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A Piece Of Lowton History

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www.lowtonhistory.co.nr

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INTRODUCTION



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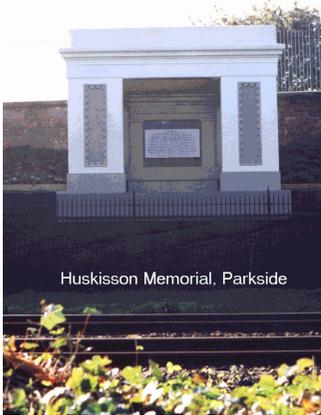
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The story of the Huskisson Memorial

The story on this page has been left as it was written for the newsletter of the Lowton and Golborne Local History Society in 1998. We are pleased to note the renovation and reopening of the memorial at Parkside on Sunday 17th September by Rail Track and officials of St.Helens MBC who's area it now lies. W. Huskisson, the Liberal MP for Liverpool, was run over by the Rocket during the opening celebrations of the Liverpool and Manchester railway in 1830. Huskisson had been instrumental in the building of the railway.

Copyright © 2000 Infoto



Photograph taken at the Centenary in 1830

The Huskisson Memorial.

Standing on the southern boundary of the Metropolitan Boroughs of Wigan and St. Helens at Lowton is the Huskisson Memorial . Unless you are travelling on the Liverpool to Manchester railway and the train is travelling rather slowly you have little chance of seeing it. The memorial is a grade 2 listed building but years of neglect and alleged vandalism had all but reduced it to a ruin however it has just been renovated to it's former glory and is well worth a look. It is unfortunate that it

can only be viewed from a moving train. Is unique and is a memorial to an event that no other place can lay claim to.

The site of the memorial is close to the site of Parkside station one of the first railway stations in the world, about 17 miles east of Liverpool. It was at this place on 15th September 1830 on the opening day of the railway that the WORLD'S FIRST fatal railway accident occurred.

All the official guests had been travelling from Manchester towards Liverpool when they stopped at Parkside station to take on water. The engine pulling the carriage containing the Duke of Wellington was pulled onto one track so that it the Duke's party could be reviewed by the people travelling in the other trains travelling on the other track.

The Right Honourable William Huskisson M.P. had got out of the carriage and was standing on the other track, along which 'The Rocket' was seen to be approaching at a fast speed. There had been some coolness between Huskisson and the Duke for some time, but at this moment the Duke made a sign of recognition and held out this hand to Huskisson whilst they were shaking hands there was a general call from the



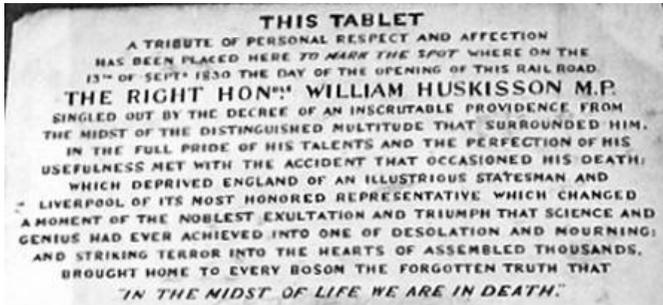
Huskisson's Tomb

other bystanders for Huskisson to get back into the carriage. However he did not get out of the way in time and was hit by the Rocket, he fell with his leg across the rail and his leg was crushed.

When he was lifted from the track he uttered the words "I have met my death", he was loaded onto one of the trains and transported to the parsonage at Eccles where despite the treatment he received he died later the same evening.

The memorial was erected to his memory and to record this WORLD'S FIRST, In recent years the memorial has been renovated to an excellent standard, it is just a pity that it can only be viewed from trains due to the position it is located.

Below is recorded the inscription that was on the marble tablet:



This Tablet

A mark of personal respect and affection has been placed here to mark the spot where, on the 15th of September 1830 at the opening of the railroad THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM HUSKISSON M.P. singled out by an inscrutable Providence from the midst of the midst of the distinguished multitude that surrounded him, in the full pride of his talents and perfection of his usefulness met with the accident that occasioned his death, which deprived England of an illustrious Statesman and Liverpool of its honoured Representative, which changed a moment of noblest exultation and triumph that science and genius had ever achieved into one of desolation and mourning, and striking terror into the hearts of assembled thousands, brought home to every bosom for the forgotten truth that- "In the midst of life, we are in Death"

William Huskisson was the First man in the world to be killed by a railway passenger steam engine train This was at Parkside Station.

His Tomb is situated in the cemetery next to the Anglican Cathedral.

Reports of the Accident



(1) Lady Wilton was in the same carriage as the Duke of Wellington, when William Huskisson had his accident. She later told Fanny Kemble what happened.

The engine had stopped to take a supply of water, and several of the gentlemen in the directors' carriage had jumped out to look about them. Lord Wilton, Count Batthyany, Count Matuscenitz and Mr. Huskisson among the rest were standing talking in the middle of the road, when an engine on the other line, which was parading up and down merely to show its speed, was seen coming down upon them like lightning. The most active of those in peril sprang back into their seats; Lord Wilton saved his life only by rushing behind the Duke's carriage, and Count Matuscenitz had but just leaped into it, with the engine all but touching his heels as he did so; while poor Mr. Huskisson, less active from the effects of age and ill-health, bewildered, too, by the frantic cries of "Stop the engine! Clear the track!" that resounded on all sides, completely lost his head, looked helplessly to the right and left, and was instantaneously prostrated by the fatal machine, which dashed down like a thunderbolt upon him, and passed over his leg, smashing and mangling it in the most horrible way.

(2) *The Observer* (19th September 1830)

Several of the passengers of the *Northumbrian* got out to walk on the railway, and among them was Mr. Huskisson. He was discoursing with Mr. J. Sanders, one of the principal originators and promoters of the railroad, when the Rocket engine came slowly up, and as the engineer had been for some time checking its velocity, so silently that it was almost upon the group before they observed it. In the hurry

of the moment all attempted to get out of the way. Mr Huskisson. hesitated, staggered a little, as if not knowing what to do, then attempted again to get into the carriage. As he took hold of the door to do this, but the motion threw him off balance, and before he could recover he was thrown down directly in the path of the Rocket. Mrs. Huskisson, who, along with several other ladies, witnessed the accident, uttered a shriek of agony, which none who heard will ever forget.

(3) Samuel Smiles, *George and Robert Stephenson* (1899)

Mr. Huskisson had alighted from the carriage, and was standing on the opposite of the road, along which the *Rocket* was observed rapidly coming up. At that moment the Duke of Wellington, between whom and Mr. Huskisson some coolness had existed, made a sign of recognition, and held out his hand. A hurried but friendly grasp was given; and before it was loosened there was a general cry from the bystanders of "Get in, get in!" Flurried and confused, Mr. Huskisson endeavored to get round the open door of the carriage, which projected over the opposite rail; but in so doing he was struck down by the Rocket and falling with his leg doubled across the rail, the limb was instantly crushed. His first words, on being raised, were, "I have met my death," which unhappily proved true, for he expired that same evening in the parsonage of Eccles. It was cited at the time as a remarkable fact, that the *Northumbrian* engine, driven by George Stephenson himself, conveyed the wounded body of the unfortunate gentleman a distance of about 15 miles in 25 minutes, or at the rate of 36 miles an hour.

Photographs donated to the Website project



St Luke's Circa 1910



Sunday Schools day out on Highfield Moss



Newton Road Circa 1920



Hughie Owens on Motor Bike Circa 1920 St. Helens Road

Thanks to the late Ronnie Marsh for the use of these four photographs from his collection

Thanks to David Boardman for sending these photographs

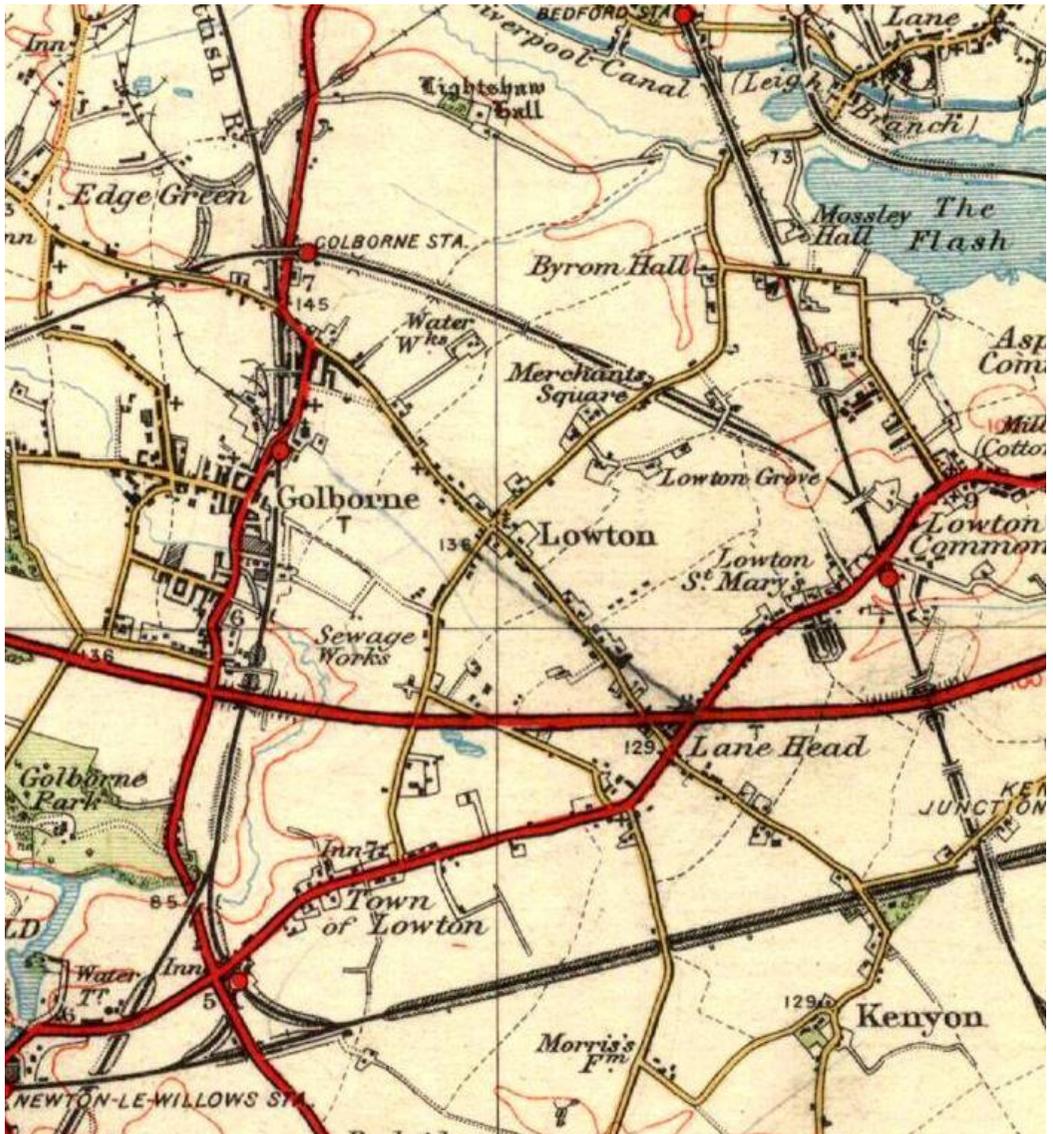


David added this text to the photographs
My great grandfather was foreman at the nurseries in Sandy Lane before purchasing them from Mr Leigh who retired to Old Colwyn I believe. Both are of my grandfather taken in 1908 and 1934. He lived with his parents in Pear Tree Cottage next to the nurseries but both the cottage and greenhouses have now been demolished after years of neglect after my grandfathers brother inherited the nurseries but failed to continue the thriving business.



Rachel Smith silk winding by hand in Hesketh Meadow Lane

1924 O.S. Map showing local railways and stations



TRANSPORT

Lowton Station on the boundary with Newton-le-Willows at the Bulls Head Bridge.

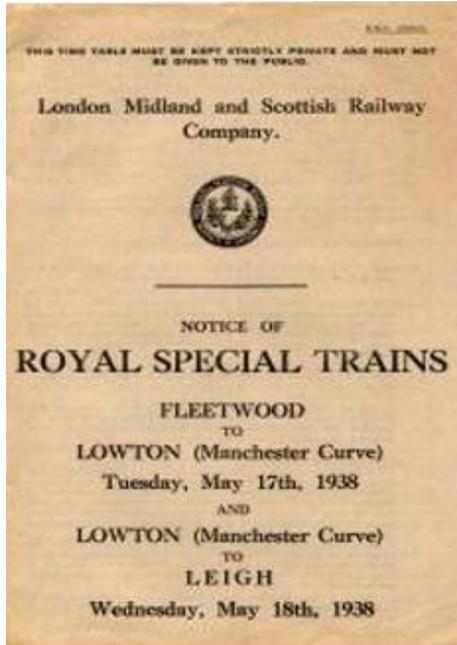


A Royal visit to Lowton in the 60's

Newton Water Tower can be seen in the distance



SECRET TIME TABLE



Lowton St Mary's Station





L. N. & W. S. R.
FURLOUGH
 Manchester Cent. to St. Marys
 TO
LOWTON ST. MARYS **MANCHESTER CENT.**
 via Glazebrook via Glazebrook
 Available for three months from date of issue. Available for three months from date of issue.
THIRD / Fur. Rtn. / THIRD
 For conditions / 2124 / For conditions
 see back Manchester Cent. see back

9295

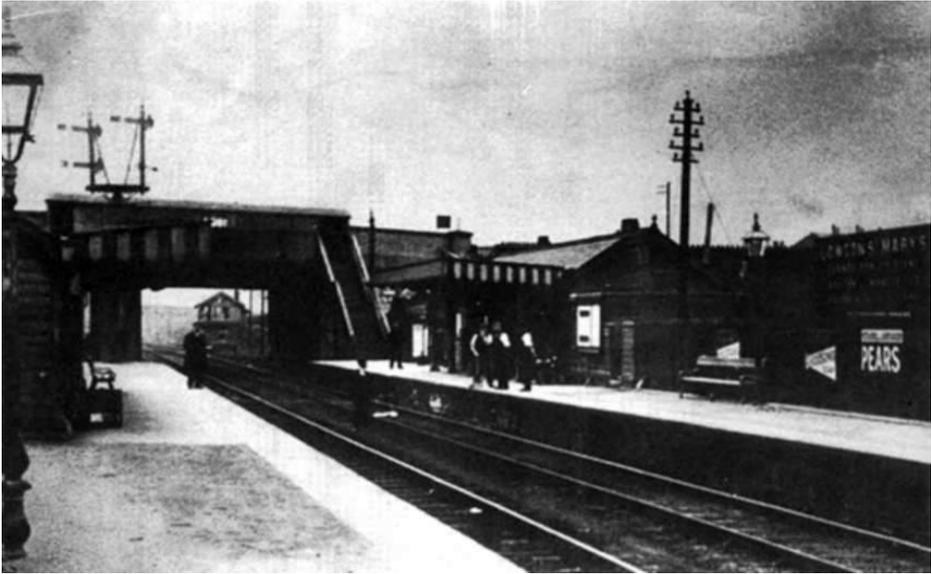
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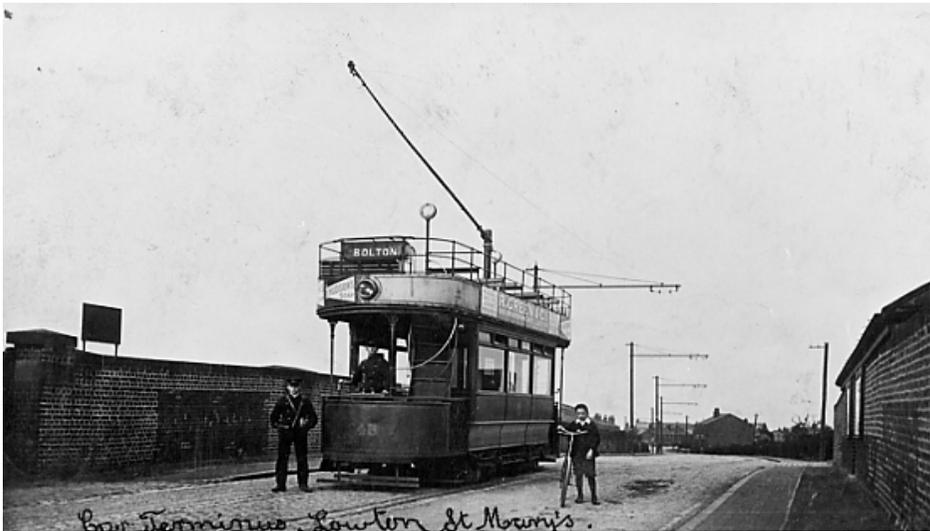


29th September 1956





The Terminus for the tram from Leigh was on the Bridge above at St. Mary's Station



Our Terminus - Bolton St Mary's.

LOWTON TRAMS & TROLLY BUSES

On the 6th August 1900, the Royal Assent was given to a private Bill, which saw the incorporation of the South Lancashire Tramways Company. The Bill authorised the Company to construct over 62 miles of tramway lines in the South Lancashire area, but construction was never started, due to difficulty raising the necessary capital. On 29th November 1900 the South Lancashire Electric Traction and Power Company Ltd was registered to acquire the shares of the South Lancashire Tramways Company, and also the shares of the Lancashire Light Railways Company and the South Lancashire Electric Supply Company. Although the new Company had intended that the major part of the tramway would be in operation by the end of 1901, construction had only just begun when the year ended, and the first section, from Lowton, via Leigh and Atherton, to Four Lane Ends (where there was a connection with the Bolton system), did not open until 20th October 1902

By an Act of 10th May 1929, South Lancashire Tramways was re-named South Lancashire Transport, and was authorised to abandon the tramway routes in favour of trolleybuses and construct extensions from the former tramway termini at Lowton St. Mary's to Lowton Lane Head.

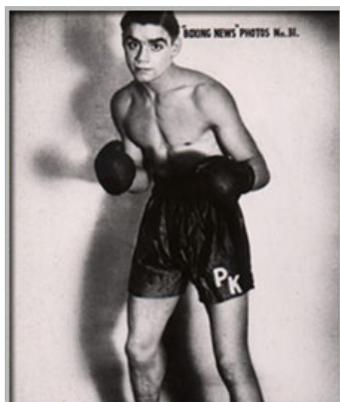
When the South Lancashire Transport Act of 1958 authorised the complete abandonment of the system, it also authorised the dissolution of the South Lancashire Transport Company. On the 31st August 1958, all remaining trolleybus services were abandoned and the assets of the South Lancashire Transport Company Limited were transferred to the Lancashire United Transport Company Limited on the 1st September 1958, bringing to an abrupt end almost 60 years of tram and trolleybus operations in South Lancashire.

Kenyon Junction





PEOPLE



PETER KANE (1918-1991), of Lancashire, was one of England's greatest flyweight boxers and a world champion in the 1930s. Kane was born in Heywood, Lancashire, on February 28, 1918, but grew up in the town of Golborne, near Wigan, after his family moved there before his first birthday. Renowned for his punching power, he lost only seven of the 102 bouts in his 14-year career. He made his name at the age of 19 in an epic world title contest with flyweight legend Benny Lynch, which attracted a crowd of over 40,000 to Glasgow's Shawfield Park. He was beaten after 13 compelling and brutal rounds but recovered from the experience. He held the title from 1938-43, although his defences were sporadic due to the Second World War and opposition was naturally limited during this period. He worked throughout his career as a blacksmith in the village of Lowton, which neighbours Golborne. He died in 1991.

Richard Mather (1596-1669)



Richard Mather was born in 1596 to Thomas and Margaret Mather, in the Lancashire district of Lowton (now part of Wigan MBC) and was to become a famous figure in the earliest history of the American colonies. Richard was educated at nearby Winwick Grammar School, and at the age of 15 became a schoolmaster in Toxteth, (now a district of Liverpool).

He was ordained as a priest in 1620 and he preached his first sermon on 30th November 1618 at the Ancient Chapel of Toxteth in Park Road. Being a strict and outspoken Puritan, however, he soon found himself inevitably in conflict with Church of England doctrines and was suspended from preaching nonconformity in the Church of England by the Archbishop of York.

Richard therefore decided to pursue his religious convictions and, like the Pilgrim Fathers before him, emigrated to Massachusetts in 1635. From then unto 1669 he was pastor of the Congregational Church in Dorchester, (now part of Boston), and went on to establish a large and influential family in the district.

The Reverend Richard Mather died in Dorchester, Massachusetts on the 22nd April 1669.

One of his sons, Increase Mather, was to become President of Harvard University, and Richard's grandson, Cotton Mather, became a noted scholar, publishing nearly 500 books and articles on scientific subjects. Cotton Mather was also the first American to be elected a member of the Royal Society. During the smallpox epidemic of 1721 Cotton was also the first recorded American to attempt the controversial procedure of treatment by inoculation on his own son. For this he was bitterly castigated from all sides, and threats were even made against his life, but his son recovered and the procedure was vindicated.

Richard's eldest son participated in the notable Salem Witch Trials of 1692 and became President of Yale University.

LISTED BUILDINGS

At the present there are only six listed buildings in Lowton
they are

Holly House, Newton Road (Grade 2)
Fair House Farmhouse, Pocket Nook Lane (Grade 2)
Byrom Hall, Slag Lane (Grade 2)
St.Luke's Church, Slag Lane (Grade 2)
The Sundial, Slag Lane (Grade 2)
The Stocks, Slag Lane (Grade 2)

On the Lowton / Golborne boundary stands
Lightshaw Hall (Grade 2*)



The Sundial
A Grade 2 Listed structure



"but in a sad state at present"
Photograph taken 28th March 2006

Anderton Shearer Mining Memorial



Anderton House, With the Anderton Shearer memorial in the foreground



Miner and shearer loader machine. Head, hands and upper body of miner emerge out of cutting drum. The hands are holding a piece of coal. Four blades of cutting drum (part of shearer loader machine) are represented.

Commissioned by Lord Robens First erected in 1965 by the North West Division of the National Coal Board at Anderton House in Lowton, Lancashire. Marked the invention of the Anderton Shearer cutter/loader which was first used in St Helens. In 1989 it was moved to Eastwood Hall in Nottingham and was then installed in its current position in December 1998. Installation costs were funded by the Southern Corridor Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) which is managed by the Ravenhead Renaissance Partnership. On behalf of the Ravenhead Renaissance Partnership, the Groundwork Trust submitted the planning application to St Helens Borough Council.

1) James Anderton, inventor of the Anderton shearer and loader machine 2) Shearer-loader (Used in coalmines worldwide, the first shearer-loader was installed at the Ravenhead Colliery's Rushy Park seam in 1952, then used at Cronton Colliery, St Helens, and Golborne Colliery, Leigh. 3) Mining community (represented in the body of the miner)

Part of Lowton's History since 1965,
Why have Wigan MBC allowed it to be re-sited in St.Helens ?
"A Piece of Lowton History"

The photos below were taken from the roof of Anderton House
prior to it's demolition











Thank You to Rene for supplying these archive photographs

BYROM HALL

John Byrom's link with Lowton

A building of historic interest in Lowton is Byrom Hall, the ancestral home of the poet John Byrom, Byrom Hall which was constructed in the 18th century, once had a moat which was crossed by means of a drawbridge. The estate of Byrom has existed since the thirteenth century and is mentioned in the Victoria history of the county of Lancashire.

A picture showing the hall with the moat is on page 61 in Bert Worsley's book A pictorial view of Old Lowton - Now out of print but available for loan from Leigh and Golborne libraries.



BYROM HALL Slag Lane Lowton

Photograph © Lowton Websites

John Byrom 1692-1763

Born in the Old Wellington Inn in Manchester's old market place in 1692, the son of a linen draper. He was educated at the Merchant Taylor's School attended King's School, Chester, then went on to Cambridge, where he graduated M.A. in 1715 he became a Fellow of Trinity College. But, declining to take Holy Orders, he resigned and soon after married his cousin, Elizabeth Byrom, against the wishes of both families. He was a devout Jacobite supporter.

He earned a living by teaching shorthand, for which he invented his own system. In 1723, he was elected Fellow of the Royal Society,

The following year, his brother died, and John inherited the family estates and returned to Manchester. He frequently visited Cheetham's Hospital in Manchester, and wrote many hymns for the boys there.

While at college several of his writings and poems were accepted and published in "The Spectator". Later he studied medicine in Montpellier (France), though never qualified.

He wrote many religious and political essays as well as numerous poems, and the Christmas carol "Christians Awake".

Byrom had several children, but his favourite was his daughter Dolly. In December 1745, after a romp with Dolly, he promised to write her something for Christmas; it was to be written especially for her, and no one else. The delighted Dolly reminded her father of his promise each day as Christmas grew nearer. On Christmas morning, when she ran down to breakfast, she found several presents awaiting her. Among them was an envelope addressed to her in her father's handwriting. It was the first thing she opened, and to her great delight, it proved to be this Christmas carol. The original manuscript is headed "Christmas Day for Dolly." It was first published in Harrop's Manchester Mercury in 1746.

Music: "Yorkshire," John Wainright, 1750 Wainright played the organ at the Collegiate Church in Manchester, England.

The ancestral home of the Byrom Family is in Byrom Hall at Slag Lane Lowton, The lane facing the hall is called Byrom Lane.. He died in 1763. Buried: Jesus Chapel, Manchester Cathedral, Manchester, England.

Largest house of ill repute in Europe

Lowton "Country Mansion" Raided by Police Man and Woman Remanded on bail

Lowton House, near Leigh, referred to as a country mansion and raided in the early hours of last Sunday morning by a fairly large force of Lancashire County police officers led by Chief Supt. W. J. H. Palfrey, was described by Mr. Palfrey at the Leigh Magistrates' court on Monday as a house "which vied in pretentiousness with some of the biggest houses of ill-repute on the Continent". Hilda Mary Williamson (40), faced two charges, keeping a house of ill-repute, and allowing a child to reside there. Eric Robinson (35), was charged that he did fully assist her in its management. Both were remanded on bail, in sureties of £50 each, until Wednesday, December 14th.

Chief Supt. Palfrey said that as a result of certain happenings which came to his notice, he caused observations to be kept on Lowton House, which could best be described as a country mansion with some twenty rooms. It was situated on the Leigh-Newton-le-Willows road, about a quarter of a mile from the East Lancashire road.

Observations were kept continuously with minor intervals, from November 19th, until December 3rd. During that time some fifty or sixty women of ill-repute, together with male persons, the majority of whom were service personnel, were seen to enter the premises and not leave until the following morning.

On the night of December 3rd, he, together with Det. Chief Inspector J. Jackson, and other

officers, kept observation on the house from 11 p.m. He was concealed in the grounds with a police woman. About five minutes past one in the early morning of the 4th, he saw a taxi enter the drive. It contained a man in service uniform and a woman, and the driver. A light appeared, and after some two minutes the woman Williamson left the house and came to the taxi. She was arrested.

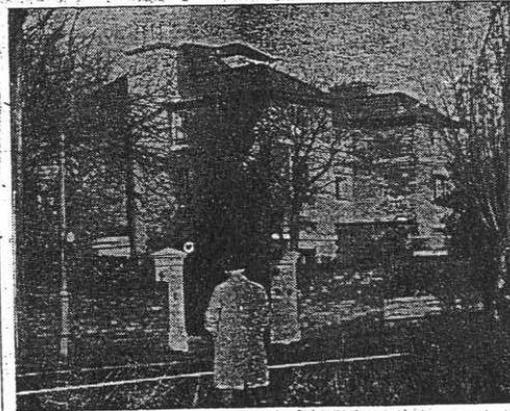
He entered the house and in a room to the left of the hall he saw the prisoner Robinson, an erstwhile bus driver, and from then until now, "senior staff officer" at the house. He was under the influence of drink. He was placed under arrest. He found another room on the right, fitted as a cocktail bar, and containing a dining room table. In

a room to the left there was a fifteen year old girl, and an elderly woman who, in keeping with the best traditions of families who lived in that type of house, was known as "Nanny".

In another room he found what he could best describe as a "hag" with tallow hair. There was evidence that an orgy of drinking had taken place.

Together with a fairly large number of officers, he made a tour of the premises. In all they found some thirteen rooms, eleven real rooms, and two portions of the landing partitioned off by curtains to give added space. The Chief Superintendent added "I found a house which vied in pretentiousness with some of the biggest houses of this kind on the Continent". Eleven of the rooms were occupied by men and women. In one room there was a man whom he could best describe as being "dead drunk".

He removed the 15 year old girl to a place of safety. He brought the prisoners to Leigh Police Station.



This is the house the police raided.

Leigh Guardian 9th December 1949

Better photograph of Lowton House now the site of a housing development
Lowton Gardens



Below: St Mary's Vicarage



Green Lawn House Lowton



Lowton Parish Church (St. Luke's) and the Rams Head Inn
Said to be the oldest public house in Lowton



EDUCATION

Please Note:

In the interests of school and pupil security, no present day photographs are displayed in this publication

St.Luke's School

Lowton History within living memory
from St.Luke's School Website

<http://www.saintlukes.wigan.sch.uk/2004extra/INDEX.HTM>



Notes on local history (1950's and from then on)

Information from Miss Collier (former teacher) or Mrs Beaumont (former school secretary)

- Lowton was a little village in 1951. Everyone knew everyone else and would notice a stranger.
- VG used to be a wood yard. (VG was a supermarket that was on Church Lane, on the other side of the East Lancs), where the hotel attached to the Toby Carvery is now). Also beside the wood yard were cottages.
- Church Lane – school side of the East Lancs – there were only 3 semis, no side roads, (i.e. no Fulwood road, no Bradwell road, certainly no Ranworth Drive) only fields. Mr Hooper, the school head master, lived in Norwood Ave, which was a cul-de-sac
- After the 3 semis and the fields, came the Toffee Works – (which after became Hille, making seats for football stadiums - though now it's gone and new houses are there) - then the Junior building. (School dinners came from Abram)
- There was a green fence then a white house, then a farmhouse with an orchard, belonging to Mr Parker. The “gravestone” came off the Infant building – the first school building - 1857 – when Mary Leigh gave money for the very first school.
- Summer 1953 closed Infant building. Infants into Junior building (dated 187?)
- Playtime was 2.45 to 3pm. Infants went home at 3.30, juniors at 4pm.
- The footpath to the farm was there.

- On the other side of Church Lane – near the East Lancs – hens were running loose on the grass.
- There were (and are) 2 blocks of terraces, then the PO, then hedges. Opposite the factory was a cottage and a sideways-on row of cottages. There was no Alderley, no Stretton Ave.
- Row of houses opposite the Junior building – terraced
- On our school side – fields as far as the council houses around Ashwood Ave, then nothing as far as the church graveyard.
- On the other side there was no Rutland, no Milton Avenue. The old cottages were there. The old block near Bridgefords, the estate agents, wasn't there – it was a park.
- The school caretaker lived opposite the Sovereign Toffee Works
- In the 1960's first came Broughton Ave, then Rutland, Ave, Bradwell Ave and Newlands Drive
- Mt Hooper left in 1961, and then it was Mr Probert.
- The church took over the school after a donation was made.
- In 1962 the Infant building was opened again because all the children wouldn't fit into the junior building.
- Walked to field opposite the church.
- School was Lowton Parish school, not St. Luke's
- The education department wanted to distinguish us from St Mary's

- There were separate heads for the Infant and Junior School until Mrs Johnson retired and they were amalgamated.
- 5 public footpaths led from the East Lancs to Church.
- There was no rectory – rector Thomas lived in Norwood Ave.

Information from Mrs Audrey Malley – given to Infants in around 1985

- 27 years ago Lowton was a little village
- At the Lanehead lights there were 2 pubs. Costcutters (VG) was a wood yard. There were houses opposite and a shop, Hawarths, next door.
- The white house near the East Lancs road was a Co-op building.
- Lights, detached house and 2 semis
- All fields from church Lane to Newton Road.
- Quiet
- Started building houses in Fulwood Road. Mr Gill built houses. Then Bradwell Road. They were going to be cul-de-sacs.
- The fields beyond St Luke's are called the cabin fields.
- The houses near the post office have always been there. Orchard behind them – that's where children play – the bottle pit

- Terraced house and Spar then Rank Strand (formerly Sovereign Toffee Works)
- Facing, there was a little row of cottages.
- Mr Gallagher stood on the corner.
- The old school
- The old building at the top of the path was the old School Hall
- As school got too big, some children had to be taught in the old school hall.
- Terraced houses with dentist were there.
- Broguhton Ave just being built.
- 1964 Those facing Broughton Ave, near Rutland Ave just being built.
- Cottages
- They were building Michael Carpenter's house when Audrey Malley came to Lowton
- Dentist's was built, but it wasn't a dentist.
- Deep bottle pit between Church Lane and Chester Ave.
- Mr Probert still lives on slag Lane (old headmaster)
-
- 4th March 1967, new school was built.



The Teachers House of the original School now a private residence



The old school - still in use

Lowton West Primary School

School Website

<http://www.lowtonwest.wigan.sch.uk/>



St.Catherines RC School

School Website

<http://www.lowtonsaintcatherines.wigan.sch.uk/>

Section of Church website

<http://www.stcatherines.freeuk.com/school.htm>



EMPLOYMENT

Toffee Manufacturing



Sovereign Toffee Works - Church Lane Lowton
Later to become Rank Strand Theatre equipment and than Hille seating

EXTRACT FOR LOWTON & GOLBORNE

FROM

1895 Kelly's Lancashire Directory

Private Residents

Alrey George, Sandfield hall, Lowton
Argot William Henry J.P., 0.0. Lime house, Lowton
Berridge Rev. William, The Vicarage, Lowton
Bridge a Henry, 7 Park road, Golborne
Brown Simon S., C.O. Bridge at. Golborne
Byrne Rev. Wm. Hy. Church at. Golborne
Camm Rev. J. T. Golborne
Caunce Mrs. Park house, Park rd. Golborne
Clarke William Laurel house, Lowton

Crowther Misses, Holly bank, Bridge st. Golborne
Dean Mrs. Elizabeth, Sunny-side, Lowton
Dobb James, Railway read, Golborne
Eckersley Richard, Moss house, Lowton
Edmondson Robert, The Holme, Golborne
Ferns Mrs. Rose cot. Bridge st. Golborne
Green Mrs. Oaklands, Lowton
Guest William, Sycamore house, Lowton
Hart Roger, Lowton
Hunt Mrs. Lowton junction
Kidd John W. Lowton junction
Laycock John, Lowton
M'Corquodale A. C.. J.P. Lowton grange
Mapei Luigi V. Bridge street, Golborne
Melville Rev William J. The -Rectory, Downall green
Mitchell, William J.P. Brook vil. Golborne
Part Herbert, Bank ho. High st. Golborne
Richardson Rev. Thomas W. Rectory, Golborne
Rigg George Wilson, Highfield house, Puck road,
Golborne
Robinson John, Park road, Golborne
Seton Major Alexander D. The Heights, Park road,
Golborne
Smith Rev. Richard, The Rectory, Lowton
Smith Robert. Park road, Golborne
Spencer Strickland. Sunnyside, Golborne
Thompson J. Beech house, Lowton
Travers Mrs. Bank cottage, Golborne
Travers Thomas L. Lowton common:
Unsworth Joseph, Fernlee, Golborne
Widdows Alias, Oaklee, Lowton
Worsley Henry, Park cottage, Golborne

AGENTS

Withnell Charles A. (for J. Pullar & Sons, dyers,
Perth), Heath street, Golborne

AUCTIONEERS.

Melling & Son, Church street, Golborne

BAKERS.

Bailey William, Lowton common
Boardman William, 76 Gerard street, A
Pounce Alfred, Bridge street, Golborne
Tune John, Lowton common
Ormston Thomas, Lowton
Travers William, 56 High street, Golborne
Unsworth Adam, 105 High street, Golborne

BANKS

Parr's- Banking Company & the Alliance Bank Limited
Heath street-, Golborne, open on tuesday & Thursday
from 10.45 a,m, to 1.15 p.m

Williams Deacon & Manchester & Salford Bank
Limited
(sub-branch), High street, Golborne; open on tuesday
& thursday, from 10.45 am. to 1.15 p.m.; saturday,
from. 10.45 a.m, to 12.30 pm

BEER RETAILERS

Boulton David, 33 Church st. Golborne
Boydell Joseph, Lowton common
Cannes Amelia, Bridge street, Golborne
Cundliffe Mary A. Church street, Golborne
Eckersley Ellen, 69 High street, Golborne
Edwards Thomas, 67 High street, Golborne
Edwardson Adam. Harvey lane, Golborne
Gilligan John, 1 Tanner's lane, Golborne
Haves William, Lowton common
Jenkinson Joseph, 95 Church at. Golborne

BLACKSMITHS.

Davles John, Ashton road, Golborne
Henshaw James, Lowton
Nuttall Charles, Heath street, Golborne

BOOKSELLERS & STATIONERS.

Collier James, High street, Golborne
Jackson William. Legh st. Golborne
Johnson Paul, 55 High street, Golborne
Williamsson Joseph, 101 High st. Golborne

BOOT & SHOE MAKERS.

Bennett Thomas, 1S Heath st. Golborne
Brookes James, 17 Heath street, Golborne
Haynes Henry, 70 High street, Golborne
Houghton Thomas, 9 Legh st. Golborne
Howard John, 77 High street, Golborne
Hunt Thomas, 65a, High street, Golborne
Roberts William, 39 High street. Golborne
Webster James, Lowton

BRICK MAKERS.

Golborne Brick Co. Harvey lane, Golborne

BUILDERS.

Travers Thomas L. Lowton
Wakefield James, Golborne

BUTCHERS.

Beaumont Jn. (pork), 30 Heath st Golborne,
Counce Alfred, Bridge street, Golborne
Dalton William, 19 Heath street, Golborne
Domakin Thomas, 78 High st. Golborne
Holden Ralph, 91 High street, Golborne
Oliver Edward, 34 Legh street, Golborne
Peet Henry, High street, Golborne
Simpson Robert, Heath street, Golborne
Struthers Betsy, 88 Bridge st. Golborne
Winstanley John, 12 Heath street. Golborne
Woods Thomas, Church street, Golborne

CAB PROPRIETORS.

Barton Samuel, Heath street, Golborne
Draper Henry, Lowton
Smith John, Lowton
Worsley Bros. Lowton

CHEMISTS & DRUGGISTS.

Kidd John W. 51 High street, Golborne
Pennington Richard L. High st. Golborne

CHINA, GLASS &c. DEALERS.

Ashton Joseph, 75 High St. Golborne
Fearn Thomas, 27 Heath street. Golborne,
Glover William, 89 Church St. Golborne
Hart Alice, 87 Church street, Golborne
Naylor Christopher, 1 Leigh St. Golborne
Silcock Thomas, Heath street, Golborne
Unsworth Adam, 105 High street, Golborne

CLOGGERS.

Birchall Joseph, 21 Church street, Golborne
Howard John, 77 High street, Golborne
Hunt Thomas, 65a, High street, Golborne
Lowe Thomas, 47 High street, Golborne
Roberts Mrs 39 High street, Golborne
Taylor Joseph, Lowton common
Twist William, Haydock
Webster James, Lowton

CLUBS.

Golborne Bowling & Cricket club, High street; Thomas
Silcock, secretary
Golborne Conservative club, Salisbury street; James
Jenkinson, secretary
Golborne Liberal club, High street; Thomas Twist,
secretary

Golborne Working Men's Liberal Club Co. Lim. High street; Thomas Twist, sec

COAL DEALERS.

Worsley William, Lowton

COAL MASTERS.

Golborne & Parr collieries, near St. Helens; Theodore D. Grimke-Drayton, managing director; Edward J. George., sec. ; W. S. Barrett, manager; John Robinson, agent. TA " Evans, Haydock "

COFFEE & COCOA ROOMS.

Golborne Coffee & Cocoa rooms, High street; Mrs. Allen, manageress

CONFECTIONERS.

Collier Samuel, High street, Golborne
Davies James, 21 Heath street, Golborne
Harrison Jane, 10 Church street, Golborne
Ogden Margaret, 57 High street, Golborne
Wakefield John, 29 Heath street, Golborne
Wakefield John, 11 Legh street, Golborne

COTTON SPINNERS & MANUFACTURS.

Golborne Mills Co. (80,000 spindles; 900 looms), Parkside mills, Golborne
Smithson Bros. cotton spinners; 6,930 spindles), Bank Heath mill, Golborne
T/ A Smithson, Golborne

DENTISTS.

Kidd John W. 51 High street, Golborne

DRAPERS.

Bailey William, Lowton common
Baker Alfred, 27 High street, Golborne
Entwistle William, 95 High st. Golborne
Fernley John, Lowton
Harrison James, 74 High street, Golborne
Jenkinson E. & M. 23 Heath st. Golborne
Keeley Jane, 20 Heath street, Golborne
Leigh Friendly Co-operative Society's stores,
Golborne; & Lowton common
Lowe Thomas, 31 Heath street, Golborne
Wakefield John, 109 High street, Golborne
Withnell Charles A. 2 Heath st. Golborne
Withnell Charles A. 61 High st. Golborne
Yates James, Legh street, Golborne
Yates Roger, High street, Golborne

DRESSMAKERS.

Turton S. A. 25 High street, Golborne
Withnell Charles A. 2 Heath st. Golborne
Yates Roger, High street, Golborne

Farmers In Golborne.

Abbott John
Boardman John
Boydell John, Dove house
Fearn Richard, Bank heath
Garton Peter, Dean Dam farm
Hart John
Jenkinson Charles, Bank heath
Knowles Peter, Lowton road
Livesley James, Wigan road
Livesley Richard, Lightshaw hall
Lowe William
Monks Richard, Windy bank
Ormerod Robert
Pierpoint T. & P. Bridge street
Pimblett William, Lowton road
Stanley William, Ashton road
Taylor Mary Wisswell
Wiswall Thomas, Lowton road

Farmers In Lowton.

Adamson John & Peter Bent John
Bent Samuel
Brown Herbert
Clarke William, Laurel house
Courtney William, Yew tree
Eckersley Richard
Gibbon John, Lowton common
Hall John, Rowbottom farm
Higham George
Howard James, Mossley hall
Lenders Samuel, Fair house
Mather Thomas, Sandobb
Page Matthew, Ivy house
Penkethman Henry, Lowton hall
Percy William, Pocket nook
Scotson James, Little Byrom
Waterworth Nathan, Hollybush
Wood Rachael, Byrom hall
Worsley Bros. Lowton

FISHMONGER.

Elsy Alfred, 103 High street, Golborne

FRUITERS & GREENGROCERS.

Elsy Alfred, 103 High street, Golborne
Goodier William, 53 High street, Golborne
Mather David, 66 Heath street, Golborne
Mather William, 99 High street, Golborne

FURNITURE BROKERS.

Winnard William, Heath street, Golborne

GLUE & SIZE MANUFACTURER.

Green John (Glue, size & soap manufacturer), St.
Mary's, Lowton T/A " GREEN, Lowton"

GROCERS.

Ashton Thomas, 37 High street, Golborne
Bailey William, Lowton common
Barlow James A. 107 High street, Golborne
Barton Samuel, 71 Heath street, Golborne
Bent Mary A. Lowton road, Golborne
Bent Mary Ann, 73 Church street, Golborne
Budsworth James, 28 Heath street, Golborne
Burke Aim, 14 Heath street, Golborn
Caldwell William, Heath street, Golborne
Carter George, 40 Heath st . Golborne
Caunce Alfred, Bridge street, Golborne
Davies James, 77 Heath street, Golborne
Fernley John, Lowton
Glover Sarah, 9 Wigan road, Golborne
Glover William, 89 Church st. Golborne
Hatton Margaret, Legh street., Golborne
Hazleton Simon, 37 Gerard street, A, & 22 Heath street, Golborne
Hodkinson John, Edge Green lane
Holding Joseph, Tanner's lane, Golborne
Honderwood Robert, 13 Legh at. Golborne
Howarth James, Lowton common
Howe John, 49 High street, Golborne
Hurst Thomas, Lowton
Ince John, Lowton common
Leigh Friendly Co-operative Society Stores, 49 High street & at Heath street, Golborne, & Lowton common
Litherland Richard, Haydock Lowe Mary, Legh street, Golborne
Marsh William, 96 Bridge st . Golborne
Mather Elizabeth, 58 Heath at. Golborne
Mort Jesse, Lowton road, Golborne
Mort Joseph, Lowton
Moss Joseph, Edge Green lane
Naylor Christopher, 1 Legh at. Golborne
Openshaw Robert, Legh street, Golborne
Orimston Thomas, Lowton
Peet William, 78 High street, Golborne
Ratcliffe L. & A. 83 High street, Golborne
Ridyard Peter, 6 Heath street, Golborne
Silcock Elizabeth, 63 Legh st. Golborne
Taylor Henry, Lowton road, Golborne

Taylor James, 97 High street, Golborne
Travers William, 56 High street, Golborne
Tunstall James, Edge Green lane
Turton John, Ashton road, Golborne
Turton John, 1 Wigan road, Golborne
Turton Jonathan, 36 Heath street, Golborne
Unsworth Adam, 105 High street, Golborne
Unsworth Henry, 93 Church st. Golborne
Unsworth John, 6a High street, Golborne
Wakefield Thomas, 68 High street, Golborne
Westhead Ellen, 12 Bolton road, A
Westhead John, Edge Green lane
Widdows, Samuel, Lowton road, Golborne
Wood Joseph, Edge Green lane
Worsley Henry, 98 Bridge street, Golborne

HAIRDRESSERS.

Nicholas John, 6 Heath street, Golborne
Stringer A. R. 89 High street, Golborne

HERBALIST.

Clegg John G. 34 Heath street, Golborne

HOTELS. *(See also Public Houses.)*

Railway Hotel, John Parr, Golborne

INSURANCE OFFICES & AGENTS

Alliance-Richard Peake, Lowton
Richard Peake, Lowton

IRONMONGERS

Beswick John, Rich street. Golborne
Eckersley Lane, `3 legh street Golborne
Rigby William H, Church street, Golborne
Talbert J. & S. 32 Heath street, Golborne

JOINERS.

Laybourn Nathan, 42 High st. Golborne
Travers Thomas L. Lowton
Wakefield. James, Golborne
Wakefield John, Railway view, Golborne

LAND, HOUSE & ESTATE AGENTS.

Melling & Son, Golborne

MARINE STORE DEALER.

Buckley John, Lowton

MILLINERS.

Turton S. A. 25 High street, Golborne
Yates Roger, High street, Golborne

MINIMAL WATER MANUFACTURERS.

Clegg Bros. Turton street, Golborne

NURSERYMEN.

Arnott. C. E. Lime House nurseries, Lowton
Boardman William, The Nurseries, Lowton

PAINTERS.

Rigby William V. 47 Heath street & Church street,
Golborne
Rostron Joseph, 93 High street, Golborne

PAPER MANUFACTURERS.

Mitchell, Arnott & Co. (paper hangings
manufacturers), Brookside Mill, Golborne-T A "
MITARN, Golborne "

PAWNBROKERS.

Harrison Martha, 38 Heath street, Golborne
Jackson Ann, 79 & 81 High street, Golborne

PHYSICIANS & SURGEONS.

Dodd James M.R.C.S., L.R.O.P. 3 Railway rd,
Golborne,

SOLICITORS.

Jenkins & Unsworth, High street, Golborne
Travers John, Bank cottage, Golborne

STONEMASONS.

Ashcroft Peter, Tanners lane, Golborne

SURGEONS. See Physicians & Surgeons.

SURVEYORS.

Bennie Chas. S. (highway), Worsley street, Golborne

TAILORS.

Baker Alfred, 27 High street, Golborne
Bate James, Lowton
Openshaw John, High street, Golborne
Touhey John, 1 Heath street, Golborne

TIMBER, MERCHANT.

Travers Thomas L. Lowton

TINPLATE WORKERS.

Winnard William, 16 Heath street, Golborne

TOBACCO PIPE MANUFACTURER.

Blackmore William, Church st , Golborne

TOBACCONISTS.

Collier James, 64 High street, Golborne
Williamson Joseph, 101 High st, Golborne

WATCHMAKERS.

Eccles Robert, SS High street, Golborne
Eckersley Edward, 25 Heath st . Golborne

WHEELWRIGHTS.

Hampson John T. Lanehead, Lowton
Pimblett Thomas, Lowton road, Golborne
Pimblett William, Lowton road, Golborne

WINDOW BLIND MANUFACTURER.

Openshaw Joseph, 19 Park road, Golborne

The advertisement Shown the next page is from the Leigh Journal May 1934, it advertises Flint's Victoria Ballroom as it was then. The photograph below shows it as it is now. You will read latter in this book how it also played a part in the life of the early Independent Methodists.



Recent Photograph now flats

**VICTORIA HALL
BALLROOM,**
NEWTON-RD., LOWTON ST. MARY'S
(Buses Stop at the Door).

CARNIVAL DANCES

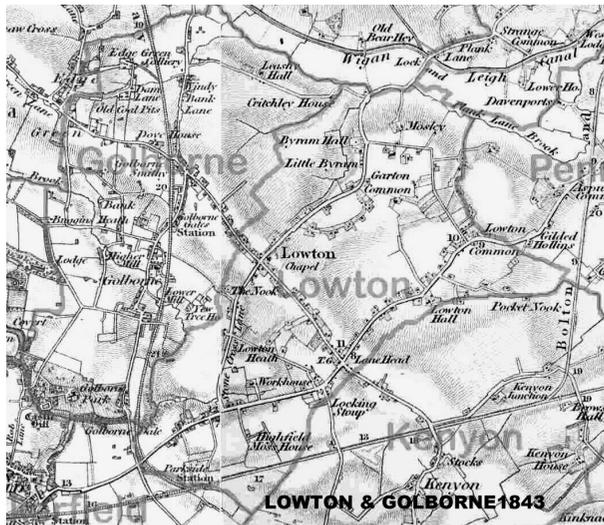
ARE HELD EVERY SATURDAY.
7-30 TO 11 p.m. ADMISSION 1/6.
EVERY MONDAY,
8-0 to 10-30: A DANCING CLASS FOR
LEARNERS. Admission 9d.

Teachers: Miss R. FLINT, Mr. J. A. FLINT,
and Mr. W. FLINT.

PRIVATE LESSONS MAY NOW BE BOOKED.
Apply at the HALL, or by letter, to the
MANAGERESS, Miss ROSE FLINT, VICTORIA
HALL BALLROOM, LOWTON.

High Journal May 1934

Map of Lowton 1843



Plank Lane Pit Village

When you are stopped at the Plank Lane Bridge traffic lights picture it in 1960
Just on the Lowton side of the Lowton and Leigh border



This picture is thought to be about 1910



Places of Worship

www.lowtonstlukes.co.nr



St Luke's Circa 1910



Lowton Stocks



Read Lowton Parish Church Past & Present

PARISHES were first formed in England about the year 636 A.D. Oswald, a Christian Prince of Northumbria, had his palace in this district at the time, and, as Winwick Church now bears his name, it seems reasonable to suppose that Winwick Parish was formed shortly after his death, and is, therefore, one of the oldest Parishes in the country. It then included Croft, Culcheth, Kenyon, Lowton, Newton, Earlestown, Ashton, Haydock and Wargrave. There was a Church in Winwick at the time of the Domesday Book Survey of 1086.

In 1650, when a commission under the great seal, sat at Wigan, the parish of Winwick was still as extensive, but Chapels had been built at Ashton, Newton and Culcheth, each of which was fit to be made a Parish Church. There was no Chapel at Lowton, but the Commissioners thought that one should be built for the Townships of Lowton, Golborne and Kenyon.

It took eighty years for their advice to be regarded, for the next evidence found on the subject is the "Lowton Chapel Agreement," dated December 1st, 1731. By this Agreement twenty-seven charterers and free holders within the township of Lowton agree that eleven acres of waste and common land on Lowton

Common, and on Lowton Heath, near the Locking Stoops, shall be enclosed at their expense, with the consent of Peter Legh, Esquire, Lord of the Manor of Lowton, for the erecting of a Chapel of Ease, and of a convenient schoolhouse. The yearly profits of the land so enclosed were to be employed for the maintenance of an orthodox

Minister of the Church of England. Overseers were 'appointed and given authority to set men on work for these purposes, and to see them paid out of monies to be collected from the inhabitants of Lowton, and from others charitably disposed to contribute to the said work.

From the date, 1732, on the Church door, the building seems to have been completed within a year, but the Chapel was not consecrated until St. Luke's Day, Thursday, 18th October, 1733, when the ceremony was performed by the Bishop of Chester, in whose Diocese it then was.

The Deed of Consecration, which was read in the Chapel on that day gives most of the information we have about the beginnings of Lowton Parish. The Chapel was built for the ease and convenience of the inhabitants of Lowton, by reason of the great distance of Lowton from Winwick, which hindered them, especially in winter time, from repairing to the said Church so often as they would, to partake of Divine Service celebrated therein. Lowton Chapel was built on land given for that purpose by Hugh Stirrup, yeoman, of Lowton, and a parcel of land around it was given at the same time, for a Chapel Yard.

The legal transfer of the lands for the maintenance of the minister, was not completed at the time of the consecration, and the Rev. Francis Annesley, Rector of Winwick, and Joseph Byrom, of Manchester, owner of Byrom Hall, guaranteed to raise the sum of thirty pounds a year for this purpose until the land was transferred, or until a grant was obtained from the Governors of the Bounty of Queen

Anne. In 1734 these lands were found suitable, and in consideration of their value of £400, Queen Anne's Bounty gave, in 1738, another £400 which was used for the purchase of lands and buildings, including the present Rectory and the fields behind it. These lands were then given to the Rev. Robert Rowbottom, and his successors, Curates of Lowton, for ever; peace ably and quietly to have, hold, occupy, possess and enjoy.

The Deed of Consecration granted the Curate full power to carry out all the Services and Sacraments of the Church which can be performed there to this day, but there were certain provisions which showed that the new Chapel was not yet a Parish Church. No corpse was allowed to be interred within the Chapel, or under any part thereof. The Registers of the Chapel were not to be kept permanently at Lowton, but forwarded every year to Winwick, to be included in the Parish Registers there; and no service was to be held in the Chapel at such times as the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was publicly administered in the Parish Church of Winwick, without the express consent of the minister thereof. Apart from these reservations all the benefits of the Church were available for the people inhabiting the Township of Lowton, and the neighbouring Townships of Kenyon and Golborne, who should resort and be contributors to the Chapel; who were to take care that it was well and sufficiently repaired, kept, and maintained.

The power to dispose of pews in the newly-built Chapel, was granted to the Rectory of Winwick, and to Joseph Byrom, of Manchester, and on his death to his son Edward Byrom. Many of the pews now bear metal plates, showing their owners. The oldest of these is pew No. 1, Edward Byrom, 1732, but many of the later plates bear surnames which appear among those who signed the Chapel Agreement of 1731, or the Consecration Deed of 1733. Such names are: Leigh, Kenyon, Green, Lowe, Worsley, Pierpoint, Mather, and Tyrer.

Histories of Lancashire describe the Church as a brick and stone building, in the form of a cross, built in 1732, enlarged in 1771 and again in 1813, chancel rebuilt in 1856, and tower added in 1863. As the tower bears the date 1862, these are probably the dates of Consecration of the additions. The Churchyard was also extended in 1832, twice in 1879, and again in 1910. and a further extension will probably be required in the next few years.

The school was first opened in 1751, the principal benefactor being the Lord of the Manor. Six poor children were educated without charge, but for any others the parents had to pay the schoolmaster; in 1828 there were 25 of these paying pupils. The Infants School was built in 1854, but in an education report of 1865, it is found that the school was most unsatisfactory, the Inspector's chief complaint being, apparently, that no Latin had been taught within living memory. In 1867 the schoolmaster resigned, and no trustees could be found to appoint a new one. - The school was there fore closed until 1871, when it was rebuilt and re opened with the Rector and Churchwardens of Lowton, and five laymen as Trustees.

In 1841, an Act of Parliament was passed for the division of the Rectory of Winwick, by which Croft, Newton-in-Makerfield, Lowton, Ashton-in-Makerfield, Culcheth, Kenyon, Golborne, and Haydock should each become a separate ecclesiastical district. Such separation was to take place during the incumbency of the Rev. John James Hornby, then Rector of Winwick, with his consent. This Act gave these newly formed parishes their full standing as separate ecclesiastical districts and transferred the tithes from the Rector of Winwick to the newly made Rectors. The separation of Golborne and Haydock was to be delayed until the population amounted to two thousand persons, and Churches capable of holding six hundred had been provided, and of Kenyon until the population reached six hundred and a Church had been built for two hundred and fifty.

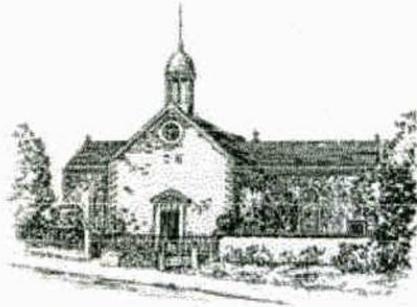
In May, 1845, before the Parish of Lowton had been separated from Winwick, a further Act was passed, repealing the Act of 1841 as far as Lowton, Golborne and Kenyon were concerned. Kenyon became part of Newchurch, and Lowton became the Parish Church of Lowton and Golborne, combined under the name of Lowton Parish, though the title of Golborne remained the property of Winwick. Golborne was to become a Parish and Rectory by itself if at any time a Church capable of holding five hundred persons was built, and the title of Golborne would pass from Winwick to the new Rectory of Golborne. The Rev. John Pennington, resident Curate of Lowton since 1813, thus became the first Rector of the combined parishes.

In 1840 Golborne Church was built, and Golborne became a separate Parish as provided in the Act, and in 1862 the Parish of Lowton St. Mary was separated from the Parish of Lowton.

The Rectors of Lowton, from the time the Parish was created have been:

1845	John Pennington
1853	Thomas Whittington
1855	James G. Darling
1856	Thomas Foster
1875	Richard Smith
1909	Webster Hall
1912	Christopher Musgrave Brown
1914	Francis Smith
1939	J. Howard Preston
1947	Leslie A. Thomas
1957	Alfred William Anderson Brown
1964	Eric Stanley Wood
1981	David Edward Webster
1989	Kenneth Alidred
1996	John Macauley
2005	Michael Read (Priest in Charge)

St.Luke's Church Past and Present



St Luke's Church as it was when built in 1732

They are going to raise the roof of Lowton Parish Church literally. To do this, the Rector, Rev. A. Anderson Brown, will shortly launch a campaign asking his parishioners not only for their financial help, but for their assistance in various money-raising functions.

The 227-year-old roof has never been touched, the structure has deteriorated and plasterwork is crumbling in many places due to dampness penetrating the walls. Considering the number of years that the church has stood, it has not required many repairs.

In 1650 the Parish of Winwick, one of the oldest in the country, included Croft, Culcheth, Kenyon, Lowton, Newton, Ashton, Hay-dock and Wargrave. In that year, chapels were built at Ashton, Newton and Culcheth, but there was no chapel at Lowton and the Church Commissioners thought that one should be built for Lowton, Golborne and Kenyon.

It took 80 years for their advice to be regarded, for the next evidence found on the subject was in the "Lowton Chapel Agreement" dated December 1st, 1731. By this agreement, 27 charterers and freeholders in Lowton agreed that eleven acres of waste and common land on Lowton Common and on Lowton Heath should be enclosed at their expense, with the consent of Peter Legh, Lord of the Manor of Lowton, for the erecting of a Chapel of Ease and of a convenient schoolhouse. The yearly profits of the enclosed land were to be employed for the maintenance of an orthodox Minister of the Church of England.

Overseers were appointed and given authority to set men to work for these purposes and to see them paid out of money to be collected from the inhabitants of Lowton and from others who wanted to contribute to this scheme.

Chapel of Ease: From the date 1732, on the door, the building of St. Luke's seems to have been completed within a year, but the Chapel was not consecrated until St. Luke's Day, Thursday, October 18th, 1733, when the ceremony was performed by the Bishop of Chester, in whose Diocese it was then situated.

The Deed of Consecration read in the Chapel on that day gives most of the information about the beginning of Lowton Parish. It states that the Chapel was built for the ease and convenience of the inhabitants of Lowton because of the great distance of Lowton from Winwick, and that it was built on land given by Hugh Stirrup, yeoman of Lowton, and a piece of land around it was given at the same time for a Chapel Yard.

The power to dispose of pews in the chapel was granted to the Rectory of Winwick and to Joseph Byrom of Manchester, and on his death, to his son, Edward Byrom.

In the church today, the high pews still bear the metal plates on the doors, showing the name of the owners. The oldest of these is pew No. 1, Edward Byrom, 1732, but many of the later plates bear surnames which are among those who signed the Chapel Agreement in 1731, or the Consecration

Deed of 1733. They include names such as: Leigh, Kenyon, Green, Lowe, Worsley, Pierpoint, Mather and Tyrer. The Earl of Wilton owned three pews which he allowed the poor of Culcheth to use. But today, all pews are completely free and one may sit anywhere.

School history: The school was first opened in 1751, the principal benefactor being the Lord of the Manor. Six poor children were educated free, but for others, the parents had to pay the schoolmaster, and in 1828, the school boasted 25 fee-paying pupils.

The Infants' School was built in 1854, but in an education report of 1865, it was found that the school was not satisfactory because, alleged the school inspector, no Latin had been taught there since it opened. In 1867 the schoolmaster resigned and no trustees could be found to appoint a new one. The school was therefore closed until 1871, when it was rebuilt and re-opened with the Rector and Churchwardens of Lowton and five laymen as Trustees.

In 1845, after Lowton became independent of Winwick, Rev. John Pennington became the first Rector. The present Rector, Rev. A. Anderson Brown, was appointed in 1957.

Reprinted from the Earlestown and Newton News circa 1960

St.Mary's

The History of Lowton St. Mary's.



The story of our church begins around the year 1850 with the building of Knott's Mill when a number of Anglican families moved into the area. They had a long journey to attend the nearest church, St. Luke's, as all of Lowton was one parish at that time. However, for their convenience, services and a Sunday School were held in what is now a public house — the Church Inn.

But it wasn't long before William J. Leigh, who was M.P. for South Lancashire, saw the need for a Church and a School in the area and he gave the site for the Church and the old school. Miss Mary Leigh of Hale, near Liverpool, offered to be the Patroness and provided most of the money for the buildings. She was a descendant of a Mr. Leigh, a tanner, who lived at Lowton Hall Farm in the 18th century, and she had inherited the estate.

The architect responsible for the building of the Church was Mr. Edward G. Paley of Lancaster who drew up the plans in May 1858. In 1859 the contract to build was given to James Fairclough of Wigan, the cost being £1,073.15s.Od (£1,073.75). The first sod for the foundation of the church was cut by a Mr. J. Smith and turned over by Mr. Foster, Rector of St. Luke's Church. The building of the church was completed before May 1860 and a further eighteen months was then allowed for the equipping and furnishing of the building.

Most of the area which now forms the Diocese of Liverpool was, at that time, in the Diocese of Chester, and so it was the Lord Bishop of Chester who Consecrated and opened the Church of Lowton St. Mary on Thursday, 21st November 1861, and the Deed of Consecration bears his signature. Witnesses to the signing of the Deed were F. G. Hopwood, Rector of Winwick, Thomas Foster, Rector of Lowton St. Luke's, and John Whiteley, Rector of Newton.

The first Vicar of St. Mary's was the Rev. James William Smart Simpson. The first Churchwardens were two farmers — John Battersby and James Leather. The aforementioned J. Smith was appointed as sexton, clerk and apparitor. He carried out his duties at the church for thirty five years and was paid £5 a year! He lived and died in a thatched cottage, now demolished, which stood near the playground car park.

The Deed of Consecration is a lengthy and complex document but, nevertheless, very interesting. In speaking of the benefactors, it reads: "Mary Leigh of Hale, aided by the voluntary subscriptions of divers other pious and well disposed persons hath caused this Church to be erected." It concludes: "She has given one thousand pounds towards the building and a further seven hundred pounds to provide an endowment for the Minister's salary." It also records that Thomas Brideoake gave land at the rear of the present church hall with the idea that it might provide a site for a vicarage.

Structurally the church has remained more or less unaltered since 1861. The original plans show the organ on the north wall of the chancel, although very early on it was moved to its present position, and the choir stalls on the south side of the chancel. The Vicar's vestry at this time was entered through a door in the nave.

The original lighting in the church, especially during the winter months, was not adequate and so, in 1923, after considering the alternatives of gas or electric lighting it was agreed to install the latter, although in the early days the supply fluctuated according to the weather. Seven years later, in 1930, the Vicar's vestry was extended to its present size, and the Chancel and Sanctuary were refurnished in limed oak. A new organ was installed and dedicated in 1933 and is still in use today. The following year the original stone pulpit was dismantled and replaced by our present oak pulpit.

The main structural addition to our church came in our Centenary year with the building of the Choir Vestry. This was built with money raised by the Centenary Fund and was dedicated in November 1961 by the Bishop of Warrington.

The church has some very fine stained glass windows. The impressive East Window was given by Robert Farrar Brideoake, the son of Thomas Brideoake, and depicts our Lord's Nativity. The nave contains three stained glass windows.

On the north side the window, given in memory of the Rev. J. W. Simpson and his wife, depicts David and Jonathan. On the south side of the nave are two windows, the first showing The Good Shepherd, given in memory of the Rev. William Berridge, and the second depicting St. Luke and St. John, given in memory of Thomas Leigh Travers and Mary Ann Travers.

Just inside the main door is a brass tablet 'raised by subscription' which records the service of James Smith, the first clerk and sexton, 1861-1896. Above the door is a panel bearing the names of past vicars. This was presented to the Church by Miss Guest in memory of her father, Dr. Guest. The list of names is as follows:

J.W.Simpson 1861 - 1886

W. A. Nicklin 1886 - 1890

William Berridge M.A. 1890 - 1897

Francis Smith 1897 - 1914

Benjamin Webster 1914 - 1919

George Arthur Guest M.A. 1919 - 1925

William Samuel Jones M.A. 1925 -1936

Arthur A. Shaw L.Th. 1936 - 1941

Donald Arthur Smart 1941 - 1949

Albert Edward Newby 1949 -1969

Robert Alexander Lally 1969 - 1982

Bob Britton 1983 - 2002

In memory of the Rev. A. E. Newby a bench seat and an oak cupboard for hymn books and prayer books were fitted at the rear of the Church in 1972, and in 1983, in memory of the Rev. R. A. Lally, the Vicar's vestry was equipped with a cupboard for the storage and safe keeping of church documents and records.

Amongst these are the Church Registers which date back from 1862, and by looking at the Burial Register we can see the high infant mortality rate in those early years of our church's history. Of the first twenty-four burials in the churchyard, only seven were adults. The first wedding in the church took place in March 1862 and it is interesting and revealing to note that both parties could not write but signed the register with 'their mark' — an X.

One document in the church is a plan of the original seating in 1861 which shows that the centre pews and those on the Lectern side were 'Paid Sittings' — the average fee being 5 shillings (25p) per seat which raised approximately £25 per year. The seats on the Pulpit side, except for three rows, were free, as were the four rows which were behind the Font. The Sunday School children sat on benches where the choir stalls now are. It was not until 1917 that it was agreed that all seats in the church were to be free.

Looking back through the records certainly gives many insights into the early life of our church from many angles. For example, on the financial scene, the accounts for the year 1892/3 show a total expenditure for the year of £104 which includes payments to the sick and poor of £2.10s.0d (£2.50) and one payment of 10 shillings (50p) for organ blowing for the year! Of the visiting dignitaries to our church, one was Bishop Ryle who came in 1890 and who preached a sermon which was well received. This is one comment which was recorded, in dialect, at the time: "He's one othe reet soart of parsons. He didn dally but went reet at his wark, and he didn begin furt exalt hisel, but plain forrard talk and wen eed dun he gav oer beant anny mur bother."

The church 'officials' up to 1916 consisted of two wardens and four sidesmen, but in that year the latter were increased to twelve 'to increase the interest of the people.' In 1917 they formed a Church Council, but with the advent of the new Enabling Act, a Parochial Church Council as we know it, consisting of 20 members and 2 wardens was elected in 1920 and its first meeting was held in May 1920.

In 1955 the Trustees of Lowton Independent Methodist Chapel very generously made a gift of a twelve yard strip of land parallel to the churchyard to be used as an extension to the graveyard. This land was consecrated by the Bishop of Warrington on the 25th May, 1983 and is now in use.

In 1965 the School Managers and the Parochial Church Council first discussed the possibility of building a new school to replace the one which had served the parish for over 100 years. The land on which the 'old school' was built was given, as mentioned before, by William J. Leigh and the money for the building provided by Miss Mary Leigh, and these gifts are noted by an inscription on a stone at the front of the building which reads:

These Schools

Were erected by Miss Mary Leigh of Hale, Patroness of St. Mary's

On land given by William J. Leigh, M.P. for South Lancashire 1862

The new school was built in three phases. 1970 saw the completion, and the opening by Mrs. F. Newby, of the first phase of the building — the hall. The Infant Department began its life in 1973 and the Junior Department in 1976. In March of the following year the school was officially Opened and Dedicated by the Rt. Rev. Michael Henshall, B.A. Bishop of Warrington.

The 'old school', of course, is still with us and continues to serve the church and community in a dual role. It was transformed in 1977 into a Nursery Unit, run in conjunction with our new school, and into a Church Hall, which is now 'home' for several of our organisations, and is used quite extensively for a variety of purposes.

In January of 1983 we welcomed the Rev. Bob Britton as our Vicar, together with his wife Wynn, and their family. Our church life was strong and healthy; there was an increase in the size of the congregation and the laity started taking a greater part in our services. Each month we held a Family Service when the Church was frequently filled 'to capacity'. A healthy sign, too, was the continuing rising attendance in our Sunday School (later re-named J.A.M. Club [Jesus and Me]) and the fact that our children and youth organisations were full, and several had 'waiting lists'. A keen interest in the Bible developed and almost fifty adults belonged to the two Bible Study Groups.

Every Ascension Day a Day of Prayer and Gifts was held when there were people praying in church from 7 o'clock in the morning until 7 o'clock at night. This continues to this day.

Perhaps an accurate reflection of the love our people have for their church was shown in 1984/5 when some £10,000 was given and raised in approximately 12 months for the re-roofing of the church which was carried out and completed in 1984.

Generosity, too, was evident through gifts and furnishings given to the church. These included kneelers for the choir and congregation, an amplification system, a white linen cloth for the Lord's Table, containers for the wine, water and bread at Holy Communion, a Lectern Bible, an Altar Service Book, Hymn books, Service Books and a beautiful portable oak Baptismal Font.

In April of 1986 we undertook a 'Parish Visit' when each home in the parish was visited by a member of our congregation who left a Church Magazine and an information leaflet about St. Mary's. This was followed in May by a Procession of Witness — the first for many, many years — in which the majority of our congregation, our organisations and Day School took part. These annual processions continued for many years but eventually had to stop because of the high cost of policing.

Our relationships with our neighbouring churches of other denominations were good, having been strengthened and enriched by members meeting together for study and the congregations joining together more frequently for acts of worship.

To mark the 125th Anniversary in 1986, the church was redecorated, the pews refurbished and the aisles and chancel re-carpeted. A display giving the history of the church was exhibited in the Church Hall and an historical booklet, from which most of the information recorded here (up to 1986) was produced.

By 1988 the organ was beginning to show its age and a further large sum was raised so that the organ could be rebuilt. Its completion was marked with an organ recital being given by Professor Ian Tracey, the celebrated Cathedral organist.

One of the big events of 1989 was the formation of the Winwick Deanery of which St Mary's are now part - we were formerly part of the Warrington Deanery.

Then in 1990, in agreement with neighbouring parishes, some of the Parish boundaries were changed to make allowance for some of the new estates that had been built and also to remove many anomalies.

In May 1991 Radio Merseyside recorded a Songs of Praise from St Mary's - this was broadcast later in the year.

As part of the celebrations to mark the Millennium, a capsule, which contained photographs and other memorabilia, was buried in the Church grounds. The intention is that this will be opened in 100 years time to give the people of 2101 an idea of what Church life was like in 2001. A copy of St Mark's Gospel was also given to all the primary school children in the Parish and new kneelers were made by the Mothers' Union.

The year 2001 also saw the introduction of the use of Common Worship Services in Church. These replaced the ASB (Alternative Service Book) which, in turn, had replaced the Book of Common Prayer some 20 years earlier. The end of the year also saw the refurbishment of both the choir and vicar's vestries and the installation of new lights in church.

In May 2002 we said goodbye to the Rev Bob Britton and Wynn as they went into retirement. Amongst the many farewell gifts from the members of the church in appreciation of all that Bob and Wynn had done was a day trip on the Northern Belle to Durham. A celebratory party was also held in Lowton Civic Hall.

Fortunately the interregnum didn't last too long and on the 5th February 2003 the Rev Bill Stalker was licenced as Priest-in-Charge of St Mary's and he and wife Pam quickly won their way into the hearts of the parishioners - well, what else would you expect of a Scouser! Bill, with the help of members of the congregation, has introduced several new initiatives including the Going for Growth and Giving

in Grace programmes; prayer triplets and clusters; Open Church whereby the churchbuilding is open every morning for anybody who wants to spend time in prayer and contemplation; and the church website.

In November 2004 St Mary's together with Lowton St Luke's and Golborne St Thomas' were officially commissioned as a Church Cluster whereby we will continue and increase the co-operation and sharing that has existed over many years between the three Parishes.

The Church continues to grow and flourish and we have much to thank God for by the way He has provided for our needs, both in the past and in the present. We can be sure we can trust Him to continue to provide in the future and, resting in this certainty, may we continue to be faithful to Him and grow and go from strength to strength in the Lord.

St.Catherine's

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ST. CATHERINE'S CHURCH, LOWTON





The Church was known as the "thre' penny bit" church because of its six sides - the shape of the old three penny coin at the time

On January 1st. 1933, a temporary church was opened, dedicated to St.Catherine of Siena, as a chapel of ease to All Saints Parish at Golborne. It stood on the land adjacent to the present Presbytery.

In 1956 Fr. John Connolly came to live in Mather Avenue to establish a new parish. The foundation stone of the Church was laid by the then Archbishop John Carmel Heenan on September 28th. 1958 and the church was opened by him the following year on June 3rd.

The old church then became the Parish Hall, a function it fulfilled until 1992 when it was replaced by the "Conference Room" - a new building joining the church to the Presbytery.

In March 1985, Fr. Connolly retired and Fr. Bernard Eager was appointed Parish Priest.

Between 1986 and 1989 the church was gradually reordered to suit the needs of the restored liturgy introduced by the Second Vatican Council. In December 1989, the bell was installed in the Tower, having been transferred from St. Lewis', Croft.

The Parish has two Permanent Deacons - Rev. Francis Newton, ordained in 1989 and Rev. Derek Morris, ordained in 1997.

On the retirement of Canon Vincent Burrowes as Parish Priest of the neighboring Parish of St. Lewis in Croft, Fr. Eager was appointed "Administrator" of that Parish and from January 13th. 2006, he took responsibility for the pastoral care of both parishes.

A sign of the times mobile phone antennas on St. Catherine's tower



Independent Methodist



www.lowtonimchurch.org.uk

There were at one time two Independent Methodist meeting places in Lowton the present church located at Lowton Saint Mary's and referred to as Lowton Common. This church you will read below came about when the people there defected from the Wesleyans in 1819.

The other cause was older. We believe that a James Ashton born in 1774, started to hold cottage meetings in his cottage on Church Lane opposite Saint Luke's Church, how his meetings became associated with the Independent Methodists is not known, but it certainly happened no later than 1815 and possibly much earlier. There was a lot of Independent Methodist activity in the area at the time and as well as Lowton there were meetings at Croft and Risley, it is interesting to note that there are still meetings in all these places. James Ashton is known to have preached at the present church after it joined the Connexion.

The attendance at Ashton's meetings became predominantly people from Golborne and eventually the people wanted to relocate to Golborne but Ashton was reluctant to loose his meeting. The people took matters into their own hands and opened their first Golborne Church in 1847, the third

Golborne Church now closed still stands in the centre of High Street built in front of the second church. The meetings at Ashton's cottage continued until he died in 1859.



Beech House

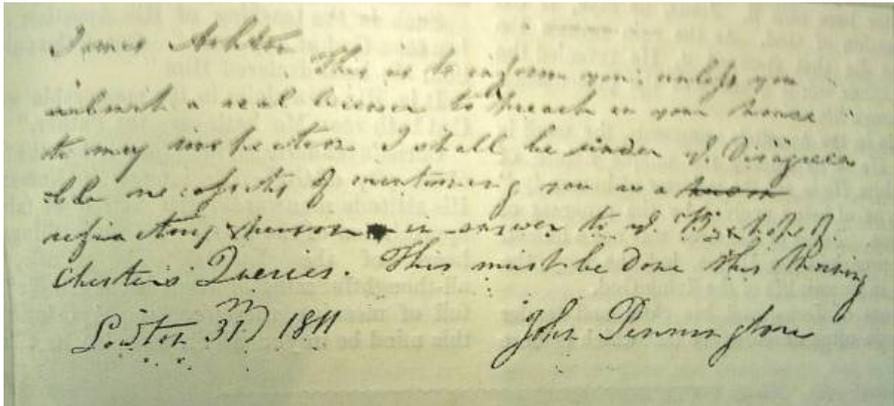
In order to help with our research into the development of the Independent Methodist Churches in Lowton and Golborne. We are interested in locating a photograph of the cottages that were in Church Lane, in the vicinity of the former Beech House this was located approximately in the region of the new Co-op store. Also any descendants of the James Ashton mentioned. We would also like to locate a photograph of the "Chapel School" that stood where Kane Court is now. If you can help with any photographs please e-mail webmaster@lowtonimchurch.org.uk

In "A short history of Independent Methodism" published in 1905 James Ashton is referred to as a pioneer of Independent Methodism in the Lowton Area, in the section dealing with Lowton Common the present IM church.

The Independent Methodist Magazine for 1908 States that the cottage of James Ashton was still standing but we believe that it has long since been demolished.

There are some interesting facts about James Ashton's ministry and his clashes with the established church Reproduced below is a copy of a letter sent to George Ashton From John Pennington the First Rector of St.

Luke's Church dated 31st May 1811.



James Ashton This is to inform you; unless you
inhabit a real licence to preach in your house
to my satisfaction I shall be under the disagreeable
obligation of mentioning you as a
refractory person in answer to the Bishop of
Chester's Queries. This must be done this Morning
Sat. 31st 1811 John Pennington

The text is difficult to read but consensus is that it says that if Ashton does not produce a real licence to preach for him to inspect that morning, Pennington was intending to report Ashton to the Bishop of Chester as an undesirable person

When we see the friendship and cooperation that now exists amongst the Lowton Churches it is interesting to note the animosity that existed less than 200 years ago.

George Ashton was born in 1774 and during his early life attended the "Established Church" He came under Methodist Influence and was converted, in 1799 he opened his home as a preaching house Services were held for sixty years until his death in September 1859. Ashton's name first appears in Independent Methodist minutes in 1815 but he began his ministry many years before and was associated with the Warrington Circuit.

He received much persecution when he began the preaching services at his house. In his memoir we are told " The step brought him into great trouble, and a multitude of persecutors of the most bitter character, surrounded his house whenever he and his brethren met for worship, Stones, sludge and brick-bats were hurled at them, while their ears were saluted with the most awful and bitter language. These mobs were frequently headed by those who professed to be the friends of religion.

As protection against these base men the house was licensed as a place of worship, which in some measure restrained their violence, and preaching and worship continued in his house for sixty years."

The letter appears to have been written during this period of pressure and persecution. It was written by John Pennington the first Rector of Lowton. (It is interesting to note that St. Luke's history only records his as Resident Curate from 1813 and rector from 1845) (Webmaster).

However on July 5th 1806 a request for registration of the cottage had been presented to the Bishop of Chester and is entered in the Episcopal Registry under the date August 22nd 1806 It is signed by James Ashton, Thomas Hill, James Houghton, Thomas Boardman, William Smith, Peter Smith and Robert Dickenson (*Copy in Cheshire Records Office*) in view of this petition duly accepted and registered it is difficult to interpret John Pennington's action as anything other than wanton persecution. Whether the mobs were incited by him is not known and it is desirable not to make the inquiry. (IM Magazine 1908)

A SHORT HISTORY

This is a reprint of the section dealing with the Independent Methodist Church at Lowton, taken from the book *Memories of Lowton*, by Richard Ridyard that was published in 1935. The Ridyard family were worshipers at this Church. The complete book has been reprinted at least three times the last time an edited version was produced in 1963 by P & D Riley but is once again out of print. Other books on the history of Lowton have been produced by local farmer Bert Worsley but again all of Bert's books are now out of print. At the present time all the books mentioned are available from the Golborne and Leigh libraries.

LOWTON COMMON METHODIST: The inhabitants of Lowton Common have long been known for their sturdy Puritanism and Nonconformity, and as far back as 1642, during the civil war, we find some of the villagers taking part in a fight between the Puritan and Loyalist forces. It is recorded that one Sunday morning, during the Winter of the above year, Lord Strange, Seventh Earl of Derby, was marching towards Bolton at the head of his Loyalist troops. About one o'clock they arrived in the vicinity of Chowbent, where they were met by more than three thousand young men, hastily summoned. comprising framers, wheelwrights, weavers, nail makers, and rustics from the surrounding districts, who attacked the Loyalists, and drove them back through Leigh towards Lowton. The horsemen, more bold than cautious, out rode the men on foot, and sustained a temporary loss on Lowton Common. However, when the men on foot arrived the battle was turned in their favour, and about two hundred of the Loyalist forces were killed and the rest disarmed and made prisoners. That many horses were also killed during the battle. and were

buried near to where Knott's Mill now stands is given colour by the great number of horse shoes found some years ago, during some excavating operations in that area.



Now flats it is believed this building 100 yards from the present chapel was one of the early meeting places of the church.

With an ancestry who were prepared to fight and die if need be for the cause of religious and civil liberty, it is not surprising that Methodism should appeal to the spiritual nature of many of the villagers and it is known that Methodist meetings were held in cottages as far back as 1780. Which section of Methodism or Nonconformity was the first to hold cottage meetings, I have not been able to ascertain. but during the later portion of the 18th century, meetings were held in one of the three cottages which are still standing in Lowton Hall fold. From information I have been able to obtain, I conclude the worshippers were believers in adult baptism by immersion, as there is a well founded tradition, that in a stream of water running near by the cottages. there used to be a small square reservoir, a few feet deep, the bottom and sides of which were made of blocks of stone. Resting on the coping stones were rough hewn images of angels and churches. which after the dissolution of the sect, went to adorn the rockeries in the local cottage gardens.

Another meeting place for worship in these early times was the granary attached to Yew Tree farm. and I learn that only a few years ago. the original oak reading desk was broken up for fire wood by the tenant farmer. To which section of Nonconformity these religious enthusiasts belonged no one knows, but there is authentic history of the Wesleyans

holding meetings about 1720. in the house known as Gilded Hollins farm, which still stands opposite Knott's Houses, St. Helens Road. In course of time it was decided to build a school chapel. and a Mr. Richard Eckersley, who owned some land on Lowton Common. gave the land on which it was erected. and opened in 1794. The building was used as a day school. Sunday school. and also for holding preaching services. The first schoolmaster was a Mr. Peter Eckersley.

For a time the cause must have prospered for according to an old Hymn Sheet, dated 1810. the scholars attached to the Sunday School numbered 200. A footnote on the Hymn Sheet reads as follows :? "In this school there are upwards of 200 scholars taught to read every Lord's Day. The amount of collections and donations last year was £6 9s. 0d. That our pecuniary assistance is insufficient must be obvious to everyone who considers that the above sum is on the average only sixpence for each scholar. We are therefore under the imperious necessity of adopting a plan that has long been in use at other places on such occasions, and which has always succeeded, viz.: of receiving silver at the door. It is not intended to supersede but to be added to the collection, which will be made as usual after the sermon. After mature deliberation we could not but think of a plan so calculated to supply our wants as that now proposed, and we flatter ourselves it will? meet with the cordial approbation of every lover of mankind, whom we once more solicit liberally to impart all possible help in support of the institution."

I cannot but think that this arrogant appeal was ill-advised on the part of the managers of the Institution, who largely hailed from Leigh, and judging from what followed I attribute the decline of Wesleyanism in Lowton to it. As an old Lowtonian, knowing something of the temperament of the villagers of 50 or 60 years ago, I can well imagine the spirit in which so dictatorial a document would be received by the older generation of inhabitants. To demand the payment of a silver coin before being allowed to enter his place of worship. and then be expected to contribute at the close of the sermon, would be anathema to the then sturdy independence of the average Lowtonian. From that time disputing began among the congregation, and in the course of a few years the members had dwindled down to six, and strange to say they were all named Eckersley. The cause almost died out. through not being able to get regular supplies of preachers and workers, and often the place would be closed for several weeks at a time.

That the meager financial assistance could not be attributed to the niggardly nature of the natives, is evidenced by the large amount of money subscribed by them in succeeding years. and the cause of the

trouble can only be surmised. On the fundamentals of doctrine there was little difference between the contending parties. and I am of the opinion that the trouble was more a question of management. and the belief of the Lowtonians that all efforts to propagate the Gospel. or working for the Lord, as they would term it, should be a labour of love, spontaneously rendered. without thought of any financial reward. Where as the Wesleyans believed in a paid ministry, etc.

Be this as it may, it is in this spirit and belief that Independent Methodism. at Lowton Common has grown from one success to another during the past one hundred years. Immediately after the few remaining Wesleyans had left the place in the hands of their stronger rivals. a new cause was started under the name of Independent Quaker Methodists. In a short time it became necessary to build a larger place, so the old place was pulled down and a larger School Chapel built, and opened in the year 1834, "for children of all Denominations." The cause prospered so much that a third place had to be built, and this was opened in November, 1849, the collection for the day being over £20. A very considerable sum to raise in those days.

In my infancy I was baptised in the above building, and up to the time of it being vacated. I regularly attended the Sunday School and preaching services held therein. The cause so prospered that the Trustees decided to build a larger chapel and school, and they were fortunate in securing a piece of land near by the old place for £200, on which the present commodious chapel and school were erected, at a cost of about £5,000, and opened on March 26th, 1880. I was present at the laying of the foundation stones, and also at the opening of the premises, and was married at the Chapel 49 years ago.

None of the pioneers of Lowton Common Methodism were educated men, as education is usually understood, but they undoubtedly possessed wisdom, and a zealous faith in their mission. Some of their names I shall never forget. such as: James Eckersley, William Winstanley, Richard Collier, James Ince, Simon Boydell, John Boydell, Joseph Birchall Joseph Hesford, and my grandfather, Joshua Ridyard, who, when I was quite young, led me to the Sunday School, where he taught a class of very young boys, always referred to as the "Reedy mid aisey class?", because of the title of the book from which they were taught to read being "Reading Made Easy". Some of these men were preachers, and much of their speech was in the local vernacular, and very quaint it would sound if heard from a pulpit to-day.

James Eckersley was a descendant of an old Lowton family, and he

began preaching, when only sixteen years of age, and he often had stones and other missiles thrown at him when holding open-air meetings, but undaunted he held on. and many of those who had been opposed to him became changed men, through the influence of his precepts and example. Although he was a member of the Primitive Methodist Chapel. Lane Head, he often preached at Lowton Common Chapel on a Sunday morning. He was a great favourite with the boys who attended the service, partly on account of his quaint sayings. but principally because of his brevity in conducting the service. If we saw him walking in the direction of the Chapel. one of the lads would approach him and say, "Are yo pretchen. Jemmv". his answer would invariably be, "Ave an al not keep yo lung if vo'll promise bi good lads". Of course the promise was readily given, but whether it was always kept. I have my doubts. True to his side of the bargain he would suddenly cut short the service about half an hour before the usual time: and exclaim. "Ah con see th'lads are genen tyart. so al gie oer, and let urn go whom to their dumplings".

I remember an occasion when several young men of the village thought they would frighten him one dark Sunday night, when he was returning home across the fields from Golborne, where he had been the preacher for the day. They agreed to hide in the hedges. and on his approach one of them should meet him, after making himself look as weird and ghost-like as possible by enveloping himself in a white sheet. When they heard the old gentleman's footsteps coming along the foot path. the ghost left its hiding place and met him face to face. The old man never changed his pace. but on passing the ghost, quietly said: "If thert dival theu cawnt hurt me. and if thert human. God al not let thi touch me". If the faith of old James could not literally remove mountains, it certainly removed from the hearts of those young men all desire ever to play the ghost on him again.

The late Mr. T. L Travers in his book of Manuscript, dated December 19th, 1888. records as follows: "Curious sayings and doings of old James Eckersley, of Lowton. a well-known and highly respected local preacher. A man very well versed in Scripture, and who at times could pray and preach as one inspired.. His Gospel was love of God and his fellow creatures. A most innocent and unworldly man, who all his life went about doing good. Never-the-less he was erratic and highly eccentric, his speeches occasionally bordering on the most startling themes. He is still living, being 85 years of age. and wonderfully active at the time these lines were written". I once heard him say from the pulpit that if he had had twenty lads, he would make them serve the Lord or he "would breke ther yeads"; well, he has three sons, who have followed in their father's footsteps.

At one time describing the glories of heaven, he said, "There would be mountains o dumplins an rivers o broth, and 'th women woula have a rare time on't as ther would bi no dolly tubs nur washin beillers waiten fur urn on a Monday mornin". On another occasion he said he would like to see all his neighbours, and all that he had known, to be saved, and if he had the power he would "slek hell-fire eaut". One time he was holding forth and a man near the pulpit was nodding, where. upon old James. tapping him on the head, said, "Wakken up. Ruffley, thers a creawn o'glory wainn fur thee in heaven if theu has a bawd yead!..

Being in his company once, and a young lady being present. he turned to her and said. "Ah tell thi what, wench. thi fevther owds some quare notions abeaut heaven. He thinks thoos ut ur saved al bi flyin abeaut wi angels, seem th wonders oth universe, an travelin fro one Orb tut tother. Ah tell thi what ast think it strange when I?m i heaven if ah see thi feyther whizzin past hooked on to a comet's tail".

Conversation overheard. October, 1889. between two old Lowton celebrities, both being rather deaf. one aged 85 and the other 75. J. Eckerslev: 'Did't go to't Chappil Anniversary o Sunday;'R. Collier: 'Aye'. J. Eckersiev: 'What wur Mawt (Mort) pretchin abeawt?' R. Collier: 'Well, he wur quite Apastolic like, he gan us a deol o Schripther. an he startet othe beginin an finished off athe eendin he gan us o text, but rawnt abeawt o good deol. Ah should like furt year him again, for he gan mi o deol o comfort in mi yead'.

Old Penks' (Penkethman) account Of Bishop Ryles' Sermon at St. Mary's Church, Lowton, 1890.

"Hes one othe reet soart o passons. He didn't daily but went reet at his wark. an he didn't begin furt exalt his-sel nor howd up' th sacraments for salvation. Nowt but plain straight forrud tawk, an when eed dun he gan o'er beawt anny moor bother".

Mr. Penkethman was a staunch supporter of Independent Methodism and lived at Lowton Hall Farm. where he died about 40 years ago. I used to hay-make for him during my school holidays, and I remember he was strongly opposed to Sunday haymaking. On one occasion his principles cost him dearly, for on a Saturday evening in July, 1872 after a period of fine weather, he had a twelve acre field of hay ready for being stacked. The workmen, afraid the weather might break expressed a wish to stack it on the following day, Sunday. Mr. Penkethman was against the suggestion, declaring he had never allowed haymaking on the Sabbath day, and he never would. The Sunday was fine until late afternoon, when

a thunder storm came on, and it rained, as it had never in living memory done before or since. A larger area of land was flooded than has ever been known, and the weather never really picking up for some weeks, the hay was spoilt, and made only fit for bedding the cattle, or the manure heap.

The men said the man was a fool for not taking advantage of the fine Sunday, but Mr. Penkethman had the satisfaction of knowing that he had kept the Sabbath day holy, and as a good Methodist would no doubt console himself with the thought that his earthly loss would be to his eternal gain.

Richard Collier was a prominent member of the Chapel. and a local preacher, and as such he christened me when I was a child.

Mr. Ruffley. when a young man, had been one of the worst characters in the village, but through the influence of the Chapel he became a reformed man, and faithfully attended the services until his death. I remember him once telling his religious experiences, and with fervour portraying the "glory of heaven, with its beautiful mansions, one of which was reserved for him, its streets pave't wi gowd. an no hongry ballies theer, furt newadding mugs. wud bi runnin o'er wi dowf".

Mr. James Mort was considered to be one of the best preachers connected with the Independent Methodist. and hailed from Lymm, where he worked on the highway. He was in great demand for preaching Anniversary sermons, and having studied Botany, he always chose a text bearing on the subject. such as: "Consider the lillies of the field", or "The grass withereth. etc". He would begin his discourse b outlining the science of plant life, and vegetable kingdom. and then give it a spiritual meaning. This he could do exceedingly well, and he was undoubtedly a good and intelligent preacher.

Although I have wandered far theologically from the Methodist fold since my young days. it is with gratitude that I acknowledge my indebtedness to these pioneers of Lowton Methodism. most of whom were old men when I was a boy, for their instruction and good advice, in trying to make me, as they would say, into a good lad.

Richard Ridyard 1935

Reproduced from the Short History of Independent Methodism, published

in 1905 as a souvenir of the hundredth Annual Meeting of I.M. Churches.

LOWTON COMMON.

In trying to ascertain the commencement of Methodism at Lowton Common we go back more than a century. Prior to 1794 there was a small society formed by the Wesleyans. and meetings held in cottage houses. After a time it was agreed to try and get a school, and a Mr. Eckersley, who owned some land on Lowton Common, gave a plot, on which a School was built. This was opened as a Wesleyan school in the year 1794 The place was afterwards used, for day school, Sunday school, and preaching services. Unfortunately, the cause almost died out, owing to its being unable to get a regular supply of ministers and workers. The condition of things became so low that there were no preaching services held for three or four weeks at a time. This state of things gave much anxiety and regret, and a number of those residing in the neighbourhood conferred together and tried to raise another cause. They took possession of the premises, which created some bitter feeling between the few remaining Wesleyans and the new comers, but the latter became the stronger party, and after a time the Wesleyans left the place in the hands of their rivals. The next step they took was to consult with Peter Phillips, of Warrington who promised to preach and help them. Thus the cause was again started under the name of Independent or Quaker Methodists, and a supply of ministers arranged for the services.

Shortly after this it became necessary to build a larger place. The old building was taken down and a more convenient school erected, which was opened in the year 1834, for children of all denominations. The following are the names of some of the pioneers of Independent Methodism at Lowton Common. Preachers : James Ashton,

James Eckersley, John Chisnall, Jeremiah Collier, Jeptha Thompson, William Birchall, and others. Sunday school superintendents, teachers, etc.: Thomas Lowe, Abel Gregson, Richard Atherton, John Bridge, Thomas Cook, Robert Battersby, Joshua Ridyard, John Bent, William Winstanley and William Smith. Eventually the cause prospered, so much so that a third school-chapel had to be built. This was completed and opened in November, 1849, by our late respected friends 'William Sanderson and James Gandy. The collections for the day amounted to £70 a very large sum to raise at that time. Since the above place was opened the work has so prospered and grown that the trustees had to look out for more land on which to erect chapel and schools. They were very fortunate in securing a site near the old place for the sum of £200, on which a commodious chapel and schools have been built, the total cost

being nearly £4,000. These buildings were opened on March 26th, 1880.

An interesting snippet gleaned from the Independent Methodist Magazine for June 1908

LOWTON The Sunday School Anniversary took place on may 17th. The address at the morning service was given by Mr Thomas Ridyard. Services were conducted in the afternoon by Mr James Trickett and the evening by Mr James Berry, Mr Trickett also preached to an overflow service held in the school Room. The collections realized £74.

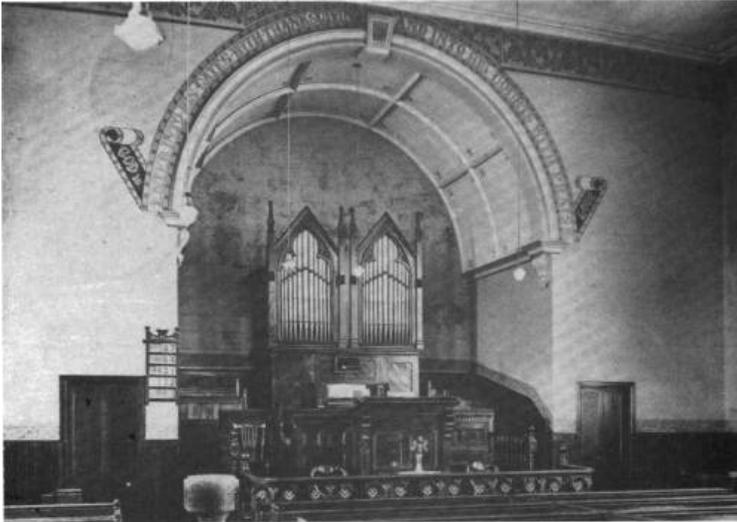
Methodist (Lane Head)



Present Church built as the Sunday School and Church Hall

The Second Church

on the corner of Winwick Lane and Newton Road



Interior about 1923.

Interior of second Church. Circa 1923



Interior of second Church. Circa 1981



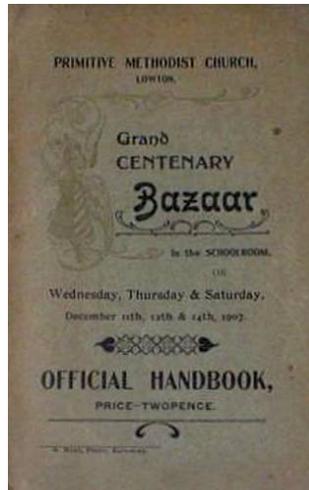
The First Chapel in Winwick Lane Built in 1842

Used as Sunday School until the new hall (now the present Church) was built.

Then sold to Golborne UDC who used it to garage the steam Roller and Bin wagon.

Photographs of Lane Head Methodists were loaned by the late Mr Walter Smith

1907 Centenary Handbook



Recently found on E-Bay

Lowton Churches Romania Appeal

Lowton Churches Romania Appeal is a charity set up by the five churches of Lowton (St Luke's, St Mary's, St Catherine's, Lane Head Methodist, Lowton Independent Methodist) after the fall of Ceau^oescu in 1990. It grew from work of an aid trip arranged by the churches after knowledge of the living conditions in the country's orphanages first became widespread. The aid trip, which saw many Lowtoners travel to Romania by coach, visited an orphanage in Lugoj, west Romania. The trip was successful but barely scratched the surface of the problem and the individuals who travelled decided LCRA should be created to deliver long-term help. Initially more trips to Lugoj and elsewhere were arranged but as time has gone on the charity has grown and expanded its remit. It now has several ongoing projects in the country.

One area in which Lugoj has strong links is in the town of Sinaia. In 2000 LCRA donated an ambulance to the town's hospital in memory of James Dickinson, who travelled on many of the charity's aid trips and was just 18 when he died in 1999. In 2003, a second ambulance was donated in memory of another of the charity's workers, Carol Jones.

For more information about LCRA please visit the Lowton Website www.lowton.co.nr



Lowton Dairy (Jackson's)

Formerly David Miles dairy

THE PYLONS

The removal of the Lowton Pylons

**The pictures show the removal of the pylon in Carlton Road on Monday 7th
July 2003**

Photographs of the pylons Copyright © 2003 Alan Nixon

Look No Wires - All done by Magic !





Notice the Conifer that had grown through the Pylon



I Cheated ! - They used a big crane and I painted it out.

PUBLIC HOUSES

All Photographs on this page were taken during January 2007

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Church Inn, Newton Road, Lowton



Kings Arms, Newton Road, Lowton

Compare this 2007 photograph of the King's Arms to the one in Bert Worsleys books and you will see that there has been much extension to the right and also at the rear it is now known as the Toby Carvery and has an Inkeepers Lodge (Motel)



The Red Lion, Newton Road, Lowton



The Traveller's Rest, Newton Road, Lowton



The Jolly Carter, Newton Road, Lowton



The Shepherd's Inn, Newton Road, Lowton



The Hare & Hounds, Golborne Road, Lowton



The Ram's Head, Slag Lane, Lowton

Reputed to be the oldest public house in Lowton. In recent weeks as can be gleaned from the crane at the rear a housing development has started on land that was formerly the gardens, bowling green, car park and the site of the old rectory.



The Stonecross, Stone Cross Business Park Lowton
Also has hotel accommodation in the adjacent lodge.



The new shopping parade and community centre on Church Lane.

Built on the site of Beech House mentioned in the history of the Independent Methodist Church.

I would like to thank everyone who gave or loaned photographs or written information to the Lowton websites project and also to the members of the Lowton websites project for their permission to reproduce sections of the websites in the production of this little book.

I hope that it gives pleasure to it's readers and that it may help future generations to understand the development of this community.

Much of the information and the photographs come from my personal archive that I have built up over a period of very many years. There were photographs of many places and buildings in the village that I would like to have included but was unable to find copies or obtain permission to use. If you have anything you think could be included in any future edition please contact me.

My E-mail address is: alan@purplewebsites.co.uk

Finally I would like to thank you the reader for purchasing this book which has been priced low to encourage it's purchase and not to make any profit, the pleasure from seeing the numbers sold makes the work in producing it worthwhile.

A.N. 2007

LOWTON WEBSITES PROJECT

www.lowton.co.nr

www.lowtonhistory.co.nr