

Wheatley Hill History Club

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FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH

If you are carrying out research into a family with connections from Wheatley Hill, Thornley or Ludworth, we would like you to show your work at our Local History Day in September.

Put on a display of photographs or any other type of information you have collected about your family.

This is the first time the History Club has attempted this type of event and we would like it to be successful.

We have been pledged support from the Durham Mining Museum, Clayport Library, Cleveland Family History Society, The North East War Memorials Project, Durham Records Online so there are lots of opportunities to further your own research. It is amazing what sort of information you can pick up at these events.

We always advertise our events throughout the County and will make a special effort this year for such a unique event.

MY VICTORIAN ANCESTOR

Is a course taking place in The Community Centre on Tuesday mornings between 10 and 12.

The course gives the learner an opportunity to develop research skills which go beyond births, marriages and deaths information, in order to build up a full picture of one ancestor. These new skills can then be transferred to all of your ancestors.

PRAISE FOR OUR LATEST BOOK

A review of our latest book: "The National Coal Board, Owners of Thornley, Ludworth & Wheatley Hill Collieries 1956-1976" appeared in the latest journal of the Cleveland Family History Society and was carried out by their Chairman, Ann Fell.

Ann gives an overview of the contents of the book and highlights the Queen's visit to Peterlee in 1960 and in particular the description of the Queen's clothing - "a white tricol shirt waister with three-quarter length sleeves", and suggests that memories are made of this - our clothing of the 60's in a history book!

She also mentions the increase in emigration and the high number of wedding anniversaries which were rich in memories of bygone days.

The review ends with congratulations to the history club on our five well-produced books.

WILLIAM GREGORY, CARTER of ROCK FARM

At the beginning of the 1900's the above was a carter in the Wheatley Hill area and I have borrowed his ledger from Clive and Connie Gregory which gives a fascinating insight into the work he carried out.

The first page, which starts in April 1917 sets out how much he was paid for 'scavenging' by the District Council. Scavenging was cleaning out the earth closets in Wheatley Hill. He seemed to be paid quarterly at a rate of approx £69 per quarter. It is not clear how many times he carried out the cleaning during the three month period, but I would speculate that it was probably weekly.

The ledger also sets out how much Rock Farm were paying their workers at the time. They seemed to employ four full time workers, generating a weekly wage bill of between £11 and £12.

Mr Gregory carried out work for the Coal Company, removing 'slag' from the sidings and taking it to local building sites. Two of these loads went from Thornley Goods Station to The Catholic School and Durham Road in September 1921, at a cost of 2/- per ton.

There is evidence of carrying turnips, swedes and hay for another local farmer. Mr Casey the Vicar paid £1.6s.0d for a load of coal on 24 November 1921. Miss Berry's load of coal on 1 March 1923 cost £1 and the carting cost 4s.

Also during November and December 1921 Mr Gregory carried the following from Thornley Station to Wheatley Hill Workingmens' Club:

- 3 Hogsheads of Beer
- 2 Kegs of Beer
- 3 cases of Wine
- 3 cases of Spirit
- 2 Barrels of Spirits
- 9 loads of coal

The Club were obviously stocking up for Christmas and their carting charge for all of the above was 4s.9d.

Mr Gregory's loads were many and varied, apart from the above he also carried cement, clay, muck, stones, timber, bricks, barrels of oil, coke, pipes etc. Much of his work also involved mending roads, cleaning roads, removing snow with his snow plough, cleaning out the beck etc. He did work for the local council at Ludworth and Shotton when new houses were being built, and there is evidence of him delivering items for local tradesmen such as George Ritchie (Builder), Hedley (Butchers), J Walton (Builder). Of course the 1920's was a time of major building, especially of Council Housing so it is no wonder Mr Gregory was kept so busy. His ledger is full of daily deliveries.

Reading this ledger reminds us that people would be reliant on the services of those provided by Mr Gregory as no-one had their own transportation and therefore no way of retrieving large items. These old ledgers provide a snapshot into the past and make us think about day to day matters, in this case, transportation which of course we never give a second thought to today!

<div>CONTACT DETAILS</div> <div>Chair: 01429 821820</div> <div>Treasurer: 01429 823198</div> <div>E: history.club2@btinternet.com</div> <div>WEB SITE:</div> <div>wheatley-hill.org.uk</div>	<div>WHEATLEY HOUSE UPDATE</div> <div>The Constitution has now been adopted The Parish Council pledging financial support for this facility over the next three years and the committee are working towards signing the lease.</div> <div>Well done to everyone who has worked very hard to make this possible - it looks as if our meeting place is safe for at least three years.</div>
<div>Report from the Clerk to the Wingate School Board on Wheatley Hill Primary School in 1878</div> <div>The Children have been utterly and shamefully neglected by the late Master. The supply of books is not sufficient. Something should be done at once to make the school warmer. The present fireplaces appear to be almost useless. If school premises are not extended (which is very desirable) a new set of offices must be built.</div> <div>I am to confirm you that unless a properly signed timetable is at once put up, and unless the office accommodation is made to accord with the requirements of this Department, we will have no alternative but to remove your school from the annual grant list.</div> <div>Should these points be attended to I am to inform you that we will require much better results on instruction as a condition of an unreduced grant.</div> <div>Robert Forster</div> <div>Clerk of the Wingate School Board</div> <div>This report was written only 8 years after education was made compulsory and it doesn't seem to be going too well in Wheatley Hill! I believe the reference to 'office' accommodation refers to toilets!</div>	
<div>RESIDENTS OF LYNN TERRACE 1911</div> <div><div><div>No 1 HENDERSON</div><div>No 2 ADAMSON</div><div>No 3 GREEN</div><div>No 4 ENGLISH</div><div>No 5 McGEE</div><div>No 6 REYNOLDS</div><div>No 7 McDONALD</div><div>No 8 FAIRLESS</div><div>No 9 RILEY</div><div>No 10 CUMMINGS</div><div>No 11 BROWN</div><div>No 12 WINNARD</div></div><div><div>George & Elizabeth</div><div>William, Elizabeth & Lydia</div><div>Henry, Silby & Robert and Thomas NICHOLSON</div><div>George & Edith</div><div>William, Margaret, Robert, John, Elizabeth & Margaret Ellen and William WOODS and Elizabeth CALLAN</div><div>Reuben & Elizabeth</div><div>George, Elizabeth, George & Wilfred</div><div>Ernest, Amelia & Robert</div><div>George, Ann & Ann and Arthur SWEETMAN</div><div>Edward, Sarah, Mary, & Sarah</div><div>John, & Annie</div><div>Henry & Ellen and George PRICE</div></div></div> <div>There were only 12 houses in Lynn Terrace in 1911 the other 9 were added on at a later date.</div>	<div>FROM THE THORNLEY PARISH MAGAZINE DECEMBER 1900</div> <div>Parish Church Choir: We shall be sorry at the end of this month to lose the services of Miss McPherson who is leaving the district after five years service as a Board School teacher and a member of the Parish Church Choir. We are grateful for the services which Miss McPherson has rendered to our Church and parish and we shall wish her much happiness and blessing in her new sphere.</div> <div>Mission Church: We are glad to note a marked increase in the number of our Sunday School scholars. We hope that parents will encourage and help their children as much as possible. The advantages in a colliery village are not many, but we ought to encourage young people to make the very best of their opportunities. Many of our scholars are, we are happy to say, well worth encouraging.</div> <div>The mission Church was at Wheatley Hill.</div>

WHEATLEY HILL BOYS SCHOOL CYCLING CLUB TRIP - NORTH YORKSHIRE

By Leslie Alderton

On Saturday 20 October 1951 ten boys met and started from Mr Brown's home for our four days tour. The party was made up of Edward Fulcher, Edward Lawson, William Lincoln, Alan Muir, Derek Hall, Joe Bell, Barry Dixon, George Battye, Leslie Charlton, Leslie Alderton and led by Mr Brown. First day we cycled to Saltburn via Castle Eden, Wolviston and stopped for a cup of tea at Billingham. From there across the transporter bridge to Middlesbrough and onto Redcar where we had an hour and half for lunch. We then went to a steady pace to Saltburn. The coast road had been good all the way and the sea air had given us all a good appetite, so after leaving our cycles at the hostel a few of us went to the shops for food to cook that night and supplies for next day, Sunday. On our arrival back, laden, we were met by Tony Carr and Bob Gutcher who had set off after lunch. The meal was cooked very nicely and a good time was had by all. A few games followed then it was bed time.

Next day, Sunday, the second day of the tour was warm and mild. We had a look at the hydraulic lift then on to Whitby and still keeping on the coast road to Loftus where we got sweets and other things to eat. Then on the road again to Staithes, a very pretty village. When we came to Hinderwell we stopped for lunch. After lunch we rode to Whitby and were all thirsty so we made tracks for a shop and leaving the cycles in front of the shop we had a welcome break. We then bought a line and went fishing in the harbour and caught 14 fish and got two flatfish given from a fisherman. These I cleaned and we had them for breakfast next morning, they were very tasty! Very sweet!

After breakfast we went to the harbour to try our luck to catch some more fish but the sea was very rough and when we tried the line out it only floated away from us so we went shopping and bought some tinned food at Marks and Spencers. Then once more onto our cycles to Westerdale Hall. The road led across the moors and it was bad going for the cold wind was still in our faces and three of us had no capes or coats so we dismounted and squatted under the capes we had amongst us. Then off we started in search of a cup of tea but our luck was out as the place was closed up. We rode to Castleton where there was a youth hostel but it had to be closed down. When we did arrive at Westerdale Hall our hands were numb with cold. The hostel was like a castle, a gloomy sort of place, however we got our teas as quickly as possible, not having had much on the way. After tea we played an American Tournament of table tennis till 11pm then went to bed.

Tuesday was a nice day and after breakfast we prepared for our departure. Mr Brown got his map out and we studied which were the best roads to take.

Having decided, we set off on our way. We went through Guisborough to Ormesby, Middlesbrough, Billingham and at Sheraton road ends we met Alan Muir's father. We arrived in Wheatley Hill in time for tea.

This was the fifth tour and I think we all enjoyed it.



WESTERDALE HALL

POLLY McGUIGAN'S STORY

On 3 December 1865 Polly Monaghan was born at Framwellgate Moor. In her little council house bungalow in Roseberry Crescent, Thornley, she told how her father and mother carried her to Thornley when she was only a few weeks old. There were big celebrations in the village the day they arrived - the new owners of the colliery were giving a dinner - they had roasted an ox in the market place and there was a plentiful supply of beer to encourage the men to sign on at the colliery.

Polly's family - father, mother, five brothers and one sister all lived in Graham street at the bottom of the duff heaps next to the washing dolly and all the children attended the Catholic School in Hartlepool Street. Polly remembers the evictions of the pitmen and their families at Wheatley Hill in 1874 and the terrible fire that destroyed the whole of the pit heap and engine houses in Thornley in 1875. She also remembers the Putt Pay when police were drafted into Thornley to stop the rioting of the men when their wages were not paid owing to the company going bankrupt.

Polly married Ned Monaghan in Thornley Catholic church when she was 21 and they had two daughters and a son. Ned kept a couple of goats, a few hens, ducks and a pig or two and he always saw that the priest had a little bit of something to eat as he knew the poor priest had very little to live on. Ned had an accident at the pit when he was 58 and didn't live long afterwards. **(Source unknown)**

ADVERTISING

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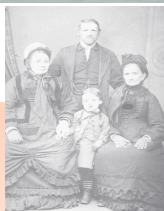
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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

25 May The History of Pickfords

SUNDAY 26 JUNE - Local History Display
Hardwick Country Park, Sedgfield

29 June An Old Soldier's Story

27 July The British Steel Archive

WHEATLEY HILL HERITAGE CENTRE

The Heritage Centre have been given a set of display cabinets by Easington Parish Council, which were previously used in the Seaton Holme.

The cabinets are of excellent quality and have improved the look of the Heritage Centre and the exhibits.

If you haven't already seen them, it is worth a visit to

ACQUISITIONS

Newspaper articles from the 1980's relating to Wheatley Hill news

Northern Echo article remembering the inundation at Wheatley Hill Colliery in 1871

Class Register from Wheatley Hill Infants School 1948

Past and Present Interviews with:

Mr Roger Richardsdon

Mr Phillips

Mrs Frances Carr

Mr Edward Cain

Dr Russell (Wingate)

Articles by John C Kirk published in Sunderland Echo