



**FRODSHAM & DISTRICT
HISTORY SOCIETY**

JOURNAL



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Front cover picture: The Eagle and Child cap badge of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Liverpool Pals (see page 22)

HISTORY SOCIETY NEWS

Welcome to this 2011 edition of our History Society Journal

President: Sir Alan Waterworth K.C,V.O

Officers:

Mrs E Wakefield, Hon. Chairman

Dr K Gee, Hon. Secretary

Mr A Wakefield, Hon. Treasurer

Mrs B Wainwright, Membership Secretary

Committee;

Mrs M Dodd

Mrs M Jones

Mr B Keeble

Mrs P Keeble

Mrs D O'Neil

Mr B Dykes

The January 2011 meeting was the first to be held at our new venue in Main Street Community Church. The move to more spacious facilities has been favourably received, our membership has increased and it is pleasing that many folk stay to take refreshments and chat after the meetings. The officers and committee have remained unchanged this year and have all contributed in varying ways to the smooth running of the Society. Kath Gee deserves special mention not only for all the work that she does as Hon. Secretary, much of it 'behind the scenes', but also for organising a most informative and enjoyable evening guided visit to Chester Rows and Bishop Lloyd's Palace in June.

Our Historic Images Website was launched in April thanks to the efforts of the Team led by Maurice Richardson. Work on this is ongoing, feedback from viewers using the website is welcomed, to add or correct information regarding the identity and detail of images. Many more photographs will be added to the Archive in due course and the Team still welcomes your old and interesting photographs of the Frodsham area.

Our Archivist, Kath Hewitt, has had a busy and productive year (see Archival News in this Journal). We thank Kath for her work and remind you that you are invited to visit the Archive Room in Castle Park House, by arrangement, to view the Society's extensive Collection.

As part of the History Society's 30th Birthday celebrations we had a special guest speaker Iain Soden, author of 'Ranulf de Blondeville the first English hero' at the September meeting. The meeting was attended by our President Sir Alan Waterworth, the Mayor of Frodsham Councillor Andrew Dawson and a number of visitors from other History Societies. At the October meeting a 30th Anniversary cake was cut by Mr Arthur Smith, a co-founder of the Society in October 1981 and the first Hon. Secretary.

Arthur Smith has again done sterling work putting together and editing this excellent Journal and we thank him and his assistant editors Kath Gee and Sheila Holroyd.

The deaths were announced at our September meeting of Mr Bert Starkey, a Vice President of the Society and Mr Dennis Simmons, a long-standing member, both after long illnesses.

A varied programme has been arranged for 2012, which I hope you will find interesting. It includes a guided visit to the Gladstone Library at Hawarden in June.

Betty Wakefield

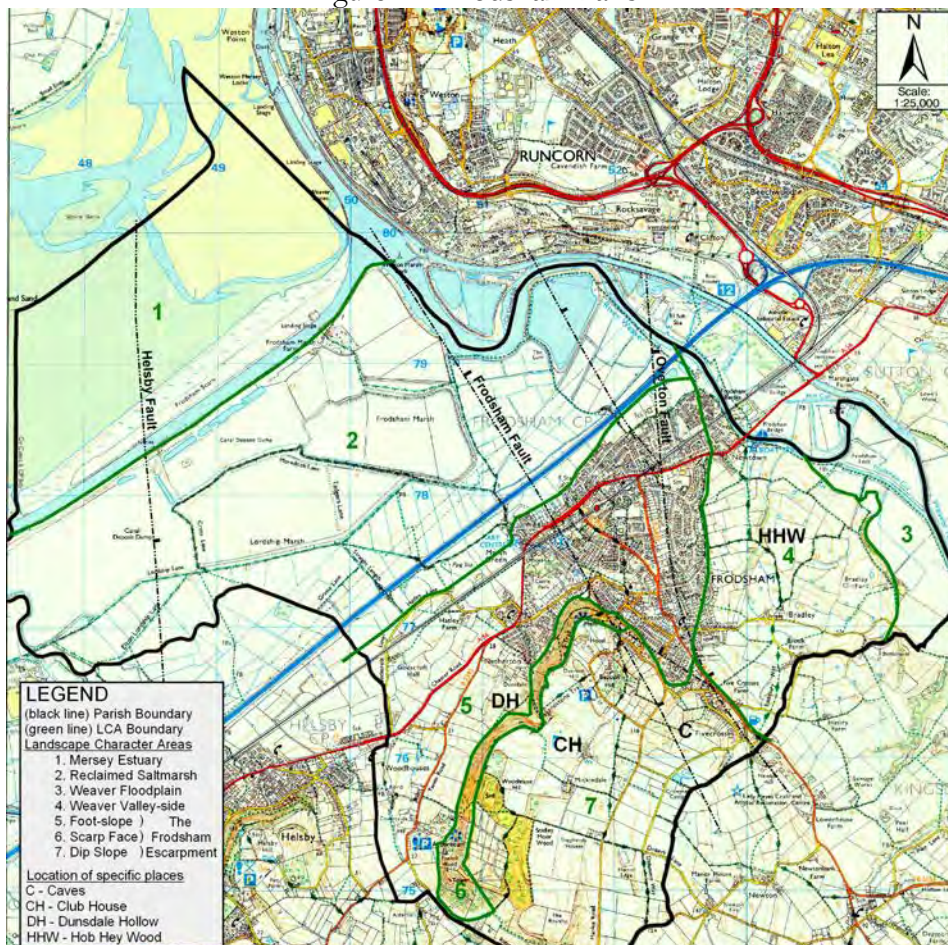
THE GEOLOGY AND LANDSCAPE HISTORY OF FRODSHAM PARISH

Kath Gee

Frodsham Parish covers an area of 9.25 square miles with roughly half of it extending from the M56 to the mid-Mersey Estuary. The whole Parish is underlain by sedimentary rocks of the Triassic Period that began to form nearly 250 million years ago. The Triassic Period followed the Palaeozoic Era and came before the better-known Jurassic Period and its dinosaur fossils. Rocks of the Triassic Period include sandstones of the older Sherwood Sandstone Group and predominantly fine-grained rocks belonging to the younger Mercia Mudstone Group. Over many millions of years those layers of rock were tilted, lifted and displaced by a series of faults, most of them trending NNW to SSE and preserving relatively younger rocks on their eastern side. At the same time, the land surface was slowly worn away by rivers and later, glaciers, as environments changed. Thus, geological history has contributed to both the present rock outcrop pattern and the physical form of Frodsham's landscape.

Figure 1, a reduced-scale map of Frodsham Parish, shows its distinctive Landscape Character Areas and some specific places named in this article.

Figure 1 – Frodsham Parish



Frodsham's seven unique landscape character areas are, in part, a product of the interplay between geological events and earth surface processes over more than 250 million years.

But, the recognition of landscape character is only complete when the host of human influences on the natural shape of the land are included. For example, from pre-historic features including the ramparts of Woodhouse Hill Fort, to more recent features associated with farming, sandstone quarrying and saltmarsh reclamation. Each of these activities makes an obvious visual contribution to Frodsham's landscape character, though their development is contained within a far shorter timescale – no more than a few millennia at most.

Returning to Frodsham's geological history, rocks of the Sherwood Sandstone Group underlie the northern and western parts of the Parish. They comprise red, yellow or brown sandstones that often show colour mottling and are partly pebbly. Within this group, specific rock units make a significant impact on Frodsham's landscape character; they include:

- Wilmslow Sandstone (WLSF), which is typically fine- to medium-grained, pebble-free and relatively 'soft', outcrops on the *lower* Scarp Face and *upper* Foot-Slope of Overton Hill and Woodhouse Hill. Small exposures can be seen in the stream channels on the east side of Castle Park. At Dunsdale Hollow there is a good exposure of cross-stratified WLSF beneath sandstone forming the *upper* Scarp Face (photo 1).
- Helsby Sandstone (HEY) forms the vertical rock outcrops on the *upper* Scarp Face of Overton Hill. The rock is typically well cemented, reddish-brown, coarse-grained and cross-stratified indicating deposition from a large and stable river system. In the past several quarries exploited these massive sandstone outcrops and their products can be seen in sandstone walls and buildings throughout the parish.
- Frodsham Beds, or the Frodsham Sandstone Member (FRM), is a distinct rock unit at the top of the Helsby Sandstone Formation. It is present on top of the Frodsham Escarpment and in the central part of the town on the eastern side of the Frodsham Fault. Where sections are exposed in railway and road cuttings the finer-grained, reddish-orange sandstones display large-scale dune bedding structures indicating formation in a desert environment at a latitude similar to that of the Sahara today. The "reference section" for the FRM is the railway cutting northeast of Frodsham Station. It has been given the national status of a geological Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and is also a Regionally Important Geological Site (RIGS). The section can be viewed from the public footbridge or from the train station (photo 2). More accessible exposures occur on the south side of High Street, at Pinmill Brow in Howey Lane, and at the caves off Manley Road. Where FRM forms the land surface it gives rise to distinctive undulating topography such as can be seen on the Dip Slope of the Frodsham Escarpment when travelling from the Golf Course on Simons Lane to Riley Bank on Manley Road.

Rocks of the younger Mercia Mudstone Group occur mainly to the east of Overton Fault. They comprise alternating beds of fine sediments and sandstones that represent the product of weathering and erosion in adjacent arid environments. Two rock units are present within the parish:

- Tarporley Siltstone (TPSF) shows indications of deposition in a broad inter-tidal zone with mudstone, siltstone & sandstone present in approximately equal proportions. A number of springs issue from this rock and form small surface streams, e.g. the stream that flows north through Hob Hey Wood to the River Weaver. This rock unit underlies the southeastern part of town and forms the

Foot-slope below the northern end of the escarpment: outcrops of TPSF can be seen near the former Union Church in Bridge Lane. (photo 3)

- Sidmouth Mudstone (SIM) records a gradual change from deposition in a shallow marine environment to sediment accumulation on land: there is an increasing proportion of wind-transported fine sediment moving up through the rock sequence. SIM underlies the farmland on the broad Weaver Valley-side where the landscape includes numerous small ponds that occupy former marl pits.

The sequence of Triassic rocks, and where key outcrops may be seen in Frodsham Parish, is summarised in Table 1.

Table 1 – Geological Succession

<i>Period</i>	<i>Rock Group</i>	Rock- Unit/Formation	Equivalent Old Name	Visible outcrops
Younger	Mercia Mudstone	Sidmouth Mudstone Formation	Lower Keuper Marl	None
		Tarporley Siltstone Formation	Waterstones	e.g. Bridge Lane – photo 3
Triassic	Sherwood Sandstone	Frodsham Beds at the top of the Helsby Sandstone Formation	Keuper Sandstone	e.g. Railway cutting – photo 2 e.g. Dunsdale Hollow – photo 1
		Wilmslow Sandstone Formation	Upper Mottled Sandstone	e.g. Dunsdale Hollow – photo 1
		Chester Pebble Beds Formation	Pebble Beds	None
Older				

A patchy cover of Drift has been deposited on top of the ‘solid’ Triassic rocks during the last 2 to 3 million years. Drift is a generic name for the wide range of sediments associated with Ice Age environments. During the most recent ice advance, about 20,000 years ago, ice from the Lake District and western Scotland crossed Cheshire. As it retreated it left behind deposits of glacial till (boulder clay), and meltwater-sorted glacial sand and gravel. Within Frodsham Parish, such deposits survive on the *middle* Foot-slope in Nethererton and Woodhouses. Patches of glacial till and sand and gravel also occur on Weaver Valley-side, to the east of Overton and Five Crosses. The erosive powers of meltwater beneath wasting glacier-ice carved out Dunsdale Hollow and other chute-like channels on the sandstone escarpments of North Cheshire. Drift described as fluvio-glacial sand and gravel may have been deposited by early post-glacial rivers and later left high and dry as rivers adjusted to sea level. In Frodsham, fluvio-glacial sand and gravel is most extensive on the *lower* Foot-slope, just above the modern floodplain, e.g. in Marsh Green and the area around Godscroft Hall.

Ice advancing from the north transported large blocks of “foreign rock” called erratics into Cheshire which were left behind when ice wasted away. A number of distinctive granite and volcanic erratics survive in Frodsham town as well as in the countryside. (photo 4)

Finally, an extensive cover of alluvium accumulated in association with the modern floodplain of the River Mersey and its tributary the River Weaver. Beneath Frodsham and Lordship Marshes, and in the lower Weaver Valley, up to 20 metres of alluvium

overlie some 50 metres of Ice Age Drift, which in turn overlies Triassic rocks including the oldest rocks in the area, the Chester Pebble Beds, with their nearest outcrop in Elton.

This article has been developed from:

CWAC (2010) Frodsham Town Design Statement Supplementary Planning Document

K Gee (2008) Landscape Character Assessment of Frodsham Parish – UNPUBLISHED

British Geological Survey (1977) Sheet 97 Runcorn

The author is indebted to John Hughes (F&D Photographic Society) for kindly placing relevant detail on Figure 1.

Photographs



1. Helsby Sandstone forming the Scarp Face overlies older paler Wilmslow Sandstone at Dunsdale Hollow



2. Frodsham Beds representing fossilised sand dunes in the railway cutting behind the east-bound platform – SSSI and RIGS



3. Laminated Tarporley Siltstone near the former Union Church, Bridge Lane



4. The Brook Stone – a granite erratic – placed at the junction of Main Street and Marsh Lane

THE FRODSHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL - Its Origins and Development (Part II)

Arthur R Smith

John Aiken in his book "A Description of the Country from Thirty to Forty Miles Round Manchester," published in 1795, has this to say of the school:

"The church of Frodsham stands on a very elevated situation above the town, in a part called Overton; and near it is a school, with a good house for the master, on which is a cupola for an observatory."



A painting completed circa 1830 showing, on the right, the rear of the Frodsham vicarage. To the left of the vicarage are the parish church, the schoolmaster's house and the Frodsham Grammar School. In front of the church there is another building that is probably the original school built in 1660. (Photograph of the painting reproduced here by kind permission of Mr Simon Crooks.)

The statutes governing the school were very strict about the calibre of the masters. They stipulated that the master should be 'of good deportment and behaviour, Diligence and Industry.' The Frodsham churchwardens had power to 'throw forth' anyone who did not match up to these standards. Sometimes the masters were even required to pay a fixed sum of money as a good behaviour bond. Thomas Cawley gave his bond when he started at the school in 1720.

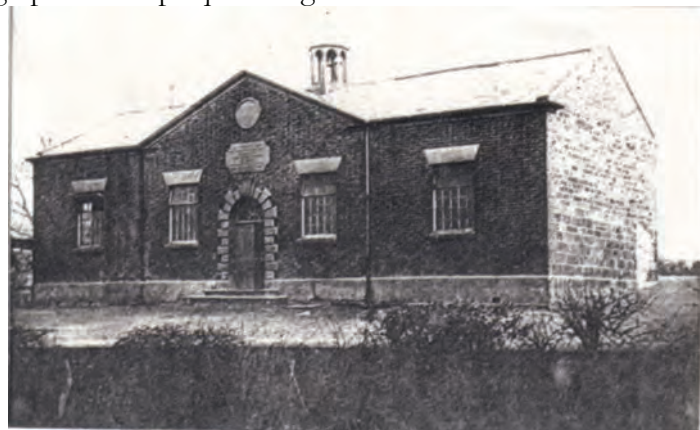
At this time the Frodsham Grammar School provided education only for boys and only for those whose parents could manage to pay 2d per week. During this period there must have been concern among the more caring members of the community at the lack of schooling for many children. As early as 1718 a certain Henry Maule wrote to the SPCK (Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge) from Dublin expressing concern that this large parish of eleven townships had a considerable child population that did not receive any instruction. Mr Maule hoped that any society members who met the vicar, Mr Benjamin Woodruffe, would try to persuade him of the need for a charity school in the district. A free school was erected in Kingsley but, sad to say, no charity school materialised in Frodsham. It was not until the Church of England National School was built in 1835 (now the Parish Hall) that more provision was made for the girls of the village. The building of the Infants' School soon followed this in 1851 on a nearby site.

At a meeting of the Parish Vestry on 20th January 1823 it was confirmed that the Grammar School should be open and free to all male children who had attained the age of 6 years for the study of English and the Classics. However this was qualified in the next sentence by the statement that every pupil should pay one shilling at Christmas and one shilling at Shrovetide for 'fire money,' that is to provide fuel for the stove to keep everybody warm, in addition to their entrance money. Furthermore those boys who wished to be taught writing had to pay three shillings per quarter and for instruction in accounts, an extra 3/6d per quarter. In addition each pupil had to pay for all his books and writing materials. At this time the school hours from March to September were 8am till noon and from 2pm to 5pm. During the remainder of the year the hours were from 8am till 12pm and 1-30pm to 4pm. There were two holidays per year – each of one month's duration – one at Christmas and one at the end of June.

When William Scarlet Littler of Eccleshall in Staffordshire was appointed master in 1823, the feoffees required him to enter into a bond of £500 – 00. Even allowing for inflation during the course of the century, this represents a big increase on the sums required in the 1700s. The most likely explanation is that Mr Littler was entering into occupation of a much bigger house, with more land attached to it than in former times. It is interesting to note that the feoffees made the further stipulation that he could take ten boarders into his house provided that he employed an under master.

By the early nineteenth century the old school building in the churchyard had become somewhat dilapidated and too small for the growing number of children, so the feoffees decided to build a new school on land alongside Overton House. A good deal of material from the old building was used in the construction of the new one.

One interesting feature of the photograph of the new school (shown below) is that there appears to be a plaque on the wall above the main door. It would seem that this is the same memorial tablet with its inscription in Latin that has been set in the wall at the modern entrance to the Frodsham Church of England Primary School. On the next page is a photograph of this plaque along with a translation of the Latin inscription.



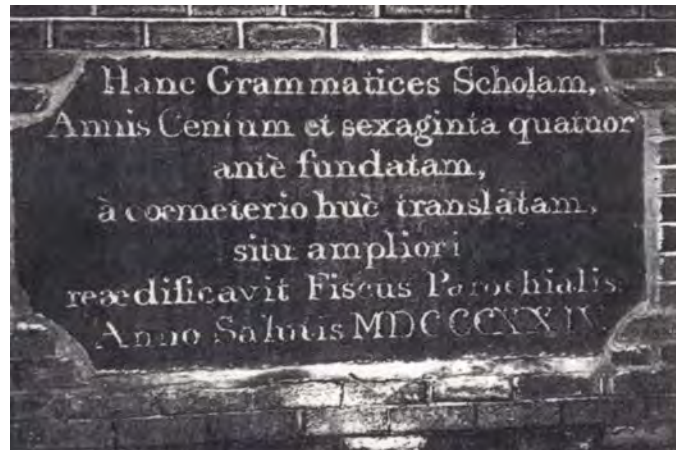
The Frodsham Grammar School standing on its new site alongside Overton House

The accounts for 1824 show the cost of the new school to have been £535 15s 8d. Unfortunately we know nothing of the dedication services and the opening ceremony that were almost certainly held to mark this special occasion. One of the first references to the new building was that in the 1830s, according to the feoffees' minutes, there were 92 boys in attendance of whom only three were studying Latin.

At a meeting of the feoffees in January 1834 certain complaints were made about Mr Littler's conduct, for which he was duly admonished. But in the end they decided that he could continue as headmaster provided that he did not take any more boarders. In July 1844 Mr Littler resigned and was granted an annuity of £20 per year for life. In the next ten years Mr Edward Daniel and then Mr Francis Duranville served as masters. Then in May 1854 Mr John Pollard began his long career as headmaster at a starting salary of £50 per annum but with a house and garden provided and some income from school payments.

By the 1860s, in areas of expanding population, many of the nominal grammar schools served in practice as elementary schools, often accepting government grants and employing certificated teachers. This was almost certainly true in Frodsham. According to a report on the school in 1867 there were about 120 boys attending and it was described as a 'superior National school.' The pupils were said to be the sons of farmers, farm labourers and small tradesmen. At some stage in the late 1880s the Frodsham Grammar School changed its status and became known officially as the Frodsham Boys' Endowed School.

Probably the main reasons for this change were that the feoffees wanted the school to serve a wide intake of boys from the village and the surrounding districts. To continue to do this, they needed to obtain public grants to pay for additional staff and better accommodation and to accomplish this worthy objective involved a change of status. In this way, no doubt sadly in the eyes of many contemporaries, the over 220-year-old Frodsham Grammar School disappeared from the scene but almost certainly Mr Pollard strove his hardest to maintain the best of its traditions in the new school.



The translation from the Latin reads: 'The parish rebuilt this Grammar School, founded one hundred and sixty years before, transferred here to a larger site by purchase. In the year of our Lord 1824.'

THE OLD MANOR HOUSE, 84 MAIN STREET, FRODSHAM

Rose Umelo (nee Martin)

At the time my parents married in 1920, they bought this house for £350. My mother, Rhoda Martin (nee Williams) was in service at the Hancocks, The Gables, Main Street. My father, Albert Edward Martin, was a saddler by trade but diversified into shoe mending and other leatherwork as the use of horses in agriculture declined. His shop was in Church Street, between the railway bridge and the Grand Cinema. Next to the cinema was the alley leading to the Infants' School (Miss Routledge's school) and the Girls' Elementary School (Miss Crampton, later Mrs Frazer). The shop was double. On the left-hand side Pat Finnerty sold sweets and ice cream. The wooden steps in front were a good place from which to watch the Carnival processions. Mr Finnerty was the Marshal leading them on a white horse.

I once saw the deeds of the house in Main Street, with a date of 1703. It had been neglected and my parents installed a bathroom. The toilet was always across the yard in the washhouse. They altered the stairs that came in a curve with nothing to hold on to. "One trip and you land at the bottom!" I saw at least one of the old wooden steps – thick and heavy, solid wood, irregular shape, wider at one end. There was a rattling door latch on the wall at the turn of the new stairs but it was never opened. Upstairs there was one large room, a spacious landing, one small bedroom, and the bathroom. There was unused space. My brother and I once opened part of this area on the landing, hoping for treasure, but there was nothing inside. I can't recall if there was any door. Normally it was papered over, but the surface gave slightly to the touch.



The much restored Manor House in Main Street, Frodsham as it appears at the present day.

The house was bigger downstairs. Floors were tiled, except for the sitting-room, which had a wooden floor. It was said that the side room was once a dairy. The back kitchen

had been an addition at the same time as an inside wall was faced with stone slabs at the base like an outside wall. When this wall was opened to allow tiling behind the gas stove it was found to be lath and plaster, “with tree branches as thick as my arm”. Heating was the open fire with an oven in the front room. A back boiler supplied hot water. There were deep cupboards with drawers underneath on each side of the fireplace. The big beam in the ceiling in front of all this suggested the fireplace had once been bigger.

The cellar was semi-basement with deep stone steps. The top step was worn where many people had sharpened knives over the years. The cellar was used as a store for pots and pans, winter apples, the crock with eggs in waterglass, and the season’s jams in a cupboard. The playroom had been renovated for my brother and I, but it was a cold room and we did not like it. There was a new window, as the wall above the former one was “tree branches”.

Across the yard from the house was a wash house. Equipment was the dolly tub and dolly peg and the heavy wood and iron mangle. A fire would be lit under the boiler for hot water. Later (but still pre-World War II) my mother had an early electric washing machine with a to-and-fro paddle and a mangle. There was a large garden as far as the railway line, with old fruit trees and dwarfed trees that my parents planted. My brother and I excavated any rubbish heap we came across but never found more than the stems and bowls of clay pipes for tobacco and lots of cockle shells.

Attached to the house, but with no direct entry from it, was the end place. I was convinced it was haunted and disliked going there, even to drop something in the dustbin near the street door. The ground floor had thick stone slabs with a slightly sunken walkway, and I was told it had once been a cowshed. There were heavy chains on the right-hand wall. It was used for coal, and coke as well during the war. Upstairs was a large room with a high ceiling and a wooden floor. The left-hand wall was whitewashed brick. The right-hand wall was the original house wall, plastered, with rosettes and a design with the date 1694. One window faced the garden. At the other end there were wide double doors, wood below and glass above, facing the street, and was said to have once been the workshop of a cabinet maker. The doors could be opened to allow wood to be pulled up.

The end place was later much altered, first to make a workshop and shop for my brother, who continued the business for a while after my father’s health failed and the Church Street shop was sold for development. Later still, after his death, that part of the property was sold and converted into a shop. The ominous feel of the place disappeared with the first alteration. I would love to know the purpose of the raised paved area which ended in the end place wall.

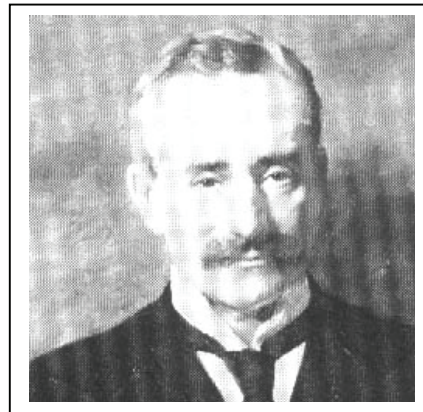
CROSSLEY HOSPITALS AND KINGSWOOD CLUB

Bill Jennins

The Club is situated on New Pale Road, Kingswood, in the parish of Manley, near to the market town of Frodsham. The location is in an attractive and historic part of the county of Cheshire. When Delamere was a hunting forest, Kingswood related to an area used by the king's hunt for the hunting of "protected" game. The Master Forester enforced strict forest laws to protect the game (principally deer) for the hunt, but this became increasingly difficult with the development of agriculture, and resulted in forest enclosures being built. During the reign of James I, about 1617, the New Pale is thought to have originated in this way. The deer were finally wiped out during the Civil War. The names of the wood and the enclosure have been retained.



*James I (of England & Wales),
James VI (of Scotland)*



Sir William Crossley

In 1901, Crossley (West) Hospital was established as the Liverpool Sanatorium. Crossley (East) was founded in 1904 by Sir William Crossley, as part of the Manchester group of hospitals. The Crossley family had substantial manufacturing businesses in Manchester, including car production. After 1948, with the start of the National Health Service, the two hospitals were administered as one.

The Kingswood Hospital Social Club was formed c1954, and started in what had been the dining room cum duty room of the Pilkington Block of the Crossley West Hospital. It was open to staff and patients of the hospitals, and 10% of the membership was open to "associates" who were not directly involved with the hospitals. At the time the Club was owned by the hospitals. Before the widespread use of motorcars, it was an important facility for a hospital, which by its very nature, was in an isolated position. There was no licence, and therefore only soft drinks were available. The "dining room" has been updated over the years, but the building is still the basis of the present day clubhouse. More recently, the club's title has been shortened to the Kingswood Club.

With the reduction in the requirements to administer to patients with tuberculosis, the Crossley Hospitals became increasingly used for long-term patients. The two parts of Crossley Hospital closed in the 1980s. At the time of the hospitals closure the ownership of the Club was transferred to its members, but the original bowling green, adjacent to Crossley East, was no longer available. The members decided to build a new green

alongside the existing clubhouse. The work was started in 1991 and took some three years to complete and bring into use.



Building the new bowling green

During this time the Kingswood Club was without a green and used the bowling green at the Tigers Head at Norley. Crossley West was demolished and nine luxury homes were built on the same footprint as the hospital, known as Crossley Park. Crossley East has been put to a number of uses since its closure as a hospital, including a school, Kingswood College. It is now being re-developed as luxury apartments.



The former Crossley East Hospital.

This magnificent listed building is shown above (prior to the re-development), with the former cricket ground in the foreground that was used by Kingsley Cricket Club amongst others. Currently, the Kingswood Club has some 60 members, and has a very active bowling section, with two teams in the Runcorn League, two teams in the Frodsham League and a team in the Norley Afternoon League. During the winter months, the Club participates in the Frodsham & District Billiards & Snooker Leagues.

THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF St. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, ALVANLEY

J.A.J.Walker

'Alvanley' is an Anglo-Saxon, pre-Domesday place-name that was probably derived from 'Aelfwald's meadow'. In the Domesday Survey of 1086, Leofric is recorded as holding 'Alvanley from the Earl'. His predecessor, Ernwy held it and was a 'free man'. It appears that there was sufficient land to work four ploughs.

By the twelfth century, the parish of Frodsham had been established, a church having been in existence at Overton since before the Norman Conquest. Then, in 1446 the dowry of Catherine, the wife of Ralph Arderne, was secured on his manor of Alvanley. After the death of her husband, she was granted a licence to erect an oratory. In 1451/2, Hugh Ardern gave to Richard Swanlowe, Vicar of Frodsham, a lease of tenements in 'Alvandley'. This was to support a chaplain to celebrate divine service, three days a week in the oratory. In 1461, the lease was amended, the rent being raised from 6s. 8d. to 7s. yearly.

When the chapel of Alvanley was founded is unknown but an Inquisition Quo Warranto addressed to the abbot of Vale Royal Abbey in 1350 mentioned the response that he claimed right of advowson to Frodsham church and its chapels, of which that at Alvanley would be one. Alvanley Chapel, the '*Greene Chapel*', is mentioned in the poem *Sir Gawayne and the Greene Knight*. It would have been set in the forest, of timber construction and served by an itinerant priest.

According to an inscription in the church, the oratory was replaced by a new place of worship in 1540. This would have been regarded as a chapel of ease within Frodsham Ancient Parish. The Ardern family was still in the role of benefactor at this date. Robert Ardern bequeathed forty shillings '*to the Chapell of seynt Stephen as well as my borde Clothe of twyll the one half to Denton Chapel to be auter clothe and the other halfe to the chapell of seynt Stephen of Alvandley*'. There must have been a change in the dedication, as the instrument substituting the new Church of St. John for the old church in 1860, records the latter to be dedicated to St. Mary.

The present church, dedicated to St. John the Evangelist, was built in 1859 at the expense of the Hon. Catherine Emma Ardern who lived in Gresham Place, Belgravia, Middlesex. It was consecrated by John Graham, Bishop of Chester on 29th May 1860. Alvanley was declared a distinct parish, and cut out from the mother church at Frodsham. The area of ground for the church and yard was about half-an-acre. An additional piece of ground, to extend the churchyard, was consecrated in 1940. The church was designated a listed building, Grade II, on 6th December 1985.



Lych Gate, War Memorial and Alvanley Church

Visitors to Alvanley Church enter the churchyard through the Lych-Gate (Anglo Saxon, 'lich', a dead body), where, in days gone by, a coffin rested before being taken by the funeral party to the church.

The path to the south door of the church wends slowly upwards to the Church Porch. The latter is divided by a glass screen and door through which you will pass to the south door.

The church is constructed of local red sandstone, with gabled grey slate roofs. It is in an early-decorated Gothic style. The nave has north and south aisles, under separate roofs, and, at the east end, the chancel has a vestry on the north side.

The aisles are separated from the nave by simple arcades with circular columns and double-chamfered arches. The chancel arch has capitals only to the corbelled responds and is a simple chamfered arch. The organ screen, on the north side of the chancel, contains four sub-arches on polished marbled columns, with geometrical tracery.

The nave has stone flooring between the pews. In the choir stalls and chancel, encaustic tiles have been laid. The interior is largely un-altered and has space for 220 sittings. The nave contains four bays and, at the west end, there is a corbelled belfry with a small steeple containing two bells. At the east end of the nave, there is a brass lectern with the following inscription:-

"To the Glory of God in Memory of Helen Catherine, Countess of Haddington who fell asleep in Jesus May 29 1889. This Lectern was presented to Alvanley Church by the tenants on the Estate. "

Opposite the lectern, on the north side, is the pulpit. The present oak pulpit replaced the original one in 1919 and has the following inscription:

"To the Glory of God and in Memory of George XI the Earl of Haddington, K.T. This pulpit is offered to Alvanley Church by the tenants on the Estate June XI 1917"

The four carved panels to the pulpit are associated, respectively, with St. Oswald (Martyr's Palm and Crown), St. George (Sword and Shield with Cross), St. John (Eagle) and St. Catherine.

At the west end of the nave, there is a memorial tablet on the wall at the south side of the west window to commemorate the death of a soldier in the First World War.

It reads:

"To the Glory of God and in Loving Memory of Private John Briscoe Rowles, 8th South Lancs Regt. Only child of Thomas and Esther Rowles of this Parish, Killed in action at Ypres August 3rd 1917, Aged 21 years."



The pulpit and the Chancel

In the chancel north and south windows we have two lights and, at the east end, there is a three-light stained glass window which depicts the transfiguration of Jesus Christ (top centre), with Moses and Elijah on either side and Peter, James and John below.

By the altar is the Processional Cross given in memory of the late Rev. S. Bunday, a former Vicar of this church. It is inscribed as follows:-

"Stanley I.D. Bunday, Priest, Vicar of this Parish, 1959-60"

The organ, made by Joseph W Walker of London and installed when the church was built, occupies the east end of the north aisle. The font is located at the west end of the south aisle and adjacent to the south-door. It has a richly carved canopy, suspended from the ceiling.



The font

A board with the names of the Curates and Vicars of Alvanley is fixed to the wall beside the south door (see appendix).

Behind the font on the west wall is a two-light window with trefoil heads in stained glass. The left-hand light shows Mary, the mother of Jesus, and on the opposite side, the Christ Child in the arms of Simeon, who is giving thanks to God for having granted his wish to see the Messiah before he (Simeon) died.

The part of the burial ground nearest to the road is the oldest, and was in use when Alvanley was a chapel-of-ease in Frodsham Ancient Parish. In the churchyard are two tombs which are listed as Grade II: one for members of the Griffith family and the other the Noden family. The graveyard area was extended when the present church was built and the ground east of the church is now in use.

A record of inscriptions on the gravestones was initiated and collected by Mr D.K.Cartwright. The survey is up-to-date and is a valuable source of genealogical information. The earliest identifiable burial was in the year 1726. In total 557 burials have been recorded from the Alvanley burial ground.



The nineteenth century burial ground and the east end of the church

Appendix - Curates and Vicars of St. John's, Alvanley

Curates

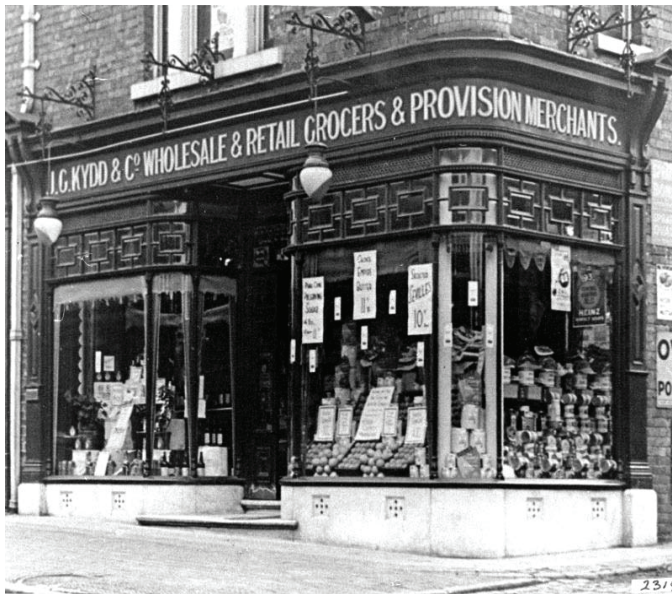
1677	Roger Dale
1707-1723	Michael Briscoe
1723-1741	Christopher Bennet
1742-1775	Robert Harrison
1775-1787	Crewe Arden B.A.
1787-1809	Church Disused
1809-1820	Anthony Benn Church M.A.
1820-1825	William Whitley B.A.
1823-1846	Robert Holmes
1847-1861	Edward Wolfenden M.A.

Vicars

1861 -1870	Edward Wolfenden M.A.
1870-1872	William Henry Lowder M.A.
1873-1882	Walker Geary Knocker M.A.
1882-1883	Charles Girdlestone Hopkinson M.A.
1883-1898	Edward Percy Alexander M.A.
1898-1910	William Edward Colegrove M.A.
1910-1913	Frederick Sydney Cooper Crane
1913-1916	Francis Roebuck Gillespey B.A.
1916-1928	Frederic Mark Bennoch Carr M.A.
1928-1931	Trevor Donne Rhodes B.A.
1931-1946	Henry Donald Hutchins
1946-1952	David Frederick F.Evans B.A.
1952-1958	Ernest Sambrook
1959-1960	Stanley I.D.Bunday B.A.
1960-1967	Geoffrey Edmund Rundell B.A.
1967-1971	Duncan Baird
1971-1976	Walford Oliver
1977-1980	Ivor Bentley
1981-1991	Michael John Fenton

Shopping in the old days

Frodsham shops in the past providing anything and everything with personal service.
(Pictures courtesy of FDHS Photo Archive)



*Joseph Kydd's store in Church Street -
now a Restaurant and Lounge Bar*



*Another JG Kydd's store.
Now the site of Barclay's Bank*



Church Street



Church Street - site of Costa Coffee



*Church Street now Cheshire
Building Society*



*Fred Booth outside his draper's
shop in Church St*



*J Gorst's shops – Furnishing Dept on the left, Tailor & Draper on the right.
High Street, now a house rental agency and Indian restaurant*



Tom Pollard's ironmonger's shop, Church Street, next to the Golden Lion



Now the Park View Garden Chinese take-away and Roger's carpet shop in Main Street

**These and other images are on the Society's image website:
www.frodshamhistoricimages.co.uk**

LIVERPOOL PALS

Sir Alan Waterworth

The citizens of Liverpool have never been slow to respond to a call to arms. More than two hundred years ago in 1803 a successful slave trader and West India merchant, John Bolton, feared a possible attack on Liverpool by Napoleon's troops. His fears were not that unreasonable for a few years earlier the French had landed 1500 men near Fishguard and it was only prompt action of the Deputy Lieutenant and the cowardice of the supporting French ships that led to their speedy capture. Under one of Napoleon's generals it was felt that a strong attack on the great shipping port of Liverpool might prove more successful and would certainly disrupt its trade. So John Bolton decided to raise a regiment of 800 volunteers. These he recruited within a couple of hours and they became known as Bolton's Invincibles. The men were clothed, fed, armed, trained and led by Bolton and were a familiar sight in Liverpool until they were disbanded in 1806.

Fifty years later it was Bonaparte's nephew, Napoleon III, who was the bogeyman and this time it was a Liverpool cotton merchant, Nathaniel Bowstead, who in 1865 formed the Liverpool Drill Club with 120 young fellows from the cotton trade drilling twice weekly. In 1859 Bowstead became the very first commissioned officer of the infant Volunteer Force which was established nationally in that year. From that time, encouraged and often financed by patriotic Liverpool merchants, volunteer units flourished often training at Altcar and meeting at Drill Halls within the city. In 1908 the Volunteers became territorial battalions of which no fewer than six were badged to the King's Liverpool Regiment (KLR). The 5th King's Regiment, in which I once served, was the direct descendant of the very first volunteer battalion. Earls of Derby were honorary colonels of the 5th battalion from 1862 until the death of John Derby in 1994.

It was his grandfather, the 17th Earl, 'the uncrowned king of Lancashire,' who, at the outbreak of war with Germany on 4th August 1914, recognised the desperate need for volunteers to match the vast number of German reservists. He called on young men working in the offices and merchant houses of Liverpool to come forward promising them that they would be able to serve together, train together and when the time came they would fight side by side. They would be something special – a battalion of Pals who shared a common social and occupational background. On August 31st St George's plateau was packed at an early hour with enthusiastic young men all waiting to enlist whilst others came from their offices marching four abreast to sign on. There is a wonderful photograph of men from the White Star Line offices marching up Dale Street all in smart suits and wearing bowler hats or straw boaters. Amongst those enlisting on that first day was my father who was assigned to the 17th KLR better known as the 1st Pals. Soon there were enough volunteers to form two more battalions – the 18th and 19th Kings, known as the 2nd and 3rd Pals, to be joined in October by 20th Kings, the 4th Pals.



Volunteers marching up Dale Street, Liverpool, in August 1914.

Lord Derby had arranged for his brother, Ferdinand Stanley DSO, then a captain in the Grenadier Guards Reserve, to command the 1st Pals. Later he was promoted Brigadier General and put in command of all four Pals battalions.

Lord Derby obtained permission from King George V for his Liverpool Pals to wear his own crest, the Eagle and Child, as their cap badge. He had these specially made in solid silver by Elkington's the jewellers in Lord Street and, assisted by his wife and daughter, he personally presented them to every man in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Pals in a ceremony at Knowsley. In practice these badges were rarely worn with uniform – they were too valuable and so many became sweetheart brooches. In their caps the Pals usually wore a bronze or brass version of the Eagle and Child.

Volunteers having come forward in such numbers, accommodation had to be found, then uniforms and rifles. The 1st Pals soon found themselves occupying the former premises of Prescott Watchworks whilst the 18th Kings under Colonel Trotter were offered Hooton Park. New huts were erected within a month at Knowsley Park for the 19th battalion. Whilst the 20th when it was raised was accommodated temporarily at Knotty Ash. On December 3rd 1914 the 18th left Hooton for Knowsley where the whole brigade continued its training. The Pals were among the first of the new army to get uniforms, for Colonel Stanley as soon as recruiting began sent a telegram to his wife telling her to buy as much khaki as she could find and have it made up into uniforms. Rifles however were a more difficult problem – one hundred obsolete Lee Metfords were available for drill purposes but were in such a deplorable state they could not be fired.

Ex-Grenadier NCOs, whom Colonel Stanley had brought with him, did much of the training. The days began with a battalion run at 6-30, then after breakfast there was drill, route marches, digging in Knowsley Park and once a fortnight they marched to St Helens baths for a swim. Most of the men being from Liverpool, they were often able to go home by tram in the evenings or at the weekends.

In March 1915, in front of 100,000 well-wishers, Lord Kitchener, standing on the steps of St George's plateau, reviewed 12,000 soldiers of the new army training in the area.

The four Pals battalions, totalling 5000 men, headed the parade, though only the first 100 of each battalion carried rifles – still the useless Lee Metfords. Kitchener liked what he saw and remarked: “They are splendid. We must have more of them.”

Amongst scenes more reminiscent of a carnival, the brigade left Knowsley for Grantham on 3rd April marching to Prescott station and boarding 12 special trains, the first leaving at 5am and the last at 1 o'clock. The journey took four hours, their final destination being Belton Park, six miles north of Grantham – the home of Lord Brownlow – a beautiful setting not unlike Knowsley Park. It is said that ‘the people of Grantham were bowled over by the charm of the Pals and before long they opened their homes and their hearts to them and treated them like their own families.’ Certainly my father had fond memories of those days and of Lady Brownlow coming down from the big house to distribute fresh strawberries to the troops.

It was here that the Liverpool Pals joined with the brigades of the Manchester and Oldham Pals to form the famous 30th Division that was to see so much action in France. In September, a year after their formation, the Pals moved to Larkhill on Salisbury Plain for their final training. Medical checks weeded out some of the Pals including Colonel Cossett, CO of the 19th battalion, and amongst others, my own father – it occurs to me that if he had been allowed to go to France with his friends, I would probably not be here writing this article.



Pals in camp at Larkhill in September 1916.

The Earl of Derby reviewed the 30th Division, largely made up of the Lancashire Pals battalions, just before they left for France. They crossed from Folkestone on 7th November 1915 and a month or so later reached the front and experienced their first casualties. They withstood heavy attacks throughout that winter but gained immensely in fitness and experience. As spring turned to summer in 1916 everyone, especially the Germans knew that the British Army would attack on the Somme.

Towards the end of June vast quantities of guns, ammunition and other equipment filled the Somme valley. On June 24th began what was then the heaviest bombardment ever known aimed at destroying trenches and other defences. 2200 guns fired night and day for five days bringing down 1.7 million shells on the German positions. On 1st July the

infantry along the whole front 'went over the top' and the attack began. The Pals were ordered to take the village of Montauban and detailed accounts show just how desperate was the fighting for the 18th Kings who were on the left flank of the division. That day they suffered 500 casualties but had prepared the way for the capture of Montauban. The 20th achieved all its objectives and the 17th, on the right of the divisional front, linking up with the French, carried all before them and, as the troops captured the first objective, Colonel Fairfax, the CO and the commandant of the French regiment were seen to embrace one another in the spirit of unity and comradeship. Overall casualties were considered to be unbelievably low. Elsewhere the massive offensive on that first day of the battle of the Somme had stalled with 57,470 British casualties. By the time the offensive had finished some five months later, there had been 420,000 British casualties, 200,000 French and 500,000 Germans. Make no mistake this was to be a war of attrition.

The 89th brigade made up of Liverpool Pals was in action throughout most of July and on the 29th took up their position to attack and capture the village of Guillemont. They advanced some 300 metres but failed to achieve any of their objectives, sustaining terrible casualties in the attempt. The total killed, wounded and missing that day from the Pals battalions was 420 officers and 1073 other ranks. The carnage that day at Guillemont virtually wiped out the original Pals and their fervour was diluted to such an extent that it was difficult to resurrect. They came out of the line but in October were in action again at what came to be known as the Battle of Flers. Mud and weather conditions were dreadful and morale low – not something that had affected the Pals before. Nearly all the original officers and NCOs had been lost through death and wounds. Replacements hurriedly trained inevitably lacked the dedication and esprit de corps of the original silver badge wearers.

The Pals spent the first part of 1917 on trench duty near Arras but on Easter Monday they took part in an attack on the Hindenburg Line after a three week bombardment but made little progress. By mid May the 30th Division had moved to the Ypres Salient and were making constant efforts to break out but again suffering heavy casualties. Until they were relieved at the beginning of August, they had lost another 223 officers and men killed and 646 wounded.

Amalgamations at this time further diluted the Pals but at least when Christmas came that year 1917 they were able to celebrate in style. For months the area around Ypres had been scoured for poultry and pigs and once secured they had been left at farms to fatten for Christmas. Brigadier General Stanley arranged for the 'Optimists' – the Pals very own concert party to go on leave together to Liverpool. There they performed three shows raising £750 to subsidise the brigade's Christmas celebrations at Chippawa Camp. Christmas dinner consisted of pork and plum pudding and free beer. Afterwards the Pals battalions played one another at football but it was only a short respite for by New Year's Day all the battalions had returned to the front.

20th Kings was disbanded in February 1918 and the soldiers joined other units preparing for Ludendorff's planned offensive, which started in March. The British were forced to withdraw with the Pals suffering such heavy losses that by May out of the three battalions only 27 officers and 750 men were fit for duty.

On 30th June the remnants of the original 17th battalion (1st Pals) returned to England and a spell of home leave but by 10th October they were aboard the SS Keemun of the Blue Funnel Line on their way to Murmansk. Their original objective was to recover British

stores and equipment sent to support the Tsarist army but which were now in danger of falling into German hands. The expedition soon turned into a series of engagements against mainly small Bolshevik units in the frozen countryside where several men were killed that winter and during the following summer. The battalion was relieved by the Highland Light Infantry and left Archangel for home on 2nd September – exactly five years since it was first raised in Liverpool. The war by then had been over for ten months and the Treaty of Versailles was already signed.

Graham Maddocks, the historian of the Pals, wrote that ‘after 1916 the character of the city battalions had changed. Perhaps the early euphoria had been replaced by reality or perhaps it was because so many had been killed or wounded that the original identity had been lost. Certainly after 1916 many Pals who had not sought a commission before, decided to do so and served as officers in other units. Many had the qualifications and the necessary qualities needed to become officers at the beginning of the war but the whole point of the Pals was that they could serve with their comrades. Of the Pals who left for France in November 1915 20 per cent were dead by November 1918. The equivalent figure for those in the 18th Kings, which served the longest on the western front, was 25 per cent. These figures however are incomplete as they only include those actually serving in the Pals at the time of their death and do not include those killed after transfer to other units. If one considers how many would have been wounded it is probable that casualties among the silver badge men were in the region of 75 per cent.

Only successful units were returned to the line time and time again, as were the Pals, because these were the units that could be relied on. From Somme to Arras and Ypres to St Quentin, they were reliable in attack and formidable in defence. If indeed they were better soldiers, why was this?’

To Graham Maddocks the answer was simple. *‘They were better educated and more intelligent as a whole, than most units and in any walk of life intelligence and education bring better results. Because of this they were better led and, whilst trusting their officers, they were often able to see the reasoning behind a decision or order and if things went wrong they didn’t act like donkeys but were able to seek an alternative. Also soldiers fight and sometimes die not for an abstract idea such as freedom but for their comrades with a determination not to let them down.’* (1)

Thus, although love of country and defence of freedom motivated the Pals, they were also much closer to their comrades than many other soldiers might have been.

The Pals were not supermen but they were the finest their generation could offer and certainly amongst the best in the British Army. Through their deeds and actions they wrote their own history and they should never be forgotten.

(1) *Liverpool Pals 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th (Service) Battalions, the King’s Liverpool Regiment – Graham Maddocks. The two photographs in this article are from this book.*

William Farish (1818 – 1896)

John Dearden

From 1977 to 1989 our family lived in a house called Hillside, at the top of the short cul-de-sac named Stephen's Grove in Helsby. The house dates, I believe, from about 1800, and whilst living there I researched its history. Undoubtedly its most prestigious occupant was William Farish (pronounced Fairish), who lived there from 1862 until his death in 1896. In 1889 he published privately his autobiography, from which much of what follows here has been taken.



Hillside, formerly the home of William Farish.

Farish was born in Carlisle on the 2nd of June 1818, the youngest child of John Farish, a handloom weaver, and his wife Sarah. He records that his childhood involved much deprivation: “We were doomed, for many successive years, to experience the most severe privations and hardships”. Among other things, he describes vividly the horrific depredations of a cholera epidemic.

In his late teens he commenced a “sowing of wild oats”, and frankly admits his waywardness and the distress that it caused his father. He became a drunkard, and comments that: “I hardly like to write the depth of poverty and degradation to which I had sunk at the early age of twenty-two, nor will I tell all. But, thank God, the light was breaking and the dawn of a better day was near”. He went to a teetotal meeting in July 1840, and signed the pledge. He also set about improving his neglected education, and attended informal adult schools and working men’s reading rooms, and then actually set up a little school of his own. He also joined the temperance movement, and remained an enthusiastic supporter for the rest of his life.

During his mother’s life he “was under a promise not to marry”, but after her death in 1844 “I began to think of bringing my bachelorhood to an end”. At Christmas 1846 he married Elizabeth (Bessy) Clemitson at St. Cuthbert’s church in Carlisle. Prior to her marriage his wife had lodged in Carlisle with a Mr. Goodfellow, who was a skilled builder and stonemason. He obtained the contract to build the Frodsham viaduct and 12 miles of the Chester end of the new Warrington and Chester railway, and offered William Farish the post of outside clerk and timekeeper, at 26 shillings a week. Farish took the job, and records that: “I enjoyed the couple of miles walk from Preston Brook, where I

landed, to Mr. Goodfellow's at Sutton Weaver". He presumably travelled to Preston Brook by canal barge. In October 1847 he comments that a commercial storm burst, and everyone on the contract, including himself, was discharged. However, he shortly obtained a position as a commercial traveller. That was short-lived, and he returned to Greenock to work on railway construction. However, in July of 1848 work resumed on the Chester-Warrington line, and he and his wife returned to Cheshire, finding lodgings at Mickle Trafford and later purchasing a house in Chester, "and thus commenced my connection with a city in whose concerns I have since had so much to do". At Christmas 1850 the line, although not complete, was opened for traffic. His work involved walking each day, wet or dry, 12 miles to the (Sutton Weaver) tunnel. He and his wife started to attend Queen Street Chapel, but then found that the minister, Rev. Richard Knill, was no longer an abstainer. They therefore left the chapel, and started attending Christ Church.

In 1853 Farish's work on the railway came to an end (the line presumably having been completed), and he found insurance employment with the Temperance and General Provident Institution. For some years he had been writing articles, on temperance and other subjects, and in the spring of 1854 he was invited to be editor of "a new weekly Radical paper, the *Cheshire Observer*". For the first issue on 12th May, "except the advertisements and a few cuttings, every line of that paper was supplied by my own pen". However, he soon found the proprietors of the *Observer* troublesome to manage, so left and took an agency for a large North Wales Colliery, the Vron. He doubled their sales in his first year, and then bought the company. Around that time, Mrs. Farish contracted scarlet fever, and her sister Sarah Clemitson came to nurse her, and remained with them until her (S.C.'s) death in 1876. Her gravestone is in the churchyard at St. Paul's Church in Helsby.

In 1856 Farish stood for election as a Chester councillor, and was elected with "nearly a hundred good teetotal votes". His coal business continued to thrive, and he went into partnership with his brother John, and added the trade of builders' merchants. I found the following advertisement in the *Cheshire Observer* for 16 August 1873:

W. AND J. FARISH,
COAL, LIME, TILE, SLATE AND CEMENT MERCHANTS,
COW LANE BRIDGE, AND No. 3, COAL EXCHANGE, CHESTER,

Beg to inform their Customers and the Public that, by arrangements recently completed, they have been enabled to REDUCE the PRICES of several articles of BUILDING MATERIALS, whilst everything they deal in will be found reasonable in cost and excellent in quality.
SANATORY SOCKET PIPES AND FIELD DRAINING PIPES IN CONSIDERABLE STOCK.

Cow Lane Bridge is the canal bridge at the northern end of Frodsham Street, close to the vehicular entrance to the Tesco supermarket.

In 1862 the Farishes moved to Helsby: "We purchased the little retreat which we still occupy, on the south side of Helsby Hill. Laying out the grounds and altering the house filled up the time until the spring. Our villa (he gave the house the name *Hillside Villa*) overlooks the confluence of the two noble rivers, the Weaver and the Mersey, and takes in a long stretch of Welsh and Cheshire scenery. Being well-screened from the east winds occasioned a jocular remark from Charles Kingsley once when he visited us". The jocular remark was that "They have no east wind here"; it seems that Farish was not above a little name-dropping. Charles Kingsley was canon of Chester Cathedral from 1870 to

1873. The house remained much as is shown in the photograph in Farish's autobiography until 1974, when the then owners, Mr. & Mrs. Cox, added a third storey and made other alterations.

When the Farishes purchased Hillside Villa the entrance was from the top of Sandy Lane. Farish made a vehicular entrance (now called Stephen's Grove) from Robin Hood Lane, planted an avenue of lime trees and built a coach house (just visible in the photograph); both are still there. The grounds occupied about two acres. All this is consonant with Farish's comments that: "In my early days in the council, and for many years after, party politics were little if at all known in the chamber. Social standing and respectable character were then of much more consideration". Along with his council duties, he became involved with the newly-formed Lancashire and Cheshire Temperance Union. His efforts undoubtedly contributed to a comment made in the February 1895 issue of a magazine called *Helsbyana*: "As regards the drink question. I never saw a village so much imbued with the spirit of putting down public houses as Helsby. Yet these houses seem to have a happy and prosperous life despite much efforts".

In 1868 Farish was elected to the high office of Sheriff of Chester for a year: "Some of my temperance colleagues were present to give, as I donned the robe and made the ancient declaration, a lusty cheer for the first teetotal sheriff. To many this elevation would have meant little, but to me, remembering the past, it meant much". Farish records that it was a great relief to him that the sheriff's responsibility for the execution of malefactors had been abolished a year before he was appointed sheriff! He continued with his political and temperance work, and on the 9th of November 1877 was invited to be mayor of Chester for a year.



"The magnanimity of the council in selecting for the high office one with no family and few social advantages to recommend him, greatly exalted them in the esteem of him whom they so honoured". He included a photograph of himself in his mayoral robes in his autobiography, together with a photograph of Mrs. Farish. They had no children. In 1881 Farish was made a Justice of the Peace, "thus attaining to an ambition always

esteemed laudable”, and in the same year resigned his council seat owing to deafness and weakness. However, he re-entered the council in 1887, “which was neither a very wise nor very happy proceeding”.

Mrs. Farish died on the 26th of October 1889, and was buried in St. Paul’s churchyard, Helsby, where her name was added to the tombstone of her sister who died in 1876. It must have been not too long afterwards that William Farish “took up” with a lady called Rachael Peacock, who lived in an adjacent property, Rose Cottage, in Robin Hood Lane. He had had dealings with her as early as 1883, when she mortgaged Rose Cottage to him, in consideration of £154-16s-6d. There was, and still is, a small iron gate between the two properties, and one wonders exactly what their relationship was, for they married on the 19th of June 1893 at St. Peter’s Church, Martindale (a tiny hamlet on the eastern shore of Ullswater), when he was 75 and she was 49. St. Paul’s Church records show that she died on the 19th of March 1911, and was buried alongside her parents, John and Elizabeth Peacock. Why did they travel to such a place to marry, when – so far as is known – neither of them had had any previous connection there?

Another possible angle relates to a gravestone in St. Paul’s churchyard, Helsby, which records that a Mrs. Elizabeth Swann (née Peacock), widow of Walter Swann, died on the 11th of March 1952 aged 69 years. That would put her birth at around 1883. Was she the child of Rachael Peacock and, perhaps, William Farish, who would have been about 39 and 65 respectively? There is no mention of such a child in Farish’s will, dated 1894, in which he left the bulk of his estate to his niece Elizabeth Kelly, including Hillside Villa for her lifetime. He did not leave much to his wife: “I give to my wife Rachael Farish an immediate legacy of £50. I also give to her all my shares in the Chester Cocoa House Company Limited. I bequeath to her all monies due and secured to me by her mortgage of her cottage and garden and all interest payable at my death in respect thereof”.

William Farish died on the 22nd of March 1896, and lies in Carlisle Cemetery, as specified in his will, under a tall red granite tombstone listing his appointments as sheriff, mayor and magistrate of Chester. His death was reported in the *Chester Chronicle* on the 28th of March. He was a remarkable man.

The Autobiography of William Farish. The Struggles of a Hand Loom Weaver. With Some of His Writings. Published in 1889 for private circulation only. A copy is held by Cheshire Archives, and I also have a copy.

OUR EARLY POLICEMEN

Sheila Holroyd

In the early nineteenth century, most areas of England were gradually adapting to the effects of the Industrial Revolution which was transforming their former agricultural society. Systems which had worked for centuries now proved inadequate. The local constable, for instance, was elected annually by each civil parish, and he might also be working as a shopkeeper or farmer or at some other trade, so that he might not spend too much time on his constabulary duties. The attitude of some is illustrated by the story of the parish constable of Taxall (then in Cheshire) who had to attend the Chester Azzizes because he had found the body of a murdered man. When he returned to his inn he was told that the Ostler (Stableman) had been found dead in the privy. "Yes," he said, "I saw him dead there three hours ago, but I had trouble enough in fording one dead man, I'll be – if I ever find another."

In 1829 Cheshire was the first county to have paid constables, and Cheshire Constabulary was formed in April 1857. A constable was equipped with a whistle or rattle to summon help, a truncheon to defend himself (the History Society has a fine specimen of a Frodsham truncheon), and a tall hat which was sturdy enough to ward off blows and could also be stood on if the constable wanted to look over a wall. The first full-time Constabulary member stationed at Frodsham was Richard Rowbottom, who commenced his service here on 20th April 1849. He was the first resident Constable of the newly-built police station in Frodsham. The red brick semi-detached house still exists in Red Lane, and remained the Police Station till 1880 when the police moved to the building on the corner of Main Street and Ship Street before moving to their present home in Ship Street.

Richard Rowbottom was born in Witton in 1822 and had already served with the Macclesfield Borough Police and on the North Stafford Railways as a police constable. He left Frodsham in 1860 and afterwards served in the Wirral, Broxton, and Northwich.

Our first policeman was 5'10" tall, with hazel eyes brown hair and a dark complexion, and his wife's name was Eleanor. He was paid 18 shillings a week, (plus sixpence a week boot allowance), rising to 22 shillings when he was appointed sergeant in 1857, and when he retired in 1878 he was a Superintendent earning £192 10 shillings per annum. His pension was £128 6s.8d. per annum.

In 1859, while stationed in Frodsham he was awarded ten shillings by the Chief Constable for his energy and gallant capture of two thieves committed for trial for highway robbery.

The police force has continued to evolve in organisation and equipment, but the police officer still remains the most important element of law enforcement.

I obtained most of the information for this article from the volunteers who man the Museum of Policing in Cheshire at the Police Office, Arpley Street, Warrington WA1 1LQ. They have a fascinating and very informative web site at <http://www.museumofpolicingincheshire.org.uk>.

CAPTURED MEMORIES

David Joyce and Barbara Foxwell

The chain of six Iron Age hillforts sits along the Sandstone Ridge of Cheshire at Helsby, Woodhouse, Eddisbury, Kelsborrow, Beeston and Maiden Castle. Recent studies have shown that many have histories going way back before the Iron Age. These Hillforts have acted as a focal point for so many activities for hundreds of years. Their dominant positions have drawn people for generations to work, play or simply sit and stare, but little of this has been recorded.

So much of our history is lost. We may know about the big events but it is also our everyday activities that shape our society and these are, all too often, forgotten. As part of the Habitats & Hillforts Landscape Partnership Scheme, a 3-year Heritage Lottery Funded project, we have tried to capture people's memories. The objective has been to collect information of activities that have taken place in the immediate vicinity of the hillforts in relatively recent times. The end-result is a book entitled 'Captured Memories across the Hillforts of Cheshire' compiled by two volunteers, David Joyce and Barbara Foxwell

During the compilation of this book, we have been fascinated by the way seemingly ordinary activities in the county have had a profound effect. Take for example the small school at Delamere which became the model for school dinners throughout the country or the farm at Kelsborrow which led the way in the production of clean, uninfected milk free from TB. Although never used in anger, there is a bunker at Helsby that was manned by well-meaning volunteers hoping to protect us from the perceived menace from the cold war. Future visitors may wonder why they can pick up spent mortar shells on a National Trust property on Bickerton Hill but this area was used for military training until 1995. The book shows that our countryside is constantly changing.

Although the Hillforts are important archaeological sites, they are also part of a living landscape. It is essential that present, and future generations, will be able to use and enjoy these prominent positions in many different ways. Nowadays, it is probably unthinkable to hold motorbike hill-climbs on the listed site at Beeston Castle as happened in the 1950s, but we must not inhibit the enjoyment of our natural resources in too many ways.

It is human nature to try and order and understand our environment and it is the knowledge of small events that can add colour and interest to a country walk. We hope that this publication will stimulate others to increase this pool of knowledge about our County. Many people think they have little to offer – one lady said to us "I'm not a true Helsby resident as I've only lived here 70 years!" Her memories, like yours, are part of the historical patchwork which define the past and perhaps point the way for future decisions.

Many individuals, national organisations, local history societies, local publications and press cuttings have contributed to the book and we are very grateful for all the assistance we have been given. The Frodsham History Society was particularly helpful and we have made much use of your archives and newsletters.

Additional Notes

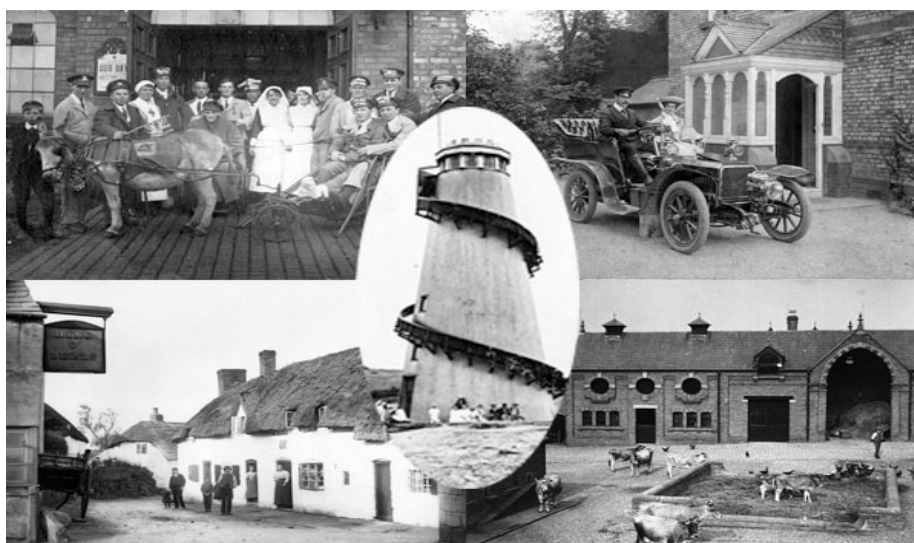
1. Habitats & Hillforts is a three-year Heritage Lottery Funded project focusing on the prominent Sandstone Ridge extending 30 km from Frodsham to Bickerton. This ridge has had a major historical impact on the culture, social and environmental history of this rural part of mid-Cheshire, and contains archaeological sites of major significance — including a chain of six Iron Age hill fort sites at Helsby, Woodhouse, Eddisbury, Kelsborrow, Beeston and Maiden Castle.
2. The scheme is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and a partnership of local organisations and residents working together to improve the hill forts and surrounding habitats; enhance access and interpretation, and provides opportunities for volunteering and training.
3. The book is available for free from Castle Park House. It was launched on the 10th September 2011.
4. The ISBN number of the book is 978-1-905702-74-9 and contains about 120 pages.
5. Copyright ©Cheshire West and Chester 2011. No part of the book can be reproduced without permission.
6. The Habitats and Hillforts LPS will finish in 2012 but a Sandstone Ridge Charitable Trust has been formed to continue the work.
7. Photographs, a map showing the location of the hill forts and the book cover can be provided by Ellie Soper
8. For more information contact Ellie Soper, Habitats and Hill forts Project Manager

Habitats and Hillforts Landscape Partnership Scheme
Cheshire West and Chester
Backford Hall, Backford
Chester, CH1 6PZ

or visit www.habitatsandhillforts.co.uk

THE HISTORY SOCIETY'S NEW IMAGE ARCHIVE

Web address: www.frodshamhistoricimages.co.uk



Background

Images of all descriptions have been gathered by or donated to the Society over many years. In 2007, an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund resulted in a grant that allowed us to scan all images and store the data electronically. Subsequently, the Project Team has set up a website and acquired software to make access to these stored images possible.

Our aims are

- To select suitable images of Frodsham and District for public access
- To add descriptive notes to these images
- To make the images freely available to students or researchers
- To offer for sale high quality A4 prints of the images.

The website currently includes more than half of all our images. (We have about 7500 images and have processed about 4000.) When the remainder are completed, we will need to remove duplicates, make corrections and substitute any better versions of existing images. So it is an on-going process. However, access to the historical images archive will be available while all this is going on.

Many archive photographs of old properties, people and events in the Frodsham and District area do not have any identity &/or date and we hope people will be able to send in information via the website to correct this. We will then add the detail to the website records.

The future of the archive

Apart from processing the outstanding images, we expect interest in the site will bring in new images and we will gather further illustrations of contemporary events, people and places over time. For that we need to arrange our own funding. It is only economic to have new images scanned in batches of 100 and the cost will be about £200 per batch. For the near future, our website is provided free of charge but later we face paying rental and maintenance charges. For these reasons, we plan to raise money partly from the sale of images and partly from a sponsorship scheme.

Sale of Images. High definition A4 prints may be ordered directly via the website system. Cost £10 + P&P to UK or overseas addresses.

Permission to use images in commercial publications will be assessed on an individual basis, requests to be made using the website's email address.

Sponsorship. We are asking for financial support from sponsors. Subject to their agreement, sponsors may be acknowledged on the website for 4 years. We are requesting a one-off contribution of £12 from private sponsors and a one-off contribution of £40 from business sponsors. Contributions above the minimum would of course be very welcome. The actual amount received from either private or business sponsors will never be shown and will remain confidential.

Sponsor forms are available from officers of F&DHS.

If you have new images to donate please contact officers of F&DHS or email frodshamhistoricimages@yahoo.co.uk

ARCHIVAL NEWS 2011

What began as a fairly quiet year compared with the last two years, developed into the most interesting and challenging series of enquiries. Hillsboro House once stood on the corner of Townfield Lane and Vicarage Lane. Recently, deeds covering 150 years of its history surfaced unexpectedly in Hillsboro Close and Sheila Holroyd and I were invited to look at them. All were beautifully written in copperplate, apart from the last 1950's deed and many were signed by the Duke of Westminster and Earl Rock Savage. We spent two hours sifting through them and our final suggestion for their future was that they should be returned to the owners' bank safety box where they would be available for future scholarly study.

29 charming and poignant letters were found during repairs at Gates Garage and donated by Mr. B. Dunne. They illustrate the changing relationships of three young people, written between 1907 and 1910. Sixteen of the letters portray the unsuccessful romantic feelings of Miss Nellie Taylor of Runcorn for Mr. George Hibbert of Liverpool - and later Frodsham. A further thirteen letters, written from numbers 70 and 72 Main Street, Frodsham, relate the developing romance of George and Ellen Andrews - Nellie's friend. George's letters are articulate, hinting at a best-forgotten past and show a depth of emotion which Ellen seems unable to share. The letters are gems of youthful social manners of the Edwardian era and a delight to read. Enquiries have been made to find their descendants.

Other enquiries have included finding information about; - 'The Dropping Stone'; James Frodsham Robinson, a Frodsham chemist 1860 to 1879; the Weaver Navigation Acts of 1714, 1754, 1807; the Frodsham Coat of Arms; the Helsby Quarry Tramway; the location of Dr. Frederick Poynton Weaver's family home - East Bank House (now Fraser House) in Bridge Lane. The Weaver Family can trace their ancestry from the 13th century. This last enquiry generated many very interesting emails from a descendant, Mr. Jamie Bruce Lockhart, about his family and the Abbott Wright family of Castle Park House. Here, I must thank Nick Smith for identifying East Bank House and Simon Longden, who lived there, for their help.

Recently, copies of Dr. Dodd's historical sketch maps of 1209 and 1873 showing the Main Street burgage plots (about one acre) were added to the Town Council's planned objections to extensive new builds behind the shops. The possibility of WW2 unexploded bombs on the marshes is being investigated. Finally, a Helsby lady wished to find out more about the Italian P.O.W.s stay in the area and maybe solve a family mystery. Our archives provided much information as did Mrs. Dorothy Smith, Nick Smith, Sam Williams and The Imperial War Museums in Salford and London.

Books, documents and maps have been borrowed for further study. Seven maps were borrowed by the members of 41 Dining Club for a very lively discussion! They included very large, detailed maps of this region from the 1880s, a Township and Lordship Tithe

Apportionment map 1844, WW2 Home Guard Plans for Frodsham farms 1940, Engineering and Sewage Plans for Frodsham Township 1879, Engineering drawings of Runcorn Union Workhouse 1872 and Aerial photographs of Frodsham.

I was interested to read that the historic 1891 Methodist Church's Banner will be preserved at Englesea Brook Museum as the various museums I had approached earlier for Mrs Caldwell were unable to conserve or store it. Mrs Caldwell was kind enough to let me borrow the 23 detailed photographic negatives of the banner, which were then scanned from film to digital and printed by John Hughes of the Photographic Society, for our archives, recording the names of so many Frodsham families.

A number of people have spent time in the archive room for personal research. The latest archive lists of books, documents, maps, posters, artefacts and the Journal Index from 1986 are available in CD form or paper copies in Castle Park House and Frodsham Library. The CD of the late Dr. Dodd's slides of Frodsham, 1960 to 1980, plus fascinating and rare glimpses of Frodsham's much earlier history, is also in Castle Park House's Computer Room.

In 1995, when Sue Davy and I began reorganising the archives, Bill Hawkin's complete archival list was typed on **eight** sides of A4 paper, where as the latest lists fill **91** sides of A4 – excluding the thick files within a single entry! So, my thanks go to all those who have contributed such interesting and valuable historical information.

There is much to see, so please contact me should you wish to visit or borrow anything from the Archive Room. I would be delighted to show you what the History Society has to offer.

Kath Hewitt.

kath.hewitt@btinternet.com or 01928 733005

The Mystery of the 'Popular' Mangle

In the last edition of the Journal we included two photographs of a 'Popular' Mangle that had been restored by Mr Harold Greenwood of Walton, near Warrington. On the side of the shelf at the top it has the name 'J Aitken Frodsham.' We asked if anyone could throw any light on who was this former owner of the machine. Just a few days ago we had a phone call from Mrs Lorraine Mackenzie suggesting that Mrs Mona Harding might know the answer. We contacted Mrs Harding and she says J Aitken is almost certainly James Aitken (a relative of hers) who kept one of the first garages in Frodsham that stood where the Devonshire Bakery is now. So the mystery is solved, except that we still don't know why Mr Aitken had his name inscribed on his mangle.

Frodsham & District History Society

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2012

All indoor meetings are held on Monday evenings at Main Street Community Church, Frodsham and start at 7.45p.m.

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| 9 January | The Littlemores, a Frodsham yeoman family
Philip Littlemore |
| 6 February | British National Parks
Dr Angela Hilton |
| 5 March | AGM & Wirral's Dee coastline
Gavin Hunter |
| 2 April | Building the Big Ditch (The Manchester Ship Canal)
Glen Atkinson |
| 14 May | The Great Exhibition of 1851: its genesis, content and impact
Professor Ian Barclay |
| 9 June | Guided Saturday morning tour of Gladstone's Library (St Deiniol's)
Organised by Kath Gee |
| 3 September | Bridge that Gap – the Runcorn Crossing from the ferry to the Silver Jubilee Bridge
Alex Cowan |
| 1 October | Hedges Round Edges
Hugh Beggs |
| 5 November | The wreck of the steam clipper 'Royal Charter'
Chris Holden |
| 3 December | A Christmas miscellany
Glynn D. Parry |

