place on the canal bank. The sum of one shilling and fivepence in copper and sundry articles were found in the pockets. On Saturday evening an inquest was opened at the Black Bull public-house, Skerton, before Mr. Holden, coroner,

when P.S. Wilson having deposed to the finding of the body, the inquest was adjourned for the purpose of seeing if the body could be identified. It subsequently turned out that the body was that of John Brayshaw, stonebreaker, of Priest Hutton, aged 77 years, and on Monday evening the inquest was resumed. When Betty Brayshaw, the widow of the deceased, deposed that her husband was employed by the township, and on Friday morning he left home about 8 o'clock to go to break stones in Keer Holme Lane. He took something with him for dinner, and said he would be at home in good time in the evening. He had the three hammers with him when he left home. He was a sober man, and had only been drunk twice during the 49 years they had been married. He rather "doated" at times, but this was the first time ever she had to late (seek) him ... He had no business which called him to Lancaster. He was not subject to fits. This was the whole of the evidence, and the jury returned an open verdict of "Found drowned."

Carol has the following queries:

Where would John have worked as a weaver in the area?
Information about his employment by the township as a stone breaker (aged 77).
Are there any photographs of the people and places in Priest Hutton from this time?

If anyone can help, Carol can be contacted at
carolmilla@aol.com