



FRODSHAM AND DISTRICT HISTORY SOCIETY

JOURNAL



**Issue No.53
December 2023**

Compilers: Kath Gee and Sue Lorimer

Journal of
FRODSHAM AND DISTRICT HISTORY SOCIETY

Issue No. 53 December 2023

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We are very thankful to Heather, a member of our society, who is employed by Cheshire Archives and Local Studies (CALS). Heather has very speedily sent us high grade electronic copies of several of our images, beginning FD or FDN, that are now displayed on the Cheshire Image Bank website, for use in Issue 53 of the F&DHS Journal.

Front cover picture:

This depicts the Coronation of King Charles III on 6th May 2023. It is one of many displays celebrating or commemorating national events by Susan and husband at the front of their house on Ship Street, near to the Frodsham PO Sorting Office.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Officers: Mrs Sue Lorimer, Chairman; Dr Kath Gee, Hon.Secretary; Mr David Fletcher, Hon.Treasurer;

Committee: Mrs Fiona Barry, Archive Project Manager; Mrs Gill Baxter, Archivist; Mrs Fran Miller & Mr John Davies, Programme secretaries; Mrs Margaret Dodd, Membership Secretary; Keith Bott; Peter Connor; Frank Whitfield.

Was it only March that I took over the reins from our chairman Frank Whitfield. It seems much longer!

The Society has been very busy with the regular monthly meetings, exhibitions at the library, the Coronation, Festival in the Park, walks etc. Read the 'Out and About' section for a full report on our activities and how we have been involved in community events around Frodsham and further afield.

It is now 3 years since we embarked on the Archives Modernisation Project and thanks must go to Gill and Fiona and all those who have helped with the project, for their dedication. Throughout this process Gill has still been dealing with queries through the website and coping with all the items donated and acquired. Do read her article on page 3, 'The fascinating Webb family story' for a very special report from her this year.

My archiving partner on Zoom was Andrew Faraday who sadly passed away in April. His good humour and technical expertise contributed greatly to the Project and his friendship is greatly missed. Andrew's faith was very important to him, he was a member of the Leadership Team at Main Street Community Church, where we hold our monthly meetings. Andrew was the technical expert at these meetings and we are grateful to Dick Curry from MSCC for filling the breach.

At the end of October we lost another valuable member of the Society, Beryl Wainwright. Beryl had been an active participant for a long time, serving as Chairman, Secretary and committee member from the early 2000s. She had been awarded Honorary Membership for her services to our History Society.

My thanks must go to our outgoing Chairman, Frank Whitfield, for valiantly steering our ship through the choppy waters of the pandemic, to Kath, whose organising skills are second to none and to all the committee members for their support. We are also very pleased our society membership has returned to pre-pandemic numbers. Thank you to all of you for your continued support.

And of course, special thanks to those members who have contributed to this year's journal. Now read and enjoy.

Sue

200 YEARS OF CORONATION CELEBRATIONS IN FRODSHAM

Fiona Barry

Frodsham has always celebrated Royal Coronations in style. The earliest record is of the arrangements for Queen Victoria's coronation in 1838.

Queen Victoria's coronation, 28 June 1838

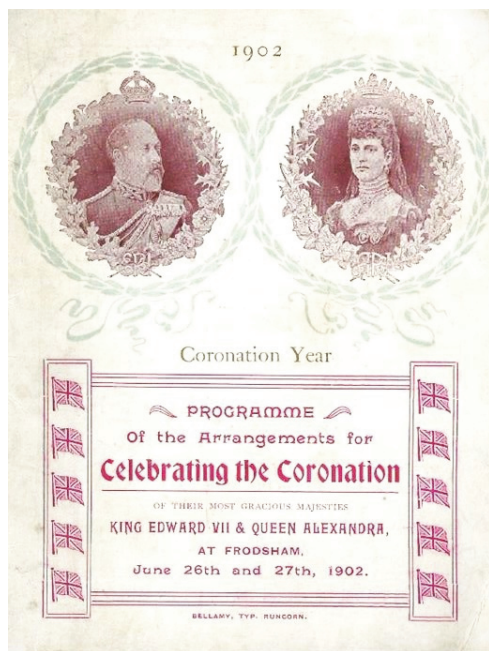
A subscription committee was formed, chaired by William Hayes (1784-1849). A large poster was printed for all local people to know the arrangements, and an original of this was donated to Cheshire Record Office by William's great-great grandson, Reverend Richard Hayes, *reference CRO D9084*.

A long procession of residents carrying flags, banners and emblems of the various trades and groups assembled at Frodsham Bridge, and just before they set off a Royal Salute was fired. They processed to Fluin Lane, where groups of children joined them to walk to Castle Park (then still known as Park Place). They continued to St Laurence's Church and listened to a sermon by Reverend J. Turner, after which the choir sang hymns.

One resident said *"I myself have never seen our parish church full, and I have it on the authority of an old parishioner, that he only saw the church full on one occasion, that being the Queen's coronation day"*. In 1838, the church could seat 1,050 worshippers, because the pews and overhead galleries were still in place, meaning that a significant percentage of the village would have gone to the church that day.

After this ceremony, the children and women went to various schools, to be served tea and buns, while the men enjoyed roast beef and ale! This was strictly a ticket only event, with tickets available from the Town Hall (until recently the TSB building).

The Coronation of Edward VII and Queen Alexandra, 26-27 June 1902



The archive holds a souvenir programme which gives details of the elaborate celebrations that were planned for the first coronation in 64 years. However, just before Coronation Day, the King was taken ill and the actual coronation was deferred until 9 August. In Frodsham, some celebrations were held as planned, and others deferred.

Arrangements for Friday 27 June were deferred to Saturday. Over 950 school children assembled in Main Street and sang the special version of the National Anthem. They processed to the Mersey View picnic grounds, led by the Frodsham Volunteer Brass Band, marshalled by Mr J. G. Kydd and Mr E. Steward. On arrival, they all sang a Coronation Ode, written by Rev. H. B. Blogg with music composed by Mr C. H. Hibbert. Sports events were held, prizes awarded, the National Anthem sung, then the

children had a 'substantial tea' provided by Mrs Parker Hoose. At ten o'clock, there was a 'brilliant display of fireworks on the site of the Beacon'.

On **Sunday 29 June**, a special supplication service was held at St Laurence's Church in lieu of the planned Coronation celebration. The 2nd Volunteer Band Cheshire Regiment played outside the Drill Hall and paraded to the church. Another service was held at the Iron Church in the evening.

On **9 August**, when the King had recovered, members of the organising committee assembled on Main Street for photographs, and after the announcement that the King had been crowned, the Frodsham Volunteer Brass Band played the National Anthem. Everyone then marched to the Athletic ground where 'Old English Sports' were played. There was an interval for the 'old people over 60' to have tea in the Drill Hall. On completion of the sports, a fireworks display was held.



FD03666

Gorst's shop, High Street, decorated in 1902

Several other premises had been decorated for the occasion, notably the Bear's Paw, Clarke's grocer's, Kydd's grocer's and the houses of Mr H. Davies and Mr E. Rhodes.

The Coronation of King George V and Queen Mary, 22-23 June 1911

FDN0610

Coronation procession down High Street, outside the George Inn, now Frodsham Tandoori

The Society has a copy of the stylish coronation souvenir programme, which gives details of the General Committee set up to organise the events for this coronation. The Chairman of the Committee was Mr C. E. Linaker, there were 78 men involved, but not a single woman! There were sub committees set up for sports, for refreshments, for beacon and fireworks, music, and finance. The programme of events was almost identical to that held in 1902.



The sports programme for **Thursday 22 June 1911** was held at the Athletics Club grounds. Many of the races were traditional, apart from the men's race for the greased pig (time limit 15 minutes). Prizes were mostly money, except for the hen race for women (the hen was the prize), the pig race for men (prize was the pig) and the winner of two events involving a greasy pole won a leg of mutton!

There was a children's sports day on **Friday 23 June** at Mersey View, with the usual races.

Coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, 12-17 May 1937

Wednesday 12 May 1937 was the date set for the coronation of Edward VIII, who succeeded to the throne following the death of his father King George V. However, on 10 December 1936, Edward VIII abdicated so that he could marry the American divorcee Mrs Wallis Simpson, resulting in his brother the Duke of York becoming King. Much of the planning for the Coronation was already in place, so King George and Queen Elizabeth decided to continue with the date that had been set, although designs for memorabilia, coinage and stamps had to be quickly altered.



In Frodsham, another beautiful souvenir programme was produced as a guide to events, with information about Frodsham's history at the back. Mr Fred Basnett, Chairman of the Parish Council, led the General Committee. Miss Crampton joined the Executive Committee. Miss Atkins, Miss Crampton, Miss Green, Miss Morris and Miss Routledge sat on the sports committee, and 15 of the 39 volunteers on the Tea and Dance Committee were women.

Many of the activities were similar to the programme in 1911, with children's sports at Mersey View, a decorated lorry procession, the ringing of bells and detonating of rockets. However, there were some new events, one being the National Broadcast of the King's speech to the Empire by wireless on **12 May**. This was held in the Pavilion at Mersey View. For the first time,

everyone would have heard the Monarch speak.

FDN2129

Coronation Committee at the Town Hall, 1937

Another new event was the Special Entertainment on **Thursday 13 May** in the Drill Hall by the Liverpool Troupe of acrobats, dancers, songsters and comedians. On **Friday 14 May**, there was a Coronation Dance and



Whist Drive in the Drill Hall to Wilf Johnson's 'Band of Seven' – which started at 8pm and went on till 2.30am! Tickets cost three shillings each, 'inclusive of special catering'. The final day was Bank Holiday **Monday 17 May**, when sports were held on the Athletics ground, with new sports including the 'Thread the Needle' race for girls, and 'Cutting the Turk's Head'. There were also relay races specifically for Boy Scouts and for Girl Guides.



On behalf of the Coronation Committee, Mrs J. Williams visited Frodsham Girls School and presented each student with a souvenir badge and also a Savings Bank book with one shilling deposit, courtesy of an anonymous donor (Liverpool Daily Post, 6 May 1937).

FD02586

Thomas Edgar and his son Edgar Brereton on Church Street with their decorated lorry

The Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, 30 May-3 June 1953

A full week of activities was organised by the Coronation Celebrations Committee, chaired by Mr Alfred Jones, with seven sub committees working on different elements.

The celebrations commenced with a Rose Queen Fete organised by Trinity Methodist Church, on **Saturday 30 May**, which provided a street procession with acrobats and dancing troupes, followed by Morris dancing, and a hill top race (down to the town and back!).

On **Sunday 31 May**, Frodsham Silver Band played in Main Street, followed by a parade of uniformed groups, then a procession to Churchfields for a United Divine service, led by Rev. M.W. Myres and Rev. Philip Thurman. The service was printed in full in the programme.



FD02821

Frodsham scouts processing past the Railway Inn (later Paperwell) on Church Street.

A cricket match was played on **Monday 1 June** between a Frodsham Eleven and a Helsby Eleven on the Frodsham Secondary School ground.

Coronation Day, Tuesday 2 June, began with bells pealing at 08.00. Events began in Main Street at 2pm. A motorcade travelled around the town to Mersey View with

displays by Warrington Gymnastic Club and entertainment from Mr Will Morris. The school childrens' tea followed this, and all the swings and the Helter Skelter were free of charge.

The Silver Band played all afternoon and evening. There was a repeat of the afternoon's entertainment, tea for the Committee, then from 8.30pm until 1am, there was 'impromptu dancing' in the Pavilion to the music of Eddie Lythgoes' band, with free admission. For those not dancing, they could have listened to the Queen's radio broadcast at 9pm. The focus then moved to Overton Hill, where a Flash Maroon Shell was fired at 10.30pm, the Royal Cipher ('E II R') was lit on the hillside, followed by an extensive firework display. At 11pm, the Beacon was lit by Mr Alfred Jones to link with a chain of beacons.

On **Wednesday 3 June**, a whist drive was held in the evening in Frodsham Secondary School. Also on Wednesday, a tea party was held at the Trinity Church schoolroom, with separate sittings for children and adults. A meal of ham and tongue salad, with bread and butter, followed by fruit salad, fancies, ices and coronation cake was provided. What a feast, as rationing was still ongoing.

Entertainment was provided by Miss Walker (xylophone), Master D. Leiser (soprano), Mr P. Leatherbarrow (conjurer), Mrs J. Hodgkinson (mezzo-soprano), Mrs T. Ellams (contralto), Mr A. Sproston (pianist) and Miss L. Coppack (ballet dancer). This was followed by community singing and the National Anthem.

Coronation beakers were presented to the children by Mr F. Hough, the eldest resident, and Chairman Mr H. Helsby. The coronation cakes were cut by Mrs Mellor and Mrs Goodall, the eldest female residents.



FD03274

Tea party at Trinity School room. Mr Alf and Mrs Jones, Mrs Longden, and Mr Harry Helsby.

On **Thursday 4 June**, Frodsham Silver Band gave a concert at Castle Park, and a Grand Bowling Match was held between the Coronation Committee and the Memorial Hall bowlers.

On **Friday 5 June**, a Coronation Ball was held in the Mersey View Pavilion from 8pm until 2am, featuring Ron Hall and his Orchestra (*Merseyside Champions 1950*).

On **Saturday 6 June**, the 'Aged Residents Tea and Social Evening' was held in Frodsham Secondary School on Princeway, with entertainment which included the Women's Institute Drama Group as well as six other individual performers.

School children had been encouraged to write about what the Coronation meant to them, and a selection was included in the programme. All schoolchildren 'resident in Frodsham' were presented with a silver spoon as a souvenir by Mrs Alfred Jones. The Decorations Committee offered prizes for the Best Decorated Road or Street; the Best Decorated Business Premises and the Best Decorated Private House.

The Coronation of King Charles III, 6 May 2023

Frodsham Methodist Church invited people to watch the Coronation on a large screen together, and share food, which was sponsored by Frodsham Town Council. Several shops decorated their windows. All schoolchildren living in Frodsham received an embossed souvenir bookmark. Castle Park Arts Centre hosted a Coronation tea party.

Helsby organised a large event, **HR Helsby**. The Methodist Church Hall, the Old Bank Tea Rooms and the station car park were the main hubs of activity with stalls and entertainments. To advertise this, a giant-sized crown was lifted into place on the roof of the cafe a week beforehand, which was promoted on social media.

The Coronation Crown at the Old Bank Tea Rooms (image courtesy of HoHo Helsby)

After a damp start, the sun shone. Residents came out to listen to choirs, watch children performing on the stage in the car park, enjoy the Morris Men, try the activities that 1st Helsby Scouts put on, and have refreshments in the café and Methodist Hall.

A celebration fit for a king!!



LOCAL MILESTONE HISTORY

Editors

At the first meeting of the Chester Turnpike Trustees on 27th January 1789, it was ordered that 10 milestones be erected on the Turnpike Road from Chester to Frodsham, at one-mile intervals from Cow Lane Bridge, Chester, to the Market House in Frodsham.

In **1822** these milestones were repaired, repainted and repositioned using the Chester Cross as the starting point instead of Cow Lane Bridge. The milestones were re-sited again in **1833**, this time measuring from the Eastgate in Chester. Following the formation of Cheshire County Council in **April 1889**, the original milestones were replaced by triangular, cast-iron ones. OS 6 inch Maps published in 1881 and 1899 show milestones near Undercliffe, Helsby and near Profitts Lane; the latter is currently missing. There are also two 'milestones' made of cast iron by Howey Lane, Frodsham, and close to where Fluin Lane meets the A56, Frodsham.



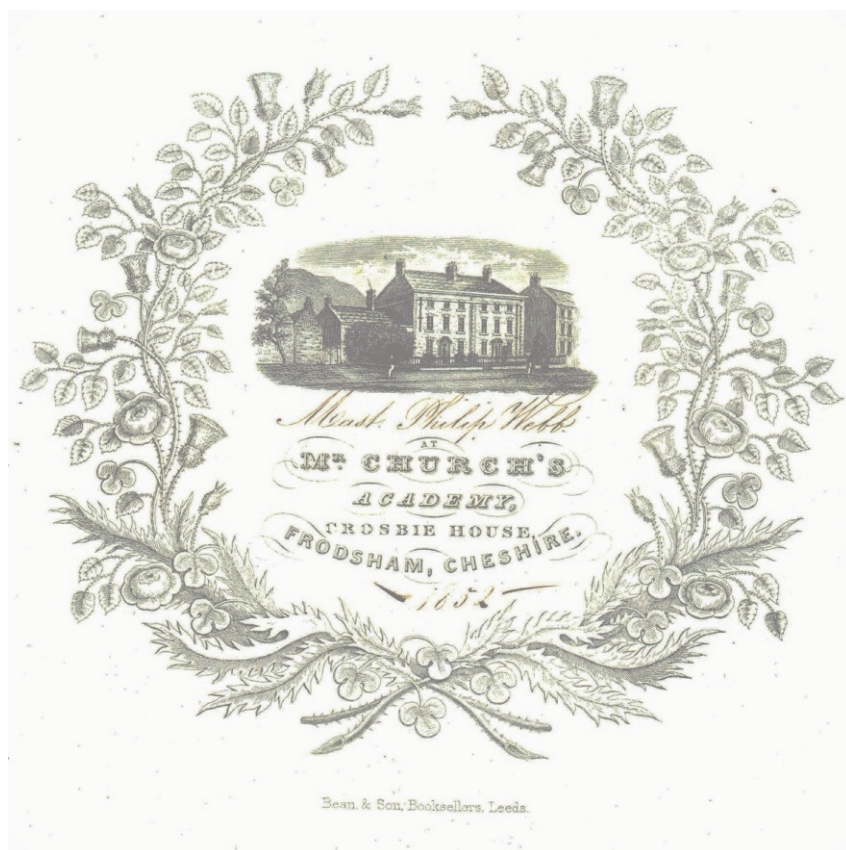
Left: Cast iron 'milestone' by 'Eight Mile House' near Undercliffe Helsby SL



Above are two newly painted Frodsham milestones, May 2011
 Centre: On the A56 near the junction with Howey Lane KG
 Right: On the A56 near the junction with Fluin Lane KG

THE FASCINATING WEBB FAMILY STORY

Gill Baxter



In March this year I received an email from Joseph Rosolino in New York. He and his partner Gina had visited Lumber and Salt, an antique salvage shop on the North Fork of Long Island and bought a mathematics exercise book titled Mr Church's Academy Crosbie House (Frodsham), dated 1852, belonging to Philip Webb. Joseph contacted our Archive email address to find out more about Philip and his family.

This is what I discovered...

Philip Webb senior, a widower, married Martha Prout on 8th February 1810 in Marloes, Chepstow, Monmouth, and their son Henry Philip Webb was born 29th September 1811. Philip Webb senior must have died, as on 21st April 1827, at St Laurence Church, his widow Martha Webb married John Williams, an Exciseman based at The King's Head (now the Queen's Head). This brought the Webb family to Frodsham. See the Webb generations at the end of this article.

Philip and Martha's son, Henry Philip Webb, a mariner, married Eliza Grice, daughter of William Grice, a corn dealer and tanner of Frodsham, on 5th April 1836, at St Laurence Church. Philip Henry Webb, the owner of the exercise book, was born 15th February 1839.

In 1841 the Census was taken on the night of 6th June. Henry and Eliza were said to be living with her widowed mother, Mary Grice, next to the tannery at Brook House in Main Street. Mary was the owner of the Tannery which was run by her son John. Philip is not on this Census entry but unusually there is a second, duplicate entry for them on the 1841 Census, at a lodging house and shop in Dalrymple Street, Liverpool, near to the docks, where Eliza's sister, Betty and her husband John Thompson lived. The Webb family, including Henry Philip, is recorded there.

Henry Philip Webb had previously been the captain of The Mary Ridgway and on 6th November 1841 he set out as captain of her sister ship, The Martha Ridgway, on a 5-month journey to New Zealand.

The Martha Ridgway, owned by John Ridgway, was constructed expressly for the passenger trade. It was launched in Liverpool in 1840.

The Martha Ridgway, a 3-masted schooner, moored just left of the flagpole in Wellington, New Zealand
© National Library of New Zealand

The Martha Ridgway had had a checkered career. In 1840, under Captain Forbes, there was an outbreak of smallpox and it was the Martha Ridgway that brought the news that the settlement of Britannia, was to change its name to Wellington, after the Duke of Wellington.



While Henry was away Eliza had another son, John William Webb, baptised 27th February 1842.

On the return voyage, the Martha Ridgway was wrecked on 27th August 1842 at Sir Charles Hardy Island, Torres Straits between Australia's Cape York Peninsula and the island of New Guinea. Captain Henry and six men were reported lost.



Beacon built at Raines Islet by Edwin Augustus

In 1844, some of the ship's wreckage was used by convicts to build the Raines Islet Beacon, to the east of the Cape York Peninsula, Queensland, Australia. The historic Beacon was added to the Queensland Heritage Register in 1992.

Captain Webb is remembered on gravestone OGB/01/11 at St Laurence Church and there is a further memorial in Chapel en le Frith.



The Chapel-en-le-Frith Memorial GB

On 31st January 1850 Eliza Webb married James Shirt at St Laurence Church, Frodsham. James was a journeyman stonemason from Chapel-en-le-Frith. This was a second marriage for both of them and they were living in Church Street Frodsham in 1851. I was curious as to why James Shirt was in Frodsham. A newspaper cutting from the Derbyshire Courier dated 3rd January 1846 mentions the death of James Shirt's first wife, when she was visiting him whilst he was working as a Tunnel Inspector at Woodhead on the Sheffield and Manchester Railway. So, perhaps James had moved to Frodsham when the railway was under construction in 1849-50.

Philip Henry Webb stayed in Frodsham with his grandmother, Martha Williams, in High Street near Chapel Lane (Fluin Lane) whilst he was attending Mr Church's Academy. Sometime between 1851 and 1857 the Shirt family moved to Chapel-en-le-Frith with Philip, and William Grice, Eliza's nephew, who was an apprentice stonemason. Philip is described as a warehouseman. Sadly, his brother, John William Webb, died in June 1857 aged 15.

Portrait of Frances Webb (nee Richards)

In 1851, Frances Richards was working for John Guest Williams of Main Street Frodsham as a Draper's Assistant. Perhaps this was where Frances and Philip Henry met. On 10th January 1863 they were married in Nannerch, Flintshire, Wales. Interestingly her father Watkin Richards was a Revenue Officer.

Frances and Philip had two children, Martha Beatrice, and James Henry Philip.





Left: Martha Beatrice Webb born 1863

Below: James Henry Philip Webb born 1865



In 1871, the Shirt and Webb families lived in Furness Vale, in the Parish of Disley. Their home was an end-of-terrace house in Bank End known as Shirt's Row. Nearby was Bank End Quarry where James Shirt worked as a Master Mason employing 25 hands. In 1871, Philip Henry Webb is a Manufacturer of Cotton Yarns.



The 1881 census shows Philip Henry as Proprietor of a Stone Quarry employing 16 men and 2 boys, and in 1891 he is described as a Stone Merchant living in Bank End. Kelly's Directories of 1892 and 1896 list Philip Henry Webb as stone quarry proprietor. The directories of 1901 and 1906 list his son, James Henry Philip Webb as proprietor.

Philip Henry died on 17th April 1899 at his home at 38 Duchess Road Edgbaston and was buried on 19th April at St Laurence Church, Frodsham. Probate was granted on 5th June to Frances Webb widow, Martha Beatrice Webb spinster, James Henry Philip Webb stone-merchant and the Reverend Frederick Haines, Wesleyan minister. Effects: £14,033 (£2,223,712 today*)

By 1901 Frances Webb is still living at the same address in Edgbaston and Martha is working as a Natural Science Mistress at Edgbaston High School for Girls, having studied natural sciences at Newnham College, Cambridge.

Martha Beatrice Webb is mentioned in the Edinburgh Post in 1908, as having qualified as the only female Doctor of Medicine from Edinburgh University. Martha spent her career as a G P in Edgbaston, researching into matters of women's health.

Martha's mother, Frances Webb of Islington Row, Edgbaston, widow of Philip Henry, died 23 February 1917 and is buried in the family plot at St Laurence graveyard. Probate was granted on 3rd April to Martha Beatrice Webb. Effects: £250 (£37,893 today*).

In 1921 Martha is living at 6 Islington Row, Edgbaston with her two adopted nieces, Dorothy Morris Japp, a Medical Student at Birmingham University and Loën Isabel Mary Aldous, a Student at King Edward's School Birmingham.

On the 1939 Register, Martha Beatrice Webb is retired and living at 36 High Brow, Birmingham. She died there on 14th February 1951. Probate was granted on 18th May to Mabel France and Eleanor Gladys Wright. Effects: £3,711 (about £143,747 today*)



James Henry Philip Webb followed in his grandfather's footsteps, sailing on the Orient Liner R.M.S. Austral from Tilbury to Sydney via Gibraltar at the end of August 1888, and to Australia again in January 1890 on the ship Loch Long as a Captain Rear Admiral.

Loch Long, built 1876 by James & George Thomson Scottish Built Ships, Wikipedia

James Henry Philip Webb married Ellen Pickford in January 1899 and in 1901 the family, now with six month old Philip Henry, is living at Buxton Road, New Mills. James Henry Philip is a Stone Merchant. A second child, Sidney Watkin Webb was born in 1908. In 1911 James Henry Philip and his family are living at Hockerley Lane, Whaley Bridge. They are still at Briar Cottage, Hockerley Lane, in 1921. Philip Henry junior joined the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve in 1918 and was sent to Bristol.

The 1939 Register has James Henry Philip Webb and his family still living in Briar Cottage, Whaley Bridge. He had retired as a Stone Merchant due to ill health. Ellen, his wife, is a housewife; Sydney is a Rubber Research Chemist; Philip Henry junior is living in Manchester as a Textile Research Chemist. Both sons are single.

James Henry Philip Webb of Briar Cottage, Hockerley Lane, Derbyshire died on the 24th December 1952. He was buried at Fernilee Cemetery, High Peak. Derbyshire. Probate was granted on 12th February to his widow, Ellen Webb, and Philip Henry Webb textile chemist. Effects: £8,938. (about £317,145 today*).

Ellen Webb died on 9th July 1960, aged 85, and was buried with James at Fernilee Cemetery, High Peak, Derbyshire. Probate was granted on 4th October 1960 to Philip Henry Webb, Works Chemist, and Sidney Watkin Webb, also a Works Chemist. Effects: £6,529 (about £185,428 today*).

Philip Henry Webb, 42 Bradford Street, Bolton, died 19th December 1969. Probate was granted on 11th March 1970. Effects: £18,570 (about £376,934 today*).

Sidney Watkin Webb of Briar Cottage, 36 Hockerley Lane, Whaley Bridge, Stockport, Cheshire died 24th March 1989. Administration Manchester 20th December 1989. Effects: £138,823 (£425,930 today*).

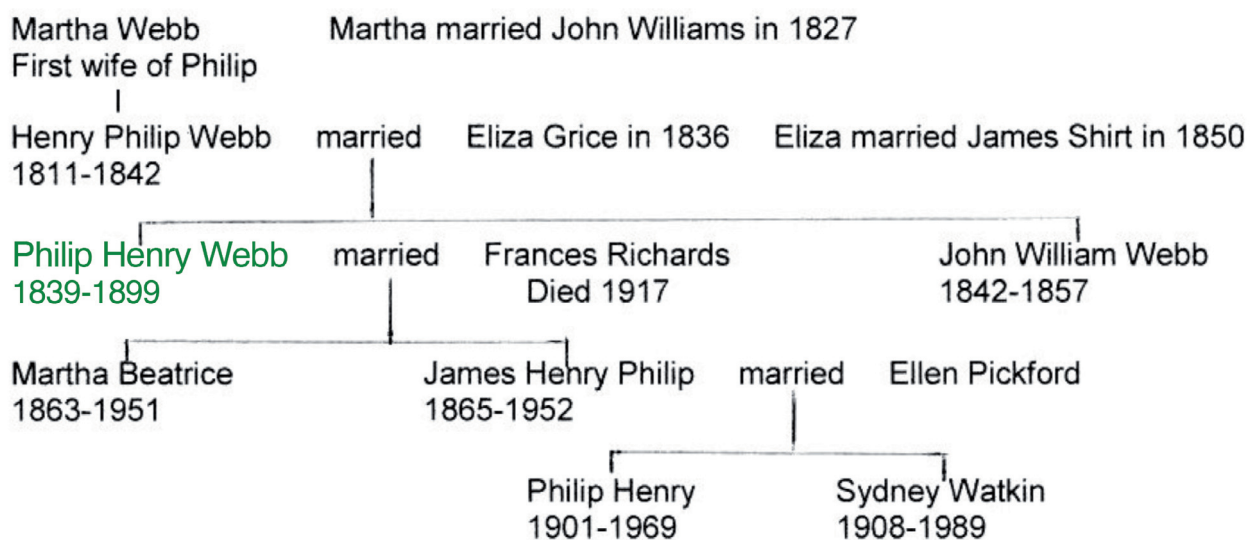
Both Philip Henry and Sidney were buried in the family grave at Fernilee Cemetery.

And finally...

I forwarded my research to Joseph and Gina, who were delighted with the story that had unfolded. They generously donated several documents to F&DHS Archives including a handwritten copy of Philip Henry's will, family photographs and the original marriage certificate for James & Ellen Webb. The will showed that Philip Henry had invested in railways including The Great Central Railway, and the Manchester Ship Canal Company. Joseph and Gina also gave the Society the mathematical exercise book that had sparked the original enquiry. Philip Henry Webb obviously became an astute businessman, perhaps due to the tuition at Mr Church's Academy, Crosbie House, Frodsham.

* www.officialdata.org/uk/inflation

The family of Philip Henry Webb



Acknowledgements

Thanks to Gina Vigliarolo and Joseph Rosolino for their thoughtful and generous donation.
Thanks to Fiona Barry, Kath Gee and Sue Lorimer for assistance with this article.
David Easton, Secretary and Archivist, Furness Vale History Society. Sue McGuire.
Membership Secretary, Liverpool History Society.
Lyn Helps, Chapel en le Frith History Society.

Further reading on Martha Beatrice Webb:

<https://furnesshistory.blogspot.com/2010/11/martha-beatrice-webb.html>

<https://www.search.connectinghistories.org.uk/Details.aspx?&ResourceID=1516&PageIndex=45&SearchType=3>

<https://aim25.com/cats/8/7137.htm>

EAST BANK AND ITS OCCUPANTS

Sue Lorimer



FDN1856 Harriet Shaw Weaver 1907

East Bank, Bridge Lane, Frodsham, which is now named Fraser House is another gem from the Frodsham History Archives. It was built in a late Georgian style typical of the age. East Bank was the childhood home of Harriet Shaw Weaver, suffragist, and supporter of James Joyce, (see pamphlet 'Harriet Shaw Weaver' by Heather Powling). But before Harriet's father, Dr Frederick Poynton Weaver, bought the house, it had already had several interesting owners. These owners are listed in Document D 354 in the Frodsham History Archives, but only the basic transactions on the property have been transcribed from the deeds. This is an attempt to give a little background information on the owners of East Bank.

The first transaction dated 2nd August 1791 was a lease from Joseph Burrows to William Antwis followed by the conveyance the following day. Joseph Burrows was a wheelwright listed in Cowdroy's Directory for Frodsham 1789. Joseph married in 1760, so he would have been at least 50 in 1791. The property could have been his home / workplace or just a plot of land. Joseph owned a number of properties during his lifetime. When he died in 1806 (the will is in the name of *Borrows*) he left land and five cottages, including his own, near Windmill Hill, to his daughters, and land in High Street, a shop and ale house known as the Dog and Partridge, to his son Thomas.

Looking at the quality of East Bank, it is unlikely to have been the home of a wheelwright, no matter how wealthy. The house was probably built by **William Antwis**, a miller and corn merchant, listed in Pigot's Directory 1822 as 'gentry'. William's father, Samuel, was also a corn dealer in Frodsham. Samuel died in 1791 and presumably William inherited the family business, which enabled him to build East Bank.

In 1806 William leased 145 acres in 'The Royalty' (the area around Snidley Moor and Woodhouses) from Earl Cholmondeley for a period of 21 years and prior to 1820 he held the lease for the two mills near Castle Park. William Antwis also leased Higher Mickledale Farm from Geo Wilbraham from about 1807 to 1828 and his son held that lease for a further 3 years.

By the time of his death in 1828, William Antwis owned considerable property in the Frodsham area. Sale details in the Chester Courant 2nd September 1828 lists East Bank, recently vacated by William Antwis, and associated land; his present home in Frodsham; land at Woodhouses (Foxhill Estate); Snidley Moor; Harrol Edge and 3 houses and land at Shepherds Houses.

The Liverpool Mercury 6th June 1828 printed a glowing obituary:

'As an agriculturalist, Mr Antwis deserves the commendation of society in general. Vast tracts of land, which but a few years since presented nothing to the eye but boggy

marshes, heaths overgrown with furze and underwood, or sandy tracts of great extent are, through his indefatigable perseverance, now luxuriant and productive. In the attainment of his object, he displayed a noble philanthropy, well meriting the imitation of landed proprietors, namely, the employment of large portions of the labouring classes who often but for him, might have been destitute of work and nourishment.'

It had been reported in the local paper eight years earlier that Mr Antwis had employed 26 distressed labourers to transport a wagon load of corn from Liverpool, rather than use horses. Perhaps not what we would consider as philanthropy, but he did promise to continue to employ them once the task was completed.

In May 1833 East Bank was bought by a **Thomas Young** and sold by 'John Young and others' in 1845. Sadly, I can't find any trace of any of either of them in Frodsham. It is possible the house was just an investment for Thomas Young and let out. One possibility however, is that Thomas Young was a corn merchant from Little Bolton, Lancs. He died in 1843 and his executors were sons John, Thomas and James. But it is a bit of a long shot!

In January 1845 East Bank was bought by **Miss Sarah Beckett**, who was already in her 70s. Sarah had moved from Aston and was buried in the church at Aston by Sutton in May 1850. Her executors sold the property to **James Mellor** later that year.

The Tithe Map of 1846 shows James Mellor renting a house and an acre of land (the site of Trinity Church) from the Rev John Collins. James Mellor was a retired cotton broker originally from Oldham, but part of the firm Mellor, Cunningham and Powell, cotton brokers and sail makers of Liverpool. The company was still operating into the early 20th century as Mellor Cunningham and Co. James Mellor was a Methodist and in 1850 laid the foundation stone for a new Wesleyan Chapel in Weston, Runcorn. He died in March 1858 and was buried in St Laurence's Churchyard. As James' wife had predeceased him, and he appears to have had no children, all his property including East Bank and its contents, were auctioned.



In 1858 East Bank was bought by a young solicitor, **Albert Harrison**. Albert was in partnership with John Ashton, of Ty Gwyn (The Old Hall), Main Street, Frodsham and in 1856 he had married John's sister Elizabeth. John Ashton is better known as Colonel John Ashton VD whose funeral in 1899 brought Frodsham to a standstill, with flags at half-mast and shops closed.

FDN0754 Funeral procession of Colonel John Ashton Church Street

Albert Harrison was appointed Magistrates Clerk in Frodsham and Clerk to Runcorn Union Workhouse and was at a high point in his career. Albert was married with two young sons when he died in May 1864 at the age of 37. His widow and family moved back to the Ashton family home, Five Crosses Farm, Kingsley Road, and later lived at West Bank, Lower Main Street.



FDN0075 Dr Frederick Poynton Weaver

There was yet another change of ownership for East Bank, as in December 1869 the house was bought by the previously mentioned **Dr Frederick P Weaver**. Frederick was born in Chester, the son of Dr John Weaver. In July 1866, Frederick married Mary Berry Wright, eldest daughter of Edward Abbott Wright of Castle Park. They brought up their family of 4 daughters and 4 sons, 3 of whom went into medicine, at East Bank.

Whilst in Frodsham Dr Weaver gave evidence in two child murder cases. In 1872, Ann Didsbury, servant at Newton Hall, was found guilty of strangling her new born son, and in 1879, Thomas Bushell was found guilty of poisoning his illegitimate daughter. All in a day's work for a village GP! When he retired in 1892 the family moved to Hampstead. Dr Weaver became a Magistrate and was greatly involved in foreign missionary work and many local charities. He died in Hampstead in 1913.

FDN0308 Dr William Edward Burton

East Bank remained in the Weaver family until 1909. From about 1894 to 1902 it was let to another young doctor, William Edward Burton. Liverpool-born, he studied at Liverpool University and University College, London. He married Mary Elizabeth Harriet Silver, in Kingsley, in July 1897. The couple met when she was visiting her uncle, Samuel Chadwick of Crofton Lodge (the Windmill), Kingsley, which is said to have been the one-time home of members of the Burton family too. William and Mary later moved from East Bank to 'Brockton', Red Lane, where they lived until 1944, and then to Oakdale, Overton.



Dr Burton gave a lot to the community, for example, in 1892 he gave free first aid lectures to women in the Town Hall in conjunction with the St John's Ambulance Association. He was a captain in the 2nd Battalion (Volunteers) of the Cheshire Regiment and was involved in the recruiting process during WWI. He was also a Magistrate and was the Medical Officer of Health for West Cheshire. William died in 1948 and his wife in 1973, six months after reaching her 100th birthday.

In 1909 Dr Weaver sold East Bank to **James Henry Thornton**, an insurance clerk from Warrington. James was the son of Henry Thornton JP of Fearnhead Hall, a director of the Refuge Assurance Company. Henry Thornton was a generous man. He gave Warrington Corporation a sword and mace to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria, and in 1906 he gave 6 semi-detached houses to General Booth to be used as Rest Homes for workers of the Salvation Army. James Henry Thornton worked all his life for the Refuge Assurance Company becoming district manager of Warrington

and Manchester. He died in 1960 and the family decided to sell East Bank and move south.

James Henry had a brother William Eber Thornton, who lived at Deyne Court, next to Trinity Church, Frodsham, and whose son Francis Harry Thornton was the owner of the Swan Motor Manufacturing Company, Frodsham. They produced Swan motor cycles, (see PAM 50/16 'Made in Frodsham' by Wm. R. Hawkin).

East Bank was bought by **Frodsham Motors Limited** in 1960 and passed to **Helsby and Longden Limited** the following year. In 1971 it was bought by **Stanley and Eva Mullock** and then returned to the Longden family in 1973. In 1980 the house was bought by **Freight Transport Limited** and used as offices. This is the point where the information held in the archives stops. About this time the name East Bank changed to Fraser House.

Gleaning information from newspapers it appears that it was used by Eurosol SA builders and developers in Spain in the late 1980s and by 1988 had been bought by **Protean Systems Ltd**, a software and distribution company. In 1991 it was bought by a Helsby based company **Bentry Ltd**, Civil Engineers, who proposed to let some of the property as offices. It was the base for KCG Management Ltd direct sales and marketing in the early 1990s and later NCN North West, a distribution company.

Fraser House is still used as offices which keep up the fabric of the building but in my opinion, it is a sad end for such a lovely family home.

East Bank / Fraser House in
July 2008 (in better
condition than now) KG

East Bank / Fraser
House is an ideal
candidate for Local
Listing, but we missed an
opportunity in October
2023, when a planning
application was
submitted to CWAC to
convert Fraser House
into 7 dwellings.

Comments on the
application on behalf of F&DHS included that the front exterior of the building should be preserved and that its heritage should be commemorated with a Blue Plaque to celebrate Harriet Shaw Weaver's childhood home. The property will be submitted for Local Listing next year.



Note: Images bearing FDN numbers have been provided courtesy of the Cheshire Image Bank.

CRAFT WORKSHOPS IN CASTLE PARK

Keith Bott

In 1980 Vale Royal Borough Council offered the Frodsham Society a 35 year lease at a rent of £5 per annum on the Clock Tower Building, which was the former Coach House and Stables for Castle Park House. This enabled the Clock Tower Building to be converted into an Arts Centre. As a result, a registered charity was formed, Castle Park Arts Centre Frodsham Ltd (CPAC) to oversee the work and then manage it (Bott K. F&DHS Journal 2022).

In 1984 the Council offered to broaden the lease to include the lower and upper courtyards, but until conversion work was completed any possible use of the courtyards was left in abeyance. Following the opening of the Arts Centre in the autumn of 1986 the CPAC Trustees were able to turn their attention to the courtyards and appointed a Working Party to look into future opportunities.

The focus was to create an environment in keeping with the Arts Centre's activities for talented craftspeople to work in congenial surroundings, selling their work themselves or through the Arts Centre. It was felt this could be achieved by establishing a set of craft workshops, rehabilitating the dilapidated outbuildings in the upper courtyard and replacing the old store in the lower courtyard with new buildings.

In parallel, the Frodsham Society made contact with the local Groundwork Trust – Macclesfield and Vale Royal – and in May 1988 a group consisting of representatives of the Society, Parish and Borough Councils showed their Development Officer, Pat Hart, and Landscape Architect, Rod King, a number of sites in Frodsham which might be considered to provide opportunities for joint groundwork / community involvement. The Groundwork representatives expressed particular interest in the possible development of the outbuildings in the Castle Park Art Centre courtyards.

Following further discussions the CPAC Trustees agreed to a Feasibility Study. This was carried out by a project team from Adelphi Environmental Enterprises Ltd, a subsidiary of the Groundwork Trust with financial support from Cheshire County Council, the Royal Institute of British Architects and the Groundwork Trust.

The agreed terms of reference for the study were to determine the feasibility of establishing individual craft workshops in three existing outbuildings in the upper and lower courtyards, i.e. the smokehouse, garden workshop and store, as additional facilities in the curtilage of the Arts Centre, to complement the complex.

On the 28th February 1989 a verbal presentation of the project teams draft report was given to the CPAC Management Committee and the final Feasibility Report was published in June 1989. The report dealt with both the physical development of the workshops (design and construction, planning permission, employment and car parking) and their future operation (financial viability, marketing, range of crafts and management arrangements).

The study concluded that a practical way to proceed would be to develop the lower courtyard with 5 new-build units, having demolished the store (known as the 'air raid shelter'), one of these would be linked to the refurbished smokehouse in the upper

courtyard. The garden workshop in the upper courtyard would be refurbished as a store and otherwise that area would only be used for car parking. The capital cost was estimated at £70,000.



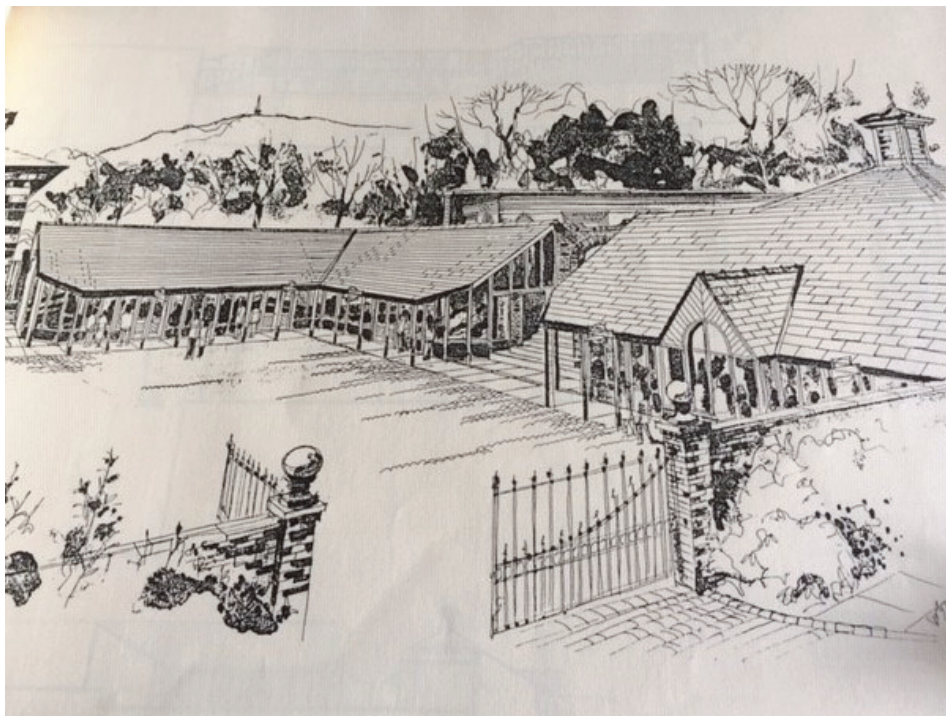
The Smokehouse prior to refurbishment and the Old Store/Air Raid Shelter that was demolished

With the support of the CPAC Management Committee the working party, now designated as the Craft Workshop Working Party, comprising Bill Dutton, Jim Cox, John Grenside, Tricia Kerr and Peter Vickery, set out to develop the recommendations in the report. Their work encompassed a wide range of activities, for instance, organising working drawings and specifications to meet planning requirements; exploring potential funding from the European Regional Development Fund, Local Authorities, Charitable Trusts, other Public Sector organisations and the Private Sector; examining the legal implications of sub-letting the workshops; investigating the provision of additional car parking spaces; reviewing methods of management and day to day running of a Crafts Centre and holding initial discussions with Council Officers.

The CPAC Trustees formally adopted the project on 24th January 1990 and in March the Council entered into a formal lease devolving to CPAC the premises in the upper and lower courtyards together with the right to park cars in the upper courtyard. By a Deed of Variation in 1992 the Garden Workshop was removed from the lease. However, working party discussions with Council Officers were suspended by them for some five months delaying progress. The estimated cost of the project, including construction, associated services and professional fees had increased to £90,000. When meetings resumed in the autumn the working party were able to present a clear breakdown of sources of income to meet the revised total cost.

The working party engaged in a programme of consultation and publicity for the project during the winter of 1990/91, prior to submission of plans for approval by the Council. A scale model was on display in the Arts Centre and drawings and photographs were on display in Frodsham Library. Presentations were made to Frodsham Parish Council, the Frodsham Society's Executive Committee and Cheshire County Council.

A landmark in the development of the courtyards was reached in June 1991 with Council approval for the plans submitted for 6 workshops to include conversion of the smokehouse as a stand alone one. In February 1992 the plans were amended to allow for 7 workshops by subdividing one of the new builds into two.



Artists' impression of Lower Courtyard development

In late 1991, Tricia Kerr was replaced on the working party by Les Whittingham. Tricia was tasked with chairing a new sub-group responsible for developing the detail of client requirements in the workshops themselves, e.g. heating, lighting,

decoration, once the buildings had been completed.

A key issue to enable the project to proceed involved obtaining agreement from the Charity Commissioners (CC) that the terms of the original 1933 Deed of Gift of Castle Park, as amended, allowed the Council, as Trustees of Castle Park, to lease land to CPAC and establish if there were any restrictions on its use, including sub-letting.

To expedite matters, following some months of little progress, a meeting was convened between the Council's Solicitor / Secretary, the Chair of CPAC Trustees and the CC in July 1992. At that meeting it was agreed that the terms of the existing arrangements permitted CPAC to operate craft workshops on the land. However, the ability to sub-let those workshops required further permission from the CC and it would prepare the necessary documentation. As a result on 24th September 1992 it issued the formal order allowing for the sub-letting of land and buildings at CPAC.

As a result, in August, the Council were able to give the CPAC Trustees permission to invite tenders for the 7 workshops on a design and build contract basis, in advance of developing a Workshop Lease Agreement together with a Building Agreement for the 'Courtyard Project' (which was issued on the 15th October)

Five tenders were opened on 7th September. The lowest from Pochin of Middlewich was accepted and work started on 19th October 1992. The buildings were handed over on 19th February 1993 and the final cost of the project was £110,000, met by grants from the Foundation for Sport and the Arts (£45k), the European Regional Development Fund (£25k), Cheshire County Council (£15k) and Vale Royal Borough Council (£15k) plus £10,000 from CPAC's own funds.

To mark the completion of the Craft Workshop Project, the Trustees commissioned the design of a set of ornamental wrought iron gates for the entrance to the lower courtyard from the main drive.

The chosen design, by Diane Gorvin a local sculptor, consisted of a pair of double gates, permitting vehicle access when required together with a single pedestrian gate to the side. The gates show Harriet and Emily Wright, spinster daughters of Edward Abbott Wright, in their horse drawn carriage together with three young ladies standing by. The Wright family owned Castle Park Estate 1860-1933.



The gates, photographed by KG 8th February 2005, were produced by blacksmith Chris Doughty at his Frodsham forge. He also designed and fabricated a second set of gates for the head of the steps to the upper courtyard, commissioned by the Frodsham Society in memory of Kenneth Leake the first Chairman of CPAC Trustees and containing his initials.



FDN1880 Lower Courtyard 25th February 1995



Workshops 26th October 2023 KG

The Craft Workshops and gates were officially opened by the Duke of Westminster on 16th September 1993. He was given a tour of the Arts Centre by CPAC Chairman, Jim Cox, and his deputy, Bill Dutton. The 'opening party' had the opportunity to meet many of the volunteers who ran the Arts Centre. As a memento of the day the Duke of Westminster was presented with a gift of pottery made by the first workshop tenant, Richard Benson. Other craftspeople already installed were silversmith and jeweller, Alan Whitehouse, and Pastels artist, Isobel Levitt. The main gates and opening ceremony were supported by Cheshire County Council with a grant from the Cheshire Year of Celebration.

The successful culmination of over five years work by CPAC trustees and volunteers provided the opportunity to maintain standards of craftsmanship and encourage small businesses in Frodsham, whilst also providing an additional attraction for visitors.

Acknowledgements

Kath Gee and Gill Baxter, F&DHS Secretary and Archivist
Peter Vickery, Chair of Trustees CPAC
Kim Horton, Manager CPAC

Sources

CPAC Magazines / Newsletters
CPAC AGM Reports & Minutes
CPAC Craft Workshop Feasibility Report
The Frodsham Society Magazines

Addendum

The Groundwork Trust – is a charity established in 1981, overseen by the Groundwork Foundation and supported by the Countryside Commission. It promotes environmental improvements and leisure facilities thereby contributing to regeneration in and around towns and cities. It does this work by working in partnership with all sections of the community, business and industry, government and local authorities, voluntary and community groups and provides advice, technical knowledge, assistance in obtaining grants and support to environmental projects, which in turn create employment opportunities and improve the quality of life.

The Macclesfield and Vale Royal Groundwork Trust established in 1983 is the local representative of a national network of 12 independent trusts operating in a number of areas across England and Wales. Its work covers five areas of activity:

- Improving the Environment; e.g. restoring the mill pond at Styal Mill; tackling neglected land schemes; acting as agents for a Borough Council in a major derelict land reclamation scheme.
- Working with Business and Industry; e.g. acting as professional landscape designers and consultants for a number of companies.
- Helping people from towns to enjoy the countryside; e.g. as an active member of the Peaks and Plains Association.
- Involving Communities; e.g. supported by the MSC setting up an educational nature reserve at Lower Moss Wood; Working with schools and Cheshire County Council's advisory staff on Environmental Education, to restoring the Lion Salt Works at Northwich.
- Providing value for money; e.g. sponsors put in £82,000 but the benefits from other agencies, companies and donations increased this almost 7-fold to £566,000.

SAMUEL MASSEY SCHOOL TEACHER OF HELSBY

Sue Lorimer

George Slater in his *Chronicle of Lives and Religion in Cheshire* published in 1891, writes *'Some of my old friends will remember Samuel Massey, of a Wincham family, who became a school master at Helsby in my early days. He was a very judicious local preacher, and who emigrated many years since to Canada, and took up residence in Montreal.'*

Samuel, born 1817, was the son of Samuel Massey, a ships carpenter of Wincham. The 1841 census shows Samuel junior, a rock salt miner and his wife Mary, living in Witton. By 1851 he was a teacher at the Wesleyan School, Poynton with Mary and their four children. Daughter Sarah Ann was born in Helsby in 1846 (registered in Runcorn at the end of 1845!), so we know that Samuel was teaching in Helsby at that time.

As the National School in Helsby was not erected until 1846, we can assume that Samuel taught at a Methodist School. The *Chester Chronicle* 2nd January 1846 printed that *'on Christmas Day the children attending the British Union School were regaled with currant buns and coffee and afterwards underwent a public examination in the Wesleyan Association Chapel'*.

British Union Schools were founded in 1808 by non-conformists, as opposed to the National Schools, which were established by the Church of England, in 1811.

In 1835, the Methodists in Helsby split into the Wesleyan Methodists and the Wesleyan Association. The Wesleyan Methodists met in a small dilapidated cottage on Chester Road, until their chapel was built in 1853. The Methodist Association or United Methodist Free Church as it became remained at the home of Samuel Burgess, 'Undermount', Chester Road, until they built the Zion Chapel in 1858. The British Union School was most likely to have been housed at 'Undermount'. The 1841 Census shows George Baigre, school master, living in the household of Samuel Burgess a further indication of a school there.

In the early 1850s Samuel Massey left teaching to become a missionary for the Manchester City Mission, run by the YMCA. The YMCA sent him to Montreal, where he worked with the poor, seamen and immigrants, helping to found the Montreal Sailors Institute. He remained in Montreal for the rest of his life and details of his religious and community work are outlined in the online 'Dictionary of Canadian Biography'.



Samuel Massey 1882

We are grateful to the McCord Museum for allowing the use of this image.

Samuel was a religious man who aligned himself with different denominations over the years, working all his life to improve social conditions in his community. He died in Montreal in 1897. No wonder George Slater remembered him as an outstanding preacher of his youth.

OUT & ABOUT IN THE COMMUNITY

Kath Gee

1 Walks, talks and visits

For **Frodsham Festival of Walks** this year, Sue and I extended the Lost Pubs walk to include those former establishments at Frodsham Bridge. The walk was well attended, but we had one casualty to deal with after a fall in Main Street.



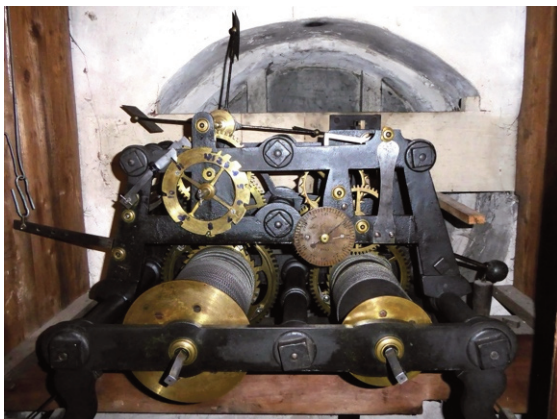
Attentive walkers near Frodsham Bridge

Below: The walk in wet July



A shorter version of the walk was scheduled for Society members on 10th July, but the weather was not kind. Those few hardy people who braved the elements enjoyed a well-earned cuppa at Tail Mates at the end of the walk!

To complete the '*Marking Time*', article 8, in Journal 51 December 2021, I had made contact with the authors of the definitive work on JB Joyce Clocks – Frodsham has 3 of them! I discovered that authors, Steve & Darlah Thomas, lived in Chester and had started another mammoth project on the clocks made by James Condliff of Liverpool. Castle Park Arts Centre clock, made in 1853, is a Condliff original. It was purchased by Joseph Stubs for his newly constructed coach house and stables, and served as the estate time-piece. **I arranged a visit to the Arts Centre for Steve and Darlah.** There we met Elwyn, the current clock winder, and climbed the tower to view and test the clock's inner workings. We followed this with refreshments in the café afterwards.



CPAC's well-maintained Condliff clock.



Winder, Elwyn, Kath, Darlah & Steve

This year, History Society's summer visit was to the **Church of St Michael and All Angels in Little Leigh**, a small village between Acton Bridge and Northwich. Here we met David North who gave us a talk about Jabez (Terracotta) Thompson, the acclaimed brick and terracotta manufacturer of Northwich. The present church was consecrated in 1879 and features many of Thompson's decorative friezes and archways, including the beautiful rose window set in a terracotta frame. But, the crowning glory is the magnificent terracotta reredos, below the window, based on Leonardo da Vinci's 'Last Supper'. We examined this at close quarters, and saw the spilt salt on the table – signifying the filial relationship between Jabez and the Thompson salt-making family.



Rose window in St Michael and All Angels



Terracotta reredos below the rose window KG

2 Displays and Sales

On Sunday 2nd July, a dry but blustery day Kath and Sue, with assistance from Rotary, pitched our gazebo to display our wares at **Frodsham Festival in the Park**. We had help from other members of the Society, and, although not as busy as in 2022, it proved to be good for meeting people and 'networking'.

We changed our display for **History Day** on Saturday 7th October to complement the chosen theme for the event:

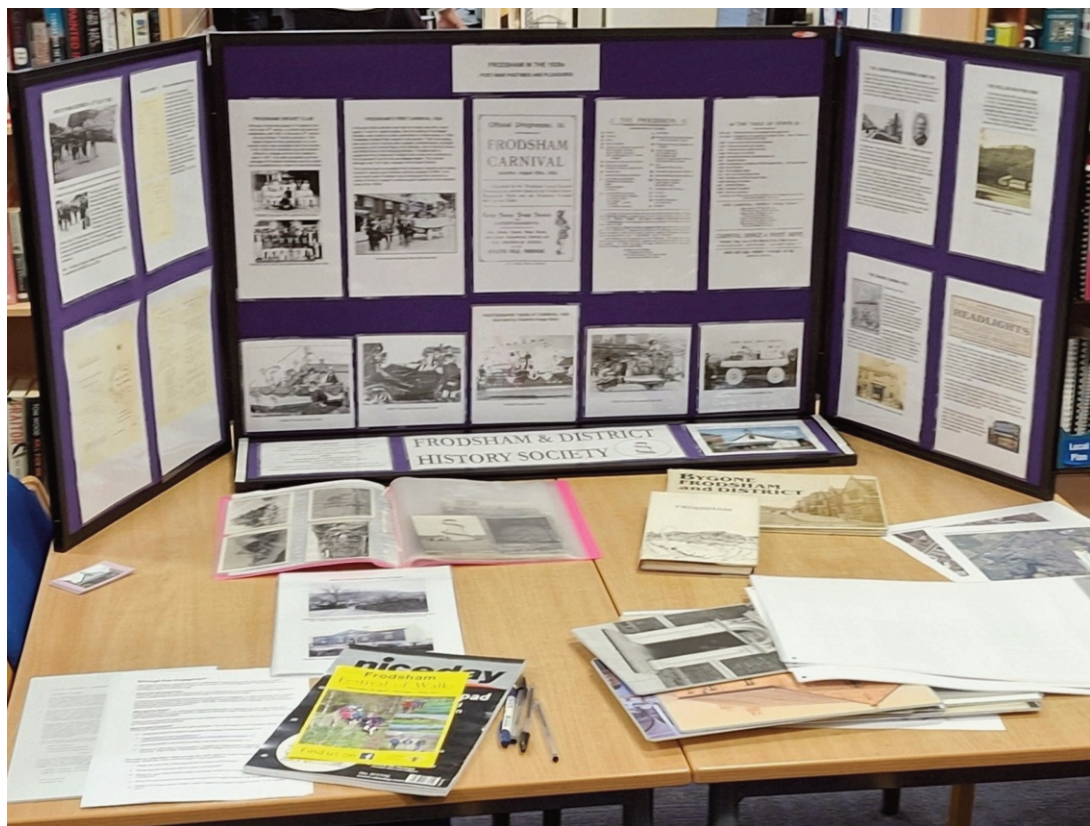
'Cheshire in the 1920s'. Our society display focused on 'Frodsham in the 1920s – Postwar Pastimes and Pleasures'.



On Tuesday 3rd October the Society participated in a Library event organised by Cheshire West and Chester Public Health Policy, and Research Officer Lyndsey Taylor.

We were asked to demonstrate our local history work at Frodsham Library to mark the **'International Older Persons Day'**. So, we were able to showcase the display we had prepared for History Day just a few days later. We also displayed maps, photographs and books on the local area and chatted to quite a few people at this enjoyable event.

F&DHS Archivist, Gill, sharing information with an interested visitor.



The History Day display used at Frodsham Library's *'International Older Persons Day'*

F&DHS supports our local churches too. We loaned **Frodsham Methodist Church** the food Shop Posters from our 2017 Arts Centre Exhibition for their **Harvest Festival weekend**. We also prepared a couple of new posters. One was of Bibby's Confectioners on Main Street (now Elliotts) and the other on Kydds on Church Street. We have recently agreed to hold a joint exhibition, next year with St Laurence Church. They will concentrate on the history of the church while we research some of the people commemorated on memorials inside the church and possibly some of the graves in the churchyard.



Back in December 2022, Gill and Fiona took a stall at **Ho Ho Helsby's Christmas market**. The stall was well placed near the entrance to the scout hut hall and many of the visitors engaged with Fiona, Gill, Malcolm and Renie who all helped on the day. Visitors looked at the exhibition material, browsed the books for sale and made enquiries. Being at this event gave us a new audience in terms of peoples' knowledge of the Society, and enough books were sold to make a small profit.

In fact, Fiona and Gill have taken advantage of several opportunities to sell our excess stock, at HR Helsby, Party in the Park and at History Day. The money raised helps to fund the ongoing Archive Modernisation Project and has enabled us to purchase postcards and other books for the Archives Collection.

3 Educational help, Library Exhibitions & work placement

Gill, as Archivist, occasionally has requests for local information from schools. This year she met a teacher from **Frodsham Primary Academy School** and provided her with copies of World War 2 air raid records and weather readings. The teacher used them in math classes, for instance, pupils worked out how long air raids lasted. The teacher has since moved to another school but has left the materials for use by other staff.

The Society has been strengthening our ties with **Frodsham Library** by continuing to use the glass display cabinet to mount small exhibitions. Titles included '*Frodsham in the 1950s*', '*Coronations*' and '*Sport in Frodsham*'. The latter was a project undertaken by Imogen, a local student. Imogen had approached the Society to see if we could provide her with some work experience as she was hoping to study history at Cambridge. This was a challenge, but as it is important to encourage young people, Fiona and Gill worked out a suitable programme, and completed all the relevant Health and Safety checks. It was a learning experience to both sides and we wish Imogen well in her future career.



Our next exhibition in the library will be '*Frodsham in the 1920's – Pastimes and Pleasures*', using the display from this years History Day.

4 Current projects

We have 2 on-going local studies you could assist with on your own or in small groups and you decide what, and how much, you do to make a contribution to either:

- The '*Local Listing Project*' – details previously circulated, or
- The recently started study – '*People on the memorials in the Parish Church of St Laurence*'. Our findings will be part of History Society's contribution to an Exhibition on the Church of St Laurence scheduled for summer 2024.

If you would like to help in any way, please contact Sue Lorimer, Chairman.

FRODSHAM & DISTRICT HISTORY SOCIETY

Programme of meetings 2024

5 th February	Cheshire Maps and Map-makers Jonathan Peplar
4 th March	Place-names and field names: a source for local history Tony Bostock
8 th April	The history of Ness Gardens Edward Hilditch
13 th May	We don't want any – Master's not in. What really happened on Census night Claire Moores
June	Visit to historic St Michael's Church and village, Shotwick Date to be decided
1 st July	Short local walk Theme to be decided
2 nd September	Things that go bump in the night and a quick history of Speke Hall Sheila Walsh (a Speke Hall guide)
7 th October	The coming of the canal to Chester and the re-cutting of the Dee Mike Royden
4 th November	History of Bridge Street, Chester David Cummings
9 th December	Christmas traditions in Britain and around the world David Hearn

Programme Secretaries, Fran and John have arranged the meetings.