

# Earby Chronicles

Edition 104

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[www.earbyhistory.co.uk](http://www.earbyhistory.co.uk)



## CERTIFICATE OF COMMENDATION

PROUDLY PRESENTED TO

*Earby History Society*

Has been nominated for, and been chosen to receive

**THE MAYOR'S COMMENDATION AWARD**

For outstanding achievement and "going the extra mile"

*Cllr. Ken Hartley*

The Mayor of Pendle

*2nd April 2020*

Date



Borough of  
**Pendle**

The Mayor's Commendation Award was launched in 2019 by Cllr. Ken Hartley, then Mayor of Pendle, to thank those who go the extra mile and make an outstanding contribution to the quality of life in Pendle. Due to the closure of Earby Community Centre notification of the award was only accessed in January 2022 and the Society is delighted to receive the commendation.

### SOCIETY AIMS:

To raise awareness, foster an interest and facilitate research into the heritage of Earby and district including Thornton-in-Craven, Sough, Kelbrook, Harden and Salterforth

## EARBY WAR MEMORIAL UNVEILING

Saturday April 8<sup>th</sup> 1922

Tomorrow's Ceremony: Mother Who Lost Three Sons to Take Chief Part.



*"You also sent gallant sons to face the foe... They behaved in the way that Yorkshiremen always have behaved. They bore the banners of their country high, they obtained its honour, and they earned undying fame and in the end freedom." Mr David Lloyd George at Barnsley, Aug. 27<sup>th</sup>. 1921*

### MRS. WILLIAMSON AND HER THREE FALLEN SONS



Mrs. Williamson, 21 Albion Street, Earby, who will perform the unveiling and (right) Private William John Williamson, aged 29, died of wounds October 1<sup>st</sup>. 1917



Left - Private Sydney George Williamson, aged 20, reported missing April 9<sup>th</sup>. 1917 now presumed dead.



Right - Private James Stanley Williamson, aged 23, died of wounds March 17<sup>th</sup>. 1918

"Tomorrow (Friday April 7<sup>th</sup>. 1922) witnesses the unveiling of the Earby Urban District war memorial. The ceremony will be performed by Mrs. Williamson, of 21 Albion Street, Earby, who lost three sons in the war.

The memorial scheme has been on foot for some time and the amount of money in hand totals £1,918. £300 is still required in order to complete the lay-out of the land in front of the monument.

On August 27<sup>th</sup> last year the foundation stones were laid by: Mrs Birley, Mrs C Shuttleworth, Mr Edmund Greenwood and Mr Walter Wilkinson. The monument has been completed by Messrs. Smith Bros., Burnley, to the design of Mr W. A. Quarmby, Burnley, whose design was selected out of a number submitted for competition.

Standing on land fronting the main road to Colne, the monument is imposing and when the surrounding land is laid out will be an outstanding feature.

Much hard work in organising has been done by the War Memorial Committee, who have faithfully kept to their purpose in face of difficulties and disappointments. The committee and those who have contributed to the fund should be satisfied with the results of their efforts,

and the relatives of those whose honoured names appear on the tablets will find comfort in the thought that the great sacrifice made has been suitably perpetuated.

The 165 names on the tablets testify to the patriotism of the district and of its losses on the battlefield. At the foundation stone laying Mr A.J. Birley, J.P. pointed out that in the whole of the Halifax recruiting area there was no district which had fewer men left in civil occupations during the war than Barnoldswick and Earby. This scheme marks Earby's tribute

The site of the memorial was selected after much consideration. There is common agreement that the spot selected is most appropriate. When completed the memorial will be handed over to the Earby Urban Council.

For tomorrow's ceremony the Earby Brass band will play through the town via Water Street, Victoria Road and Colne Road. Mr B Mathews (Chairman of the War memorial Committee) will preside over the proceedings which commence at 2-30 p.m and the unveiling will be performed by Mrs Williamson, who was asked by the committee to undertake the task. Local clergy will also take part and singing will be led by a united choir representing all denominations and conducted by Mr J Foulds.

A very neat programme has been published for the occasion and reflects credit on the printer, Mr C Garrett Hartley. The opening page very appropriately expresses the sentiment of the occasion in the following words.

#### **Earby Urban District War Memorial 1914-1918**

To the memory of the sacred dead of this Urban District who, having left all that was dear to them, endured hardships, faced dangers and finally paid the supreme sacrifice in defence of our King and country.

Let their names be ever remembered with gratitude.

May their souls rest in peace.

The 165 names on the roll of honour are inscribed on tablets on the monument."

(Transcript of the report in the 'Barnoldswick and Earby Pioneer' Friday April 7<sup>th</sup> 1922) . **Article sent by Mike Jackson**

## **COLNE AND DISTRICT ROLL OF HONOUR AND WAR RECORD**

A member of the team at the Pendleside Hospice shop in Earby noticed that a copy of the Colne and District Roll of Honour, published by The Colne and Nelson Times in 1920, had been donated and put it on one side to see if the Local History Society would be interested in it.

A visit to the Hospice charity shop was made and although the book was in a somewhat distressed state it was very legible and contained many photographs of the men mentioned in it.

The book included those men from Kelbrook and Salterforth who gave their lives as a result of serving in the Great War.

The book was purchased and is now added to the Society's WWI archive collection.

Other additions to the archives have been a collection of Earby ephemera donated by Peter Wright. This includes church programmes, maps and several books local interest.

Thanks go to Peter and the Hospice shop.

Our opening meeting of the post pandemic era was a talk entitled "Other Folks Rubbish" given by Chris Helme.

He told of the many items of local history which were often destined for the skip and had been rescued by observant people and sent to him.

The Society is always on the lookout for local material, documents, title deeds, photographs etc that might appear to be of no use to the owner and in danger of being lost. So keep your eyes peeled please.

## **VANDELEUR AUGUSTE SYDNEY WILKINSON**

### **(1891-1918)**

Bob Abel

While sorting out some papers during the Christmas holidays, I came across an enquiry to the Society dated 2002 asking if Earby had a war memorial and if so was there an Auguste Wilkinson commemorated. The simple answer to the latter was no and I couldn't find any reference to Auguste Wilkinson in the area. Apparently August died in France during WWI.

Over the last twenty years there has been a vast amount of genealogical data published on the internet particularly though Ancestry.com and Findmypast.com so I decided to re-investigate Auguste.

First of all we find that Auguste was actually Vandeleur, Auguste, Sydney Wilkinson. The name Vandeleur immediately struck a chord as one Vandeleur Wilkinson ran the bobbin mill at Thornton in Craven and he turned out to be our subject's grandfather. For brevity I will refer to our subject as VAS Wilkinson.

VAS Wilkinson was born in 1891 and registered at Skipton but I have been unable to find where he was actually baptised but his parents were living in Red Lion Street, Earby, at the time.

His father was John Wilkinson and his mother Florence nee Michel. According to the 1891 census John was born locally in 1863 but Florence was born in Germany in 1864. The 1911 census declares that Florence was a British Citizen having been naturalised some forty years previously ie c 1871.

John and Florence married in 1886 the marriage being registered at Skipton but I have not been able to ascertain where exactly their marriage took place. They had two children, Lucy (registered 1887) and VAR (registered 1891).

In 1891 they family was living in Red Lion Street and John was described as a wheelwright

John's untimely death was in 1899 at the age of 36. The probate record shows he was still living on Red Lion Street and at the time of his death he was a timber merchant.

The 1901 census places the widowed Florence and the two children at 31 Victoria Road where she had set up in business as a glass and china dealer. The census enumerator made a mistake when filling in the census form. VAS is recorded by his second Christian name, Auguste, and is listed as a female.

By 1911, all three members of the family had moved from Earby. Florence was in service in Keighley, Lucy was an elementary school teacher also in Keighley and VAS was a teacher in Oakworth. In this census he was recorded by his third Christian name, Sydney.

VAS joined up for the first world war and his medal index record shows he was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal but not the 1914/15 star suggesting that he joined up when conscription was introduced in 1916. He was enlisted into the Duke of Cambridge's Own, The Middlesex Regiment.

VAS's military record documentation is sketchy to say the least. Many First World War records were destroyed in the London Blitz during the Second World War. From the few remaining records for VAS we see that he was made up to corporal shortly after joining up in 1916 and the London Gazette recorded that he was commissioned as 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant on 31st October 1917.

His first front line posting was to Salonika in Greece in September 1916 where the Middlesex Regiment was engaged with allied forces in operations against Bulgaria in the Balkan campaign.

From another record, the register of soldiers' effects, he died on 7<sup>th</sup> June 1918. The record states that he committed suicide.

He must have been posted to France by then as he was buried in Buysscheure Churchyard in Northern France. We can only speculate the reason for his suicide but perhaps he was suffering from shell shock. At the time of his death he was in the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion attached to the 19<sup>th</sup> battalion of the Middlesex regiment.

The record of his dependant's pension shows that his mother, Florence, was living at 96 Aldermans Drive in Peterborough. The medal index card gives the same address but with name Mrs Baxter.

This begs two questions, how had VAS's mother Florence come to be living in Peterborough and who was Mrs Baxter. I did wonder if Florence had remarried but I could not find a marriage record.

Two more records for VAS have been found relating his trade union membership. One reference is in the list of teachers who joined up and the other the roll of honour of teachers who died in the First World War. VAS appears in both lists, the latter recording that before he joined up he was a teacher at Oakworth County School which ties in with the 1911 census showing him living in Haworth.

From Commonwealth War Graves records the inscription on VAS's head stone was submitted by a Mrs Lucy Baxter of Aldermans Drive, Peterborough. Lucy was VAS's sister who had married George Seymour Baxter in 1914 in Shipley. George worked for the income tax inspectorate and must have transferred to Peterborough.

So the mystery Mrs Baxter was VAS's sister and presumably his mother Florence had gone to live with her daughter and son in law. Florence died in 1920.

The inscription on VAS's headstone is "In hoc signo vinces" a Latin phrase conventionally translated into English as "In this sign thou shalt conquer".

As far as I can tell Vandeleur Auguste Sydney Wilkinson is not commemorated on any war memorial but his this will be rectified on Poppy Day when a memorial kerb stone will be dedicated to him at Earby War Memorial.

## EARBY'S CORN MILL AND SPINNING MILL

Margaret Brown

A few years ago some members of Earby and District Local History Society started researching into the history of Earby's Corn Mill. This turned out to tell a very interesting story.

## Background to Earby and the use of corn mills.

While the very early inhabitants of this area would have been hunter gatherers, the Bronze and Iron age people would have been farmers, they would have ground their grain in a quern by hand. This was a back breaking, time consuming task taking a least 1½ hours each day to produce enough ground corn to produce flour for the family's daily bread. The word "corn" is used to describe all types of grain.

It is not known where these people made their homes, but there is a possible site of Old Earby in the fields behind the Red Lion. This is shown on LiDAR (*Light detection and ranging, this is a remote sensing method that uses light in the form of a pulsed laser to measure ranges of the earth*) that there could have been a Saxon or earlier settlement there. These would have been wooden huts with an earthen floor, so little is left of them other than humps and bumps in the fields.

Over time this part of Earby was abandoned, it could have been that it was destroyed as part of William the Conquerors harassing of the north, or disease or just that these houses became uninhabitable and newer, better houses were built on the other side of the beck on what is now Red Lion Street the old name interestingly being "Main Street".

During Saxon times there may well have been a water powered mill on the beck. This would have been with a horizontal wheel. We have not found evidence of any earlier mill, but further archaeological investigations may increase our knowledge of this.

Our first written evidence of plough land is recorded in the Domesday book. "*In Thornton-in-Craven, Alcolm had 3 carucates to the geld. In Earby, Alcolm had 3 carucates to the geld. In another Earby, Alcolm [had] 2 carucates and 6 bovates to the geld.*"

A "carucate" is a measurement of land using how much could be ploughed in a day by an oxen team. So there was a significant area of land being ploughed.

The Norman system made the peasants pay "**suit to Court and mill**" an agreement whereby when a tenant took possession of his tenancy he agreed to using the mill and to work on the lord's land for

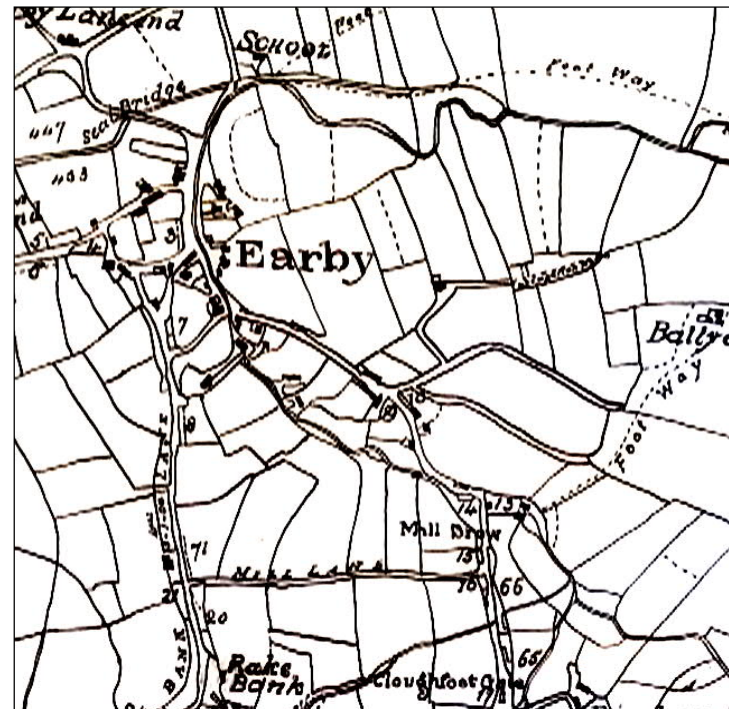
an agreed amount of time and to join him as a soldier in time of war. At this time it became illegal to have or use a hand quern and all tenants had to use the Lord's mill. Our first definite written evidence of a mill is in the Lister/Kaye papers (*this collection is part of the Yorkshire Archaeological archive now stored in Leeds university libraries*) and they tell us that in 1557 & 1568 there were 100 houses, 60 cottages 60 tofts in Thornton/Earby/Kelbrook /Haigh and mills in Earby and Thornton in Craven.

After the demise of Charles I, in 1649, The Commonwealth government passed laws that ended the practise of "Suit to Court and Mill" loosening the ties of feudalism. But life would still have still carried on the same for the tenants and they would still have worked their strips, had their corn ground at the mill and kept their animals on the common ground. Life would have been hard but sustainable for most of the people.

In the fields around Gaylands Lane, the cemetery and Red Lion Street you can still see the ridge and furrow patterns caused by hundreds of years of Ox-gang ploughing.

From the early 1700's sheep were becoming more important, woven woollen cloth was a valuable commodity, it seems likely that there was a fulling mill using the water power too. We have so far not been able to find any physical evidence of a fulling mill, but the baptism records of 1713 to 1722 show that the Binns and Robinson families were millers and fullers living and working at Earby Mill. We think the fulling mill and dam were on the site of the row of cottages across from and below the hostel. (see over)

The 1825 enclosure map is we think a copy of an earlier estate map that was copied and reused to draw up the enclosure areas. The map shows the mill, drying kiln and possible site of the fulling mill, these structures had fallen out of use by 1825, also the bridge and embankment are not shown, these would have not been built when the first map was drawn. This map was copied many times, the society holds 4 different versions in the archives.



### **The physical evidence of the mill sites.**

The mill was situated in the far end of the back garden of the hostel, with a small water wheel pit to the south side between the mill and the lane. The dam was in what is now the car park and the mill race ran from just above the waterfall along what is now a walk way to the dam. Along the course of the beck there is evidence of several man made weirs, these would have been used to control the flow of water. The drying kiln was above the lane in the back garden of the house above the hostel. This set up was enough to power the corn mill. Which was used to grind Wheat, Barley, Oats and Pulses. It became redundant in the late 1790's due to changes in agriculture and politics when corn was grown more successfully in the drier regions of East Yorkshire and the improving transport network made it cheaper to import corn from those areas.

We think that at this point, around 1798, William Harrison, the broth-

er of the miller Francis Harrison, set up in partnership with Joseph Cowgill of Marlfield to turn the mill into a cotton spinning mill. At this time many of the small corn mills in the north of England were being converted to cotton spinning. To provide enough power to run the mill 24 hours a day would take a lot more power than the corn grinding set up. So we think William and Joseph built all the walls and the little bridge and embankment to create further dams higher up stream, they may also have replaced the small water wheel with a 30 feet metal one to provide a consistent source of power. They rebuilt the old miller's house between 1800 & 1806, this is now no. 11 & 13 Mill Brow. This was originally one house but was divided in the late 1800's and is now part of the hostel. The lower cottages nos.5,7,& 9 were built in the mid 1800's.

The cost of all this work would have been enormous and could be why Joseph lost all the money he inherited. (see the Marlfield papers, available to view in the Society archives.) He had links with other "cotton men" in the area so would have had the necessary knowledge of spinning and William would have the knowledge of water power and its management.

However their partnership was dissolved in 1806 and the lease was sold to Bernard Crook a businessman and draper of Colne, around 1810. He ran the mill for a couple years until it burnt down in suspicious circumstances in 1812. Such a small mill would have been unable to compete with the larger mills in Burnley and Colne. The mill was never rebuilt and the usable stone and water wheel would have been sold and the land reverted to farm land. In 1937 the land was bought by A. J. Birley an Earby mill owner and member of Earby Urban District Council. He then donated the land to Earby Urban District Council for use as public playing fields. The council workers constructed the paddling pool and demolished part of the upper dam embankment to allow access to the far side of the bridge. This is only a brief outline of the research undertaken over the last few years. We have much more evidence and information in our archive room

Editor's note—Margaret used this research as the basis for her talk to the Society last year.

## AN UPDATE ON JOAN WILKIE WILKINSON

Margaret Brown

You may remember a talk and book launch I gave in 2018 about my father's cousin, Joan Wilkinson, and her amazing life both on and off the cricket pitch. She was an international cricketer playing in two tours of Australia and New Zealand in 1948/9 and again in 1957/8. She represented England many times, played for Lancashire, Cheshire and other counties depending on where she was posted with the WRAF, and of course playing for the WRAF and combined services.

She started out her working life as a weaver in Foulridge her home town, while playing for Burnley Ladies Cricket team and Lancashire County matches. In WWII she was conscripted into the WAAF/WRAF because of her sporting abilities, where she rose to the rank of War-rant officer.

Following the completion of the book, Hazel (Joan's sister) who co-authored gave me her large collection of memorabilia for me to use to illustrate my talks on Joan. We discussed what to do with all this collection as we both felt that it should go to a museum. At that time Somerset cricket ground was home to a small archive of women's cricket artefacts, so I contacted them but did not get a reply, however, after many months finally an email came apologising for the tardiness of the reply but explained that the collection had been moved to Lord's cricket ground and suggested that I contact them. I rang and spoke to a lovely gentleman who not only knew of Joan's career but had been looking for a copy of the book. He also told me that they were putting together an exhibition on women's cricket but due to Covid this had been put on hold until the end of 2021. He was delighted with my offer of Joan's collection and a copy of the book. Arrangements were made to send the collection down to them. Some of Joan's collection is now part of the display in this exhibition. You can find details at

<https://www.lords.org/mcc/heritage-collections/latest-from-lord-s>

The exhibition is called "**Evolution of Women's Cricket**" and fea-

tures items from the beginnings of women's cricket to the present day. It will be open until mid-2023 contact Lord's cricket museum for further details. The exhibition is described as:-

Drawing upon the WCA and MCC collections, as well as loans from the UK and overseas, it is a landmark in the MCC Museum's long-term strategy to diversify its Collections and displays. Among the objects featured are the cricket clothing worn by Molly Beckenham, one of the first women professionals in the 1890s, scrapbooks from early overseas tours, kit worn by players in the 2017 ICC Women's World Cup Final and the original Women's World Cup trophy. The late Baroness Heyhoe Flint helped initiate a project to collect items related to Women's Cricket together with historian and author Isabelle Duncan which form some of the displays. Many former players shared memories as part of the Women's Oral History Project and have kindly donated personal items.

I am so pleased that I have found a home for this wonderful collection and that it is now available for cricket fans to see. It is a bit ironic as during Joan's life time women were not allowed to play there. Sadly Hazel did not live to know about the donation to the MCC exhibition but I am sure she would be so thrilled to know that Joan's memory is being kept alive, the collection is safe and part of Joan finally made it to Lord's.

We have updated the book Joan "Wilkie" Wilkinson "*I had a wizard time*" and it is now available through Amazon at the links below in both paperback and e reader. If you cannot order on line please contact me and I will order on your behalf.

<https://amzn.to/2Z6xwNw>

<https://amzn.to/3paK80T>

## KELBROOK CLOCK RESORATION

Bob Abel

As reported in the last edition of Chronicles, Kelbrook Church clock was refurbished and reinstalled last November.



Photographs courtesy of John Tomlinson

Kelbrook church was consecrated in 1839 but the clock wasn't installed until 1859 but no information has been found to date as to how it was funded.

The clock was built by Thomas Cooke and Sons of York. Thomas had made a name for himself for the building of telescopes as well as tower clocks. The clock at Kelbrook is distinctive in that it has four faces rather than the usual one and also has a gravity escapement mechanism invented by Lord William Grimethorpe for Westminster's Elizabeth Tower clock.

The Kelbrook clock is one of only two turret clocks built with a two train movement in a pagoda style frame, the other is in Burmah. The clock has been restored to its original eight day wind.

The funding for the restoration was provided by Kelbrook Parish Council and principally from the Fort Trust. The Fort family is an old established Kelbrook dynasty, Robert Fort (born in Rimmington) coming to Kelbrook in about 1880 where in the 1881 census he was described as Farmer and Butcher. His son Sagar Fort was a well-known



farmer in Kelbrook

The Forts also owned property in Kelbrook including Forts Buildings on Waterloo Road.

Sagar had two sons, Edward Sagar Fort and Robert Fort. Julie Davies relates that "Robert joined Kelbrook church in the 1980s and having survived cancer Robert went on to be a church warden. Robert's wife, Joanna, also did lots of practical work for the church including making the beautiful altar frontals."

Edward founded the Fort Vale Engineering company in 1967 which he developed into a very successful multinational business having factories in the USA, Russia, Singapore and Australia as well as locally.

After Robert died, Edward wanted to continue to support the church but he didn't do until about 2014, when it looked like the church may well close due to lack of money and people.

Julie continues "I believe Edward had started looking after the church yard for us and one day when I wrote to thank him for this; I put in the letter thank you for helping save Kelbrook church.

Edward wrote back and said tell me about the word save. I went to talk to him at Fort Vale engineering and explained our plight.

He wanted to support us and more or less said tell me what you need and we will do it. The list was a mile long and to be honest I think he would have given us millions but sensibly he set a trust in place and encouraged us to help ourselves also.

To date I think we have had about three quarters of a million pounds. He has supported us in many ways; to refurbish the organ, the toilet facility, the coffee making facility and our sound system etc. and now the clock."

The clock restoration was carried out by Cumbria Clock Company based in the village of Dacre near Penrith.

At an outdoor service, on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021, prayers of thanksgiving for the restoration of St Mary's clock were led by the Rev Hugh Fielden.

## MEMORIES OF FOULRIDGE RESERVOIR IN THE MID 1920s

The following is an excerpt from a memoir of Alice Mona Manton, nee Collyer (born Earby 1920), Aunt of John Turner

"I must have been five or six years old - I really don't remember but I was quite small and during the winter there must have been a long hard frost when Foulridge reservoir had frozen hard and solid and our boys had wanted to go along with the other teenagers and young men from the Chapel (*Mount Zion*) to join the skaters who they had heard were performing there. I remember a group of boys gathered at our house along with my brothers (*Harry, Leslie, Clifford and Granville*). I will try and remember their names. Clifford Turner who years later married Rene my sister, Raymond Smith, who as I said earlier eventually married Rene Turner who was sister to Clifford, thus strengthening our family connections. Then there was Leonard Smith, Byron Lord, Teddy Dwyer and I think Henry Rigby and another young man called Dennis and for the life in me I can't remember his surname. But those are definitely some who I can remember and they all set off pushing my father (*Arthur Henry Collyer*), well blanketed up in his bath-chair, to walk to Foulridge; whilst my mother (*Sarah Alice Collyer*), Rene (*my sister*) and myself got ready to go on the bus

It must have been on a Saturday, of course, but I remember it was an exciting day out and there were crowds of people there, some skating, others, the majority, not having skates, just sliding about on the solid ice. I remember too that on the grass area at one side of the reservoir, a wood fire was alight and some enterprising men were roasting and selling potatoes. Mother and Rene returned home on the bus, but our young men suggested that I snuggled down under the blankets between my dad's legs and they happily pushed the two of us back home. All I remember of that return journey was the guffaws of laughter as our group banded what must have been jokes or accounts of the day with many other groups making their way home. Many of them had spent all their money and hadn't enough to pay their bus fare home and so they quite happily set off to walk. It didn't worry them one little bit.

On another occasion I remember going to Foulridge during the summer time when again our boys would hire a rowing boat and take us out on the water, they would have pushed my dad there in his bath chair but I suppose again mother, Rene and I would have gone there on the bus. But on that occasion poor Rene didn't have a very happy time and she had to suffer. There was a boat-house near to the main road, almost opposite to where the garden centre entrance was, (of course there wasn't a garden centre there then), but the man who had the boathouse and from whom you could hire the boats, had as a pet, a monkey, and all the children would pat this monkey and feed him nuts etc. Perhaps by the time Rene was patting him he had had enough because he swung round, grabbed her hand and took a bite out of her finger. A very nasty bite too, which meant that mum had to rush her back home to go to the doctors.

## 41273 THE BARLICK SPUD

Bob Abel

The photos, taken in the 1950s, (see over) show the Barlick Spud ready to depart from Earby and taking on water after arriving at Barnoldswick (Barlick Spud was the nickname given to the branch line train which ran between Earby and Barnoldswick).

The engine, a 2-6-2 tank engine numbered 41273, was built at Crewe in 1950 to a design by George Ivatt, Chief Mechanical Engineer of the London Midland Region of British Railways. It was built with branch line working in mind as it was fitted for push-pull working.

Push –Pull working meant that the engine did not need to be run round its carriages for the return working from the branch terminus (e.g. Barnoldswick).

A push-pull train could be operated from either end. In one direction of travel the engine driver controlled the locomotive from the foot plate (pull). For the return journey the end of the train had a compartment from where the engine driver could control the locomotive with the fireman remaining on the footplate (push).



Top the Barlick Spud waiting to depart from Earby and bottom—having arrived at Barnoldswick , taking on water.

The third image shows the compartment at the rear of the train from where the engine driver controlled the locomotive in push mode.

41273 was allocated to Skipton engine shed but subsequently transferred to Farnley near Leeds from where it was eventually withdrawn from service and scrapped in 1964.



An older version of the Barlick Spud push and pull train taking water at Barnoldswick

A sister engine, number 41241, was also allocated to Skipton and was often seen at Earby and Barnoldswick and this locomotive was purchased in 1967 for preservation on the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway.

## REFLECTIONS OF A RAILWAY SIGNALMAN

Mike Jackson

On being demobbed from the Army after the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War my dad found work, in his home town of Leeds, as a conductor on the Leeds City trams. He was loath to return to his pre-war occupation in engineering with Greenwood & Batley.

After a short stint on the trams he got a job on the railway as a signalman at Woodlesford on the outskirts of Leeds. He found the job suited his temperament; he was virtually his own boss, within the parameters of the job's regulations. It was around this time that he met my mother, an Earby lass. They soon married and lived in the Head-

ingley area of Leeds, near the Yorkshire Cricket Ground. Both of them wanted to move to the Earby area as soon as a vacancy was available on the railway as they had fallen in love with the idea of living in the countryside. A position eventually became available and the move to Earby soon followed.

Dad became a relief signalman, which involved working various signal boxes in the area. He covered an area from Chaffer sidings in Nelson, through Colne, Barnoldswick Junction, Earby, along with all the boxes in the Skipton area including those on the Settle Carlisle route as far as Blea Moor.

In those early days, he had no transport and relied on hitching a ride, either on the road or from a passing freight train. When neither were possible it was down to a bicycle. On the occasions when he was working 'earlies' at Hellifield the journey for the early 6am shift involved leaving home at 4am. How many would tolerate that these days?

Travelling to work one very foggy morning, the fog was so thick that he dismounted and pushed his bicycle. He could hear a scratching sound and when he looked down to see where the noise was coming from, there was a badger walking alongside him, as it walked its claws made the scratching noise on the tarmacked road surface.

On his way to begin his shift at Snaygill, he was walking down the railway track carrying one of the early pocket sized transistor radios. As he approached some workers on the lineside they stopped as they wondered where the music was coming from. They were amazed when my dad showed them the radio. That radio was still in daily use until he finished on the railway, many years later.

After many years as a relief signalman he decided to apply for a permanent post in just the one box. Station North signal box, Skipton, became his permanent location; sadly this box which was located on Broughton Road, in the shadow of the road bridge, is no longer there. I can only presume it was demolished, though, perhaps it was sold to a heritage railway and is serving a useful purpose.

A train loaded with nuclear flasks arrived in Skipton and the company wanted to put it on the siding alongside Broughton Road. Fortunately my dad was on duty at the time and refused to allow it to be left in that location. After all, who wants nuclear material left within a few feet of a residential area? The bosses insisted that there was no alternative and it had to be left there. Dad wasn't having it, despite their insistence. Eventually he told them that he would be ringing the Craven Herald and informing them of the situation. That was enough for them to re-think the situation and move the nuclear flasks to another location.

During a slack time on nights he wrote the poem below. Funny he always told me he often didn't have time for a brew during his shift!

### **'NOSTALGIA'**

**A Poem by: John Jackson**

Thundering by, by night and day,  
Those roaring monsters on their way,  
Progress tended by unseen bands,  
Safety ensured by vigilant hands;  
Arrival; departure; a tick of the clock,  
Goods and passengers arrive on the Dock.

“Six to two “ and “two to ten,”  
Back on night we are again;  
Through the night those monsters go,  
Mingled with the humble “slow,”  
Round the clock with fingers dragging,  
Vigilance and care unflagging.

Dawn and dusk, fog and snow,  
Storms and tempest often blow,  
Choking drifts, torn-down wires;  
Calloused hands with tools and pliers;  
Demanding with their constant roar,  
Normal passage as before.

Summertime – more demanding,  
Seaside trips and people standing,  
Crying kids and suntanned faces,  
Seeking near and faraway places,  
Spotting, ignoring, frightening, pleasing,  
Those roaring monsters there, unceasing.

### **BREACH OF PROMISE CASE AT EARBY IN 1910**

Stephanie Carter

There were lurid headlines in several newspapers in May 1910 regarding a breach of promise case in Earby:

“Cupid and the Mill Girl – Faithless Sweetheart Marries a Young Widow” (Lancashire Evening Post)

“Sordid Revelations in Breach of Promise - A Wife on her Death Bed – Husband “Carrying On” with Another Woman” (Hull Daily Mail)

“Too Serious for Laughter – the Weaver’s Wooing – Butcher who Played Fake has to Pay Damages! – (Empire News)

The case involved William Edmondson, born in 1878, a butcher, whose shop, which had been set up by his father, was on the corner of Stoney Bank and Red Lion Street. His parents, John, a dairy farmer and butcher, and Ann (nee Brunskill) Edmondson lived at Cowgarth House. William was their only son and he had nine sisters Helen,

Jane, Elizabeth, Mary, Annie, Isobel, Annetta, Muriel and Kathleen.

The following is an outline of the case as reported in the Burnley Express May 11<sup>th</sup> 1910:

AN EARBY COURTSHIP – EXTRAORDINARY EVIDENCE  
£50 DAMAGES FOR BREACH OF PROMISE - CASE WITH  
“NOTHING TO LAUGH AT”

“There is not a laugh in this case from beginning to end”, said Mr Gordon Hewart, in opening the action Wilkinson v Edmondson, in which damages were claimed for breach of promise of marriage, heard before Mr Justice Hamilton and a jury at the Manchester Assizes yesterday. Mr Wingate Saul appeared for the defendant.

Mr Gordon Hewart said the plaintiff was Mary Ann Wilkinson, 26 years of age and an orphan. The defendant was William Edmondson whose age was 32 years and who carried on the business of a butcher in Earby, his place being described as “the oldest butcher’s in Earby”. The acquaintance began some three or four years ago. The defendant was then married, but his wife was an invalid, suffering from consumption, and the plaintiff, who was a friend of Mrs Edmondson, used to go to the house and help Mrs Edmondson with her household duties. The defendant’s wife became more and more ill, and in the summer of 1907, she died. About a month after the funeral plaintiff was at the home of Mrs Hopkins, and defendant was also there. He left a few minutes before her, and when she went out she found him waiting. He said he had been waiting for her and suggested that they should return by way of Stoney Bank Road. The plaintiff agreed, said counsel, and they went the longest way home on a quiet country walk. The defendant then proposed marriage, and she accepted him. Reference was made to his wife’s recent death, and it was agreed that the marriage should not take place for a few months.

In the spring of 1908 defendant dispensed with his housekeeper, and invited plaintiff to go to his house as before and help with the domestic work. She did so, and often stayed away from her work at the mill in order to do the washing. During this period defendant told her he

was coming in for a considerable sum of money under his grandfather’s will. The plaintiff, continued counsel, relied on Edmondson’s promise to marry her, and he seduced her. They continued to go about together, and visited flower shows and went to Bolton, Burnley, Colne and Clitheroe. Once when a mutual friend was about to get married defendant said to her “We will get married at the same time”. The couple took out a joint policy of insurance and owing to an agent’s mistake the policy was made out to “Mr Edmondson and Mary Ann his wife”. The defendant said it did not matter as “it would soon be so”.

Last Whitsuntide the defendant without telling the plaintiff, removed his furniture and went to live with his father, who it appeared did not want him to get married then. Plaintiff met him at a friend’s house and he told her he had promised his mother not to see her for twelve months. “As a matter of fact”, counsel continued, “the defendant had then transferred his affections to someone else, a young widow, living in a neighbouring village, who, he said, had plenty of money. For the sake of that he threw over his faithful weaver”. She tried to see him again but he avoided her. And then she went to her solicitor.

Mr Hewart said two solicitor’s letters were sent in July, but defendant did not reply to them. By way of dotting the i’s and crossing the t’s of his behaviour, the defendant, while the action was pending, went off and got married to the young widow on April 7<sup>th</sup> last at Thornton Church. It was sometimes thought, added counsel, that cases of breach of promise provided a suitable occasion for humour. In that case, however, there was not a laugh from beginning to end.

The plaintiff, a quietly dressed, sedate looking young woman, then entered the box, She bore out counsel’s statements in every detail.

Cross examined by Mr Wingate Saul, the plaintiff said she first went to defendant’s house five or six weeks before his wife died. She did not go when he had the housekeeper there, although she was then engaged to him. It was not that she did not think it was “quite proper” but because he never asked her to go. “I did not like to go when she was there” said the plaintiff.

Later Miss Wilkinson admitted intimacy with the defendant some weeks before he asked her to marry him and before his wife died, and also to sending two letters through her foster brother, in one of which she threatened to take action which would end in the police court, adding "I have heard about the charming widow with plenty of money".

Asked to explain the threat, the plaintiff, with some reluctance, made a statement alleging that the defendant gave her £4 to go to Bradford so that there might be an illegal operation performed.

After other evidence Mr Wingate Saul opened the defendant's case, and in addressing the jury he said that the relationship between the parties was not that of an engaged couple. It was a very wrong relationship, but the defendant had never promised marriage and never thought of it.

The defendant entered the box, and stated that owing to his late wife's illness he got heavily into debt, and his father had to take over his business. Speaking of the plaintiff's frequent visits to his home, defendant said he never looked upon her as his future wife. He never promised her marriage, though he admitted that he might have spoken about marriage in a jest. He denied that he gave plaintiff a ring, and also denied the story about him paying for the Bradford visit. As to the joint insurance, no such policy existed. The agent had tried to persuade him to have a joint policy when he had seen them together. "You know what insurance agents are" said the defendant.

Cross-examined, defendant said he got married a month ago because he wanted to bring that case forward, as it had been on his mind for 12 months. He added that his present wife had a home of her own. His income was now only 10 shillings a week, and that was commission for selling hides and skins.

Answering further questions, defendant gave two names of men with whom he alleged the plaintiff had been intimate.

Mr Hewart: Did you say that the plaintiff stole the ring which she said you gave her?

Witness: Yes

You mean that she is a thief as well as a perjurer?

Yes, a thief and a perjurer.

In summing up his Lordship said he could not help remarking that it was a singular state of things that the girl could obtain without any difficulty the address in Bradford of the person who was willing to commit a certain offence, and who, if she had died through the operation, would have certainly had to answer a charge of manslaughter or murder. Several persons knew of the visit to Bradford, and yet it did not appear to have excited any censure or remark at all. The girl was no more blameable than several other people; in fact, she was the more to be pitied.

The jury returned a verdict for the plaintiff, and awarded £50 as damages."

#### **Editor's Note**

"At Earby someone apparently, without any difficulty, could give an address in Bradford where the performance of the "illegal operation" could be procured." So said Mr Justice Hamilton at Manchester Assizes.

"And if the operation had proved fatal, the person responsible would have had to answer a charge of manslaughter or murder; yet although several people knew of it, the matter did not appear to have excited censure or remarks. It was a curious state of things."

Miss Wilkinson had been given £4 to pay for the "procedure". In today's money that would have been £483.31!

She was awarded £50 in compensation. In today's money that would have been £6,041.41s.

William Edmondson's second wife was Gertrude Miller nee Parker. They were married at Thornton Parish Church 1910/04/07.

## NEW SOCIETY COMPUTER

Thanks to a generous donation to the Society funds we have been able to replace our ageing laptop computer with a new model; the previous one was over 20 years old. Also thanks to Colin Faulkner for setting up the new machine.

11th DECEMBER 1942

Barnoldswick and Earby Times

### Bells of St. Mary's.

Kelbrook's bells, silent since the order to "cease ringing" was issued about two years ago were heard once again on Sunday, November 16th, when the thanksgiving peal rang out in celebration of the inspiring victory gained by General Alexander's forces in North Africa. The event has called forth some interesting details from Councillor W. Bishop, on Kelbrook clock and bells. St. Mary's Church possesses two bells, one cast in 1858—the year in which the clock was installed, and the other, a smaller one, 20 years earlier, in 1838. The large bell weighs about 4 cwts. The church, therefore, possessed only one bell at the time of its consecration in 1839. Both bells were rung by the retired verger, Mr. Naylor in honour of the North African campaign.

## David and Dorothy Wilkinson

It is with sadness that we have to announce the passing of two stalwarts of the Society, David Wilkinson and his wife Dorothy.

Both have been members from the early days of the society. Dorothy acted as speaker secretary for a number of years and both were always keen to help out at the meetings, which they regularly attended, either with the refreshments or with shifting the chairs before and after meetings.

Both David and Dorothy loved the great outdoors and took every opportunity for cycling or walking and were also active in the Earby Walking Group.

David ran a motor engineering work shop on the site of the former Methodist Church, with Walter Nuttall They leave three children one of whom is our Society Secretary, Margaret Brown, and we extend our deepest sympathy the Margaret and the rest of the Wilkinson family in their sad loss.



On April 8th this year it will be 100 years since the Earby War Memorial in Sough Park was officially dedicated. The picture on the left was the original, temporary, memorial at the junction of Victoria Road and Skipton Road and that to the right as it stands today

## THE SOCIETY

Meets at the Community Centre, New Road, EARBY on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7.30 p.m.

### ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

£10.00

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### PROGRAMME FOR NEXT QUARTER

March 15th Steve Williams Four Cans

April 19th Steve Halliwell My Work as a Local History Detective

May 17th Denise North Side Tracked by SEM One Thing Leads to Another

June July, August No meeting

### DATA PROTECTION ACT

Members details are held on computer for mailing and compilation of a membership list. The details will not be used for any other purpose without the express permission of the member. If you do not wish your details to be held on computer please inform the Treasurer immediately.

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