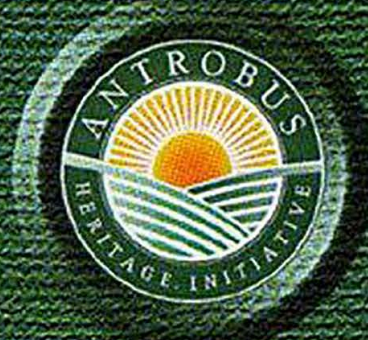




Antrobus

A Country Parish at the Millennium



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FOREWORD

The Countryside Commission (now called The Countryside Agency) launched the Local Heritage Initiative in 1988 as a Partnership Project with the Heritage Lottery Fund. The aim was to help people to care for their local landscape, landmarks and traditions. Advice, technical and financial support was given to 24 communities nation-wide to help them record their local heritage as part of a pilot study.

Antrobus was one of three Cheshire villages selected. It was chosen as a typical country parish with a good record of community achievements.

A group of seventeen parishioners, under the umbrella of the Antrobus Women's Institute, spent twelve months researching the aspects of the Parish's heritage that they felt should be recorded. The results were then compiled, edited and printed by the group to produce this book.

The next stage of the Initiative will be to use the interest the book has generated to foster further work for the benefit of the whole community.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

We thank all those local people who have come forward with articles, information, memories, photographs and technical support.

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Antrobus is a large parish with over forty miles of roads and lanes. It is situated in north Cheshire, seven miles south of Warrington and five miles north of Northwich. The village centre lies just over a quarter of a mile to the northeast of the A559, formerly the old Roman road (King Street) which connected the two towns.

Antrobus is first mentioned, as 'Entrebus', in William the Conqueror's Book of Winchester, better known as the Domesday Book. It is recorded as part of the manor of Weaverham and also under its own name. It is described as 'waste' and with a wood about three miles long and one and a half miles wide. In essence it was mostly uncultivated with no settlements.

The locally accepted derivation of the name Antrobus is from the Domesday Book entry 'Entrebus', which has been taken to mean 'between the woods' from the French *entre bois*. This has been woven into other theories about its tenure as rewards for services during military operations. Sadly this is most unlikely, for two reasons; firstly Antrobus existed before the Norman Conquest (since it is recorded that Leofnot held it then) and also because 'Entrebus' is not sufficiently close to either French or Latin for a Norman clerk to have written it in that context. Other authorities believe it not to be English. Therefore it is presumably the best the clerk could do with an existing Viking name.

In his authoritative work published by the English Place Names Society, Mr Dodgson derives Antrobus from a person's name i.e. Eindridi or Andridi linked to 'buscr' meaning bush. His theory is that an Old Norse or Old Danish speaking man called Andridi had a 'tun' or farm nearby. That is now called Anderton.

Apart from the Township / Parish boundaries which generally originate from the 12th C., give or take a century or two, there is little tangible heritage of Antrobus before 1600. Relevant records are few and far between, mostly written in Latin and best left to the professional historians.

We know that at some time the Township of Antrobus, probably as part of the Lordship of Over Whitley, became part of the Parish of Gt. Budworth.

We are very fortunate in still having the Town books for Antrobus (1730 - 1782) and Sevenoaks (1686 - 1756) which give details of the accounts for the Overseer of the Poor, Petty Constable and Surveyor of Highways plus some other information. These give a good idea of the lives of ordinary people at the time.

Throughout succeeding ages, Antrobus existed on agriculture. At first it was for local self-sufficiency and then as canals and railways improved transport, the farms thrived by supplying the demand of the towns and cities. The chapter on farming illustrates this. The many fine Georgian and other farmhouses form another part of our heritage as do the more humble cottages that have been renovated and extended in recent years. Later, the salt and chemical industries in Northwich provided work and set the beginnings of a trend towards Antrobus as a dormitory village.

The electoral roll of 1998 numbered 642 and a check against the known farming community showed that agriculture now only supports about 10% of the population, allowing for a hundred or so children.

A questionnaire indicated that the main reasons for people moving into Antrobus are its quiet character and its many appealing buildings, in spite of the fact that there is no mains drainage or gas, combined with easy access to the motorways. 60% of families have two or more cars while

only 4% have none.

The style of modern living, as elsewhere, has reduced the shops in the parish to one, which struggles to survive as documented later in the book. A bus service of sorts still exists, but only for the village centre.

These aspects of our heritage may be bemoaned by some, particularly the old, young and less mobile members of the community. The majority obviously has little trouble with them though as nearly 90% of respondents to the questionnaire have lived here for five years or more and 20% for a lifetime.

The readiness of many newcomers to join in village activities is a reflection of both the village spirit and the type of person who comes here. Without a sense of community this book would not have been compiled and the many other excellent achievements documented in it would not have happened.

The village schoolchildren have predicted a future when education, work, shopping and leisure activities are home-based. If this were the case, life in the parish could once again be more self-contained and less dependent on the car. Whatever the lifestyle of the future, it is hoped that the community spirit, which makes Antrobus such an attractive place to live, will flourish into the new millennium.



Buildings

ST MARK'S CHURCH

The first small beginnings of St Mark's Church came from a meeting held in the school in the winter of 1846. The Anglican community of the townships of Antrobus and Seven Oaks needed their own place to worship without travelling to Great Budworth.

Once the decision had been made to build a church, a considerable, and one can only imagine 'heated' discussion took place as to where it would be built.

There were two proposals, one by the Reverend George Eaton, who wanted the Church to be built on his land along Knutsford Road and another from Mr Jackson of Cogshall Hall who wanted it built on his!

Mr Jackson, a wealthy man, told a packed school that if he were to be allowed to build the Church, it would be a fine building with a tower and bells, built on a field held by Frandley Farm, facing the main road between Frandley and the then 'Wheatsheaf Inn'. The vote went against him and plans were made to build the Church on the proposed site on Knutsford Road. It was designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott who was one of the most successful and prolific exponents of Gothic style architecture during the Victorian period. He is famous for designing the Albert Memorial in Kensington Gardens, London. In May 1847 the Reverend George Eaton laid the foundation stone. Embedded in this stone is a bottle which contained a document about the event and one of every coin then in use.

By December that year the building was complete, with the stone for the exterior walls coming from the Delph quarry opposite Appleton Hall. The interior wall was built from bricks salvaged from an old brick kiln in Whitley. The sand came from the Ring Field at Nook Farm and the woodwork was by Mr Fairhurst of Whitley, whose premises were just past the Birch



and Bottle. Horses, of course, did the carting, over very bad roads. One horse, a grey, was famous for bringing twelve tons of stone every week from the quarry for the whole eight months it took to complete the Church. The Church is built in the Early English style and is a hundred feet long and twenty-five feet wide plus the vestry extension. The total cost being £1700. £200 was given by the Cheshire Rural Chapel Society, £75 given by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and a further £80 from the Incorporated Society.

The balance was defrayed by the Reverend Richard Greenall, the incumbent of Stretton and Rural Dean, who had taken a great interest in the building of the Church, even insisting that any stone which he thought might chip, be replaced.

ANTROBUS CHURCH
The Consecration

Of this Church is appointed to take place on
Friday the 7th of January 1848

When

A SERMON

Will be preached by the

Right Rev. The Lord Bishop of the Diocese

And a collection made towards the erection of a Parsonage
House

Divine Service will commence at Eleven o'clock.

The Church will be opened for Divine Worship

On Sunday the 9th January

When

SERMONS

Will be preached on behalf of the same object.

That in the morning by

The Rev. George Eaton, M.A.

And that in the afternoon by

The Rev. Richard Greenall, M.A.

Incumbent of Stretton and Rural Dean.

Morning Service will begin at Half past 10 o'clock.

Afternoon service at half past 2 o'clock.

The consecration, a grand affair, took place at 11am on
January 7th 1848, barely a year after the first meeting, by
Bishop Sumner who was later translated to Canterbury.



The interior of the church as it is now

On the left is a copy of a pamphlet circulated in the village
at the time.

The first baptism in the Register is that of Lucy Ormson
and the first wedding between William Sharps and Anne
Appleton, butler and housemaid at The Pole. The first
interment in the register is that of William Smith of Pole
Lane, but the first actual burial in the churchyard took
place whilst the Church was being built. Some gypsies
were encamped on a field at the west end of the Church.
One of their children died and was buried, without
service, in what was considered consecrated ground,
either under or very near the yew tree at the west end of
the Church.

The first two incumbents, Reverend L H Streane and the Reverend Henry Brooks stayed only a short time, then came Reverend J W N Tanner, a formidable looking character, who was vicar for forty-four years.

In 1863 the Chancel roof was decorated and the East and West windows together with the Chancel windows, given by Mr Samuel Higginbotham in memory of his wife, were filled with the lovely stained glass we can see today. The two windows on the south side of the nave were given in 1877 by the tenants and friends of the Reverend George Eaton of The Pole.

In 1856 Richard Coppock was appointed Parish Clerk, a post which he held for sixty-four years! He was also a rating officer and schoolmaster of Antrobus School.

The Reverend Joseph Holden served the Church for the next nineteen years, followed by the Reverend W G Lasseter and finally by the Reverend O M Tyndale, the last vicar of Antrobus who retired in 1966.

He was much loved by everyone in the Parish;



Reverend O M Tyndale
the last vicar of Antrobus

he knew each child by name and was often seen walking around the parish with his carpetbag. The people of Antrobus gave him a wonderful send off when he left presenting him with dining furniture, a bedroom suite, easy chairs and a television.

On his retirement, the Church Authorities sold the Vicarage and Antrobus was linked with Great Budworth. In 1975 Antrobus was transferred to a Union of Benefice with Appleton Thorn and then back with Great Budworth in 1984.

In 1992, a United Benefice of Four Churches was formed by Antrobus, Aston by Sutton, Little Leigh and Lower Whitley.

There have been changes and refurbishment to the interior as well as the exterior of the Church.

The Churchyard was extended in 1901 and in 1906 the present organ was bought and erected. The Church was re-pointed in 1934/5, the walls were re-plastered and electric lights put in.

In 1966 the orchard part of the Vicarage garden was transferred as part of the churchyard and was dedicated by the Bishop of Birkenhead in 1977.

At about the same time a faculty was obtained to allow cremated remains in a special section of the churchyard.

In 1974 the choir screen was moved and electric wall-heaters were installed. The screen was curtained to encourage the small congregation to sit in the front section of the church.



Choir Stalls

On Friday 11th November 1949 the Choir Stalls were dedicated as a memorial to the fallen of both the First and Second World Wars and the names of the following are recorded:

Sam Burgess	Arthur Moseley
Arthur Rustage	Holford Wilkinson
Richard Henry Maddock	Walter Keen
Arthur Blain	Robert Stanley
John Bryde Clements	Wilfred Jones
George Dickens	William Stewart Brown
John Lynskey	John Wilkinson
William Barnard Tyndale	

The Vicars of Antrobus are as follows:

1848-1850	L H Streane
1850-1850	Henry Brookes
1850-1894	J W N Tanner
1894-1914	Joseph Holden
1915-1932	W G J Lasseter
1932-1966	O M Tyndale
1967-1975	Leslie Forster
1970-1974	Chris Wright (Curate)
1975-1984	Bernard Bennett
1984-1986	John Annett
1986-1992	Derek Mills
1992-1997	Ted Drayton
1997-1998	Michael Reavil
1999	David Johnson

The four churches have grown stronger and, united, look forward to the future with confidence.

THE METHODIST CHAPEL

Methodism began in Antrobus almost 200 years ago when a faithful gentleman, Mr Leech, journeyed each Sunday on foot from Runcorn, to hold services in the old Nook Farm - a distance of twelve miles each way. There are not many records of the early days. The first attempt at keeping Treasury accounts was in 1894. Amongst the accounts are the following: Seat rents £10/12/9; Sermons £3/9/6; Subscriptions £10/9/6. The smallest item is 5/10d being the collections at the harvest festival. It would seem that the members of the congregation were not too pleased with the harvest that year. Time went by and a chapel was built in Barbers Lane where Hankeys' bungalow now stands.



It was an L-shaped building with the pulpit and choir in the angle and the pews rising in each arm. The pews were box style with two doors and were of painted wood.

In the early days the preachers had a mid-day meal at Nook Farm and later at the Wheatsheaf.

The old chapel served well but in time it became obsolete so plans were drawn up for a new building under the leadership of the Superintendent Minister, Rev. J.H. Sanders. Much help in money and gifts was received from villagers and surrounding district to raise funds.

The new chapel, built adjacent to the old one, was opened in 1936 and is a modern building including a schoolroom, divided from the chapel by folding doors so that the whole building can be used when necessary. There is a kitchen and cloakroom enabling the schoolroom to be used for various social functions. A fine organ was bought and installed in 1950 at a cost of £1400, thus completing everything necessary for worship. Money was raised



by summer sales, farm sales of implements, calves, straw and hay. The organ was inspected at different stages of construction at Liverpool and it was the smallest pipe organ that Rushworth and Dreaper had ever made.

Antrobus Methodist Chapel is part of the Warrington circuit of churches, which is in the Liverpool District. The week to week running of the church is administered by a group of members who form the Church Council.

1961 saw the Antrobus Methodist Church celebrating its Silver Jubilee with anniversary services held on Sunday 11th June when an amalgamated choir led the singing, followed on 13th June by a Public Tea at 2/6 a head. The preacher was Rev. Dr Maldwyn Edwards - President Designate of the Methodist Conference.

In the late 1960s, instead of the afternoon service, a family

service was introduced at 11 a.m. on the first Sunday of the month. Evening service continues at 6-30 p.m. and now includes, once a month, a united service with St. Mark's, the Parish Church. The Sunday School, now re-named Sunday Club, continues to meet each Sunday morning except in school holidays.

The Ladies Bright Hour meetings continue to be held on alternate Wednesdays throughout the winter months, usually in members' homes.

Special services held each year include the Chapel Anniversary, Harvest Festival, Home Missions and Overseas Missions, Ladies Sunday and Mens Sunday. The Christmas Carol service, which is arranged and led by the teachers and children of the Sunday Club, provides a joyous and very popular end to the year, with tea and mince pies served afterwards. During the week prior to Christmas both Anglicans and Methodists and also many friends join together to tour the parish in Carol Singing. The money collected is divided between St. Mark's Church funds, Chapel funds and a recognised charity.

The Sunday School and Choir outings, which were very popular years ago and usually took the form of a day at the seaside, are now a thing of the past.

Over the years some modernisation of the building has been undertaken. In 1973 the old coke heating boiler was replaced by an oil-fired system. The Church front doors have been renewed and stacking chairs are used in the schoolroom instead of the old pews. This has proved more convenient for social functions which happily seem to combine well with fund raising.

Regular events of this sort include Home Missions Luncheon, Harvest Supper, Ladies Weekend and Mens Weekend with supper and entertainment, and Coffee Mornings. Another form of fund raising, started in the 1980s, are the mammoth Jumble Sales. These are now held in the Village Hall, usually in February or March, and raise around £600 - £700. The aisle and communion area of the church is now carpeted and, in 1984, new hymn books, "Hymns and Psalms" came into regular use.

In June of 1986 - Golden Jubilee Year - a two-day Flower Festival was held in the Church, a booklet about Methodism in Antrobus was produced and many visitors came from far and near to view the Floral Art depicting the Parables. The most popular display was one of posies, done by the children of the Sunday School, linked by ribbons to a tall display of white flowers. This was entitled "Suffer the little Children to come unto Me".

By this time the pipe organ had been in use for 36 years and was in need of renovation. This was done just in time for a Songs of Praise service held on the Sunday evening of the Flower Festival. The church's two organists are Dorothy Martin and Evelyn Bolshaw and they have each been playing for over 50 years.

Throughout the life of the Church, several gifts have been bestowed upon the building, given in memory by the families of faithful members. The pulpit - Mrs Sarah Walley of Frandley Farm; the wall clock - Mr and Mrs Painter of Reed House View (now Hunters Moon); the choir spot-lights - Mr Bert Bennett of Peel Hall; the wooden cross - Mr Joe Gibbons of Knutsford Road (this cross was hand-made by his grandson Robert); the pulpit fall and altar cloth - Mr Joe Bolshaw of Brow Farm; the organ hymn books - Mrs Barbara

Lowe of Well Farm; two glass flower vases - Mrs Ethel Moores of Higher Whitley. There is also a cast iron plaque, depicting the Lord's Supper, which was donated by Mr Max Bleasdale of Knutsford Road when he left the village.

In common with many places of worship, congregations are now smaller. In 1996 the chapel celebrated its 60th anniversary. On a beautiful Saturday evening in July a barbecue was held at Brook Farm, the home of X and X. The following day an open afternoon was held in the chapel where a lot of memorabilia was on display and teas were served. This was followed by a celebration service.



An early photo of the new Methodist Chapel with the old one in the background

St MARK'S SCHOOL

In 1844 Antrobus National School was opened. It had been built by obtaining £210 in subscriptions with a further two grants of £50 and £30. The land was donated by the Eatons of "The Pole", for the purpose of building a school for the poor. The Trustees were the Vicars of Great Budworth and Stretton. The first Headmaster might have been Thomas Greeby, as we know he held this position in 1850. The School House was built in 1860, costing £118. This money was raised by subscriptions. In 1873 the Infant School and cloakrooms were added, the money being raised by a voluntary rate of 6d in the £1.

Children paid 1d per week to attend school, but there is no record of when this ended. At this time both boys and girls

learned to sew, making clothes for themselves and knitting socks. As well as the usual lessons the children were taught about the human body and alcohol. Once a year a Scripture exam was held in the morning with the afternoon being a half day holiday.

St Mark's Church was built in 1848 and after this date the Vicars went into school several days each week to conduct Scripture lessons.

On 26 February 1877 Mr Richard Coppock the Schoolmaster noted ' I have this day with extreme sorrow to record the death of our most valued and esteemed friend and school manager the Rev. G Eaton of the Pole. During the whole of the 21 years I have held the Mastership of this school, he has taken a lively interest in the welfare of scholars and teachers alike. Today he is to be interred in the Parish Churchyard, and in order to assist in taking him to his last resting place I shall close the school all day'.

In Autumn 1945 school meals were started. These were delivered in containers from Frodsham. However, later the school was able to provide fresh cooked meals and it was only after Mrs Ripley retired in 1986 after 23 years that the meals were once again delivered from a central point. These were eaten in the "Horsa" building which had been put up during the war next to the Village Hall and across the road from the school. The present cook is Mrs Wendy Wright and most of the food she serves comes ready frozen. On the Menu are such things as Chicken Teddy, Fish Penguins, Potato Smilies and Spaghetti Bolognaise with toffee apple squares as well as jam roly poly for





Former Teachers L/R
Mr Weir, Ethel Twist, Mary Turner, Nira Hodgkinson

pudding. About 60% of the children eat school dinners, the rest bring a packed lunch from home.

In January 1953 Stockton Heath Secondary Modern School opened and 22 children left Antrobus School. Staffing was reduced from three to two for the remaining 49 children.

Teachers remained in their posts for many years. Miss Pearson was Headteacher for 27 years and was followed by Mr Weir who retired in 1975 after nearly 25 years. Miss Marjorie Stelfox retired from teaching the infants in 1963 after 42 years, her place being taken by Mrs Ethel Twist, who has written an account of her life at Antrobus School at this time. A new school building was proposed in 1964 but was never funded by Cheshire County Council. Bucket toilets were changed to water closets in 1967, but remained across the yard until 1998.

In January 1970 the school had 100 pupils, due to newhouses being built in Comberbach, with 2 full time and one part time teacher as well as the Headteacher. However



The mobile classrooms and outside toilets in 1996

a new school was soon built there. In September 1986 the Mobile Classrooms arrived and these are still in place, one part having been converted for the use of the Pre-School Nursery which formerly met in the Village Hall.

The "Friends of Antrobus School" started a "100 Club" in 1988, when there were 41 children on roll. They have done a great deal of fund raising since this time including a large amount towards the building of the new school.

The first phase of the School Grounds Project was also started in 1988. At this time 380 trees and shrubs were planted and people agreed to "adopt a tree". The "Wild Area" was founded and has developed into a pleasant place to have outdoor lessons and for the children to observe nature.

In 1995 the governors and parents voted for the school to change its status to Grant Maintained, which came into effect in January 1996. This meant that the parents and local people had sole control of the running of the school rather than Cheshire County Council.



The Horsa building finally being demolished

An application for funding was then made direct to the Department for Education on the grounds of health and safety which when approved provided for a new school hall, additional classrooms, a kitchen, offices, staff room, the long awaited indoor toilets and a new playground.

The old "Horsa" building across the road, which had been used as a school hall etc, was pulled down and the children now have a warm, light, safe building in which to work and play without having to cross the increasingly busy School Lane. The extra fund -raising by the Friends of School and the use of a seed funding scheme which added pound for pound provided the total of nearly half a million pounds. It was the most expensive investment in the facilities of

Antrobus to date. The building work was completed in 1998 and formally opened by the Bishop of Chester.

The Headteacher is now Mrs Val Brooke and there are three full time teachers with two classroom assistants. School numbers continue to increase and are at present 87. The Pre-School Nursery and its associated Toddler Group is now on the same site and provides an easy transition into school. There is also an After School Club which cares for children outside school hours. The school has several networked computers. The children have controlled access to Internet and recently won an award for installing the best web pages.

Antrobus St Mark's G.M.School is flourishing.

MEMORIES OF ANTROBUS SCHOOL 1929 to 1999

MABEL CUTLER (nee Burgess), remembers that 70 years ago there were three teachers in a two roomed brick building. The larger room was divided into two for the Junior children. There were three coal fires which were lit each morning in the Winter, but the School was still very cold. The two cloakrooms had only cold water and the two sets of lavatories had bucket toilets. One set was used by the boys and the other by the teachers and girls. Miss Pearson was the Headmistress. At dinner time kettles were boiled on the fires and the teachers made tea or cocoa for the children, to have for their dinner with their sandwiches. Some children walked three miles to school. The playground was small and the boys played football in the biggest part, but at lunch time they could play hopscotch, tops and whips or skipping on the road!!

There were virtually no cars, vans or buses. They could also go to the shop, but children who did not return punctually at 1pm were caned, as they were for bad behaviour or for getting more than ten spelling mistakes.

The Vicar went into school every morning to hear prayers. One morning a week the older children went to Stockton Heath Council School, the girls for cookery and the boys for woodwork. Later the school was given part of a field by Mr Frith and there was a ditch running into a small pond in one corner. Mabel remembers that when she returned to the school as a Dinner Lady she had to stop children from playing near it and it was subsequently filled in.

When DOROTHY MARTIN, (nee Bennett), started school at the beginning of the Second World War there were only two classes. Miss Stelfox taught the 5 to 8 year old group and Miss Pearson the 9 to 14 year olds. The classrooms still had only coal fires and she remembers having to keep her coat on and all the children doing jumping exercises to keep warm. The morning began with a hymn and prayers, with the Creed and Catechism having to be learned by heart. On Friday the Vicar took Assembly. The Infants wrote on blackboards with chalk and progressed to a thin exercise book and pencil. In the second class they had pens, ink and blotting paper, with the best behaved child filling the ink wells once a week. "Times tables" were chanted every morning after assembly. Discipline was strict. Boys were caned on the bottom and girls on the hands by Miss Pearson. Infants were smacked with a wooden ruler and anyone using a swear word had carbolic soap rubbed on their tongue to wash the dirty word away! Children had to stand when a teacher or adult came into

the room and no talking or whispering was allowed. Dorothy remembers Christmas when they dressed up and acted plays. Many children were poorly dressed and all walked to school, some well over a mile. When she started school they all had to take sandwiches for their dinner but at the end of the war school dinners arrived ready cooked. At morning break time children had a small bottle of milk, the cardboard tops being saved and used for Craft classes for making raffia mats etc. The boys did gardening and for "Dig for Victory" they planted potatoes and vegetables in the top part of the field. The girls learned to sew and knit, making squares for blankets and balaclavas and scarves for soldiers and sailors. Food parcels arrived from Canada with chocolate and sweets. Children practised going into the air-raid shelter with their gas masks once a week. A few times it really was an air raid and then teachers would tell stories with the only light being from an oil lamp, until the "all clear" sounded. Rose hips were collected in the Autumn and sent to make rose hip syrup to provide Vitamin C for babies.

HAZEL RUSHTON (nee Wright), ten years later, remembers being very happy at school with lots of friends. She remembers the small bottles of milk being put near the fire to thaw out on a cold frosty morning. Sometimes the milk was quite warm by playtime!

COLIN GREENHOUGH, who was a pupil in the early sixties, remembers Mr Weir as an excellent headmaster, respected by the whole school. He was a strict but fair disciplinarian, able to judge who needed the carrot and who the stick, although Colin can never remember him using the stick.

He does remember him in his dark, double-breasted suit clapping his hands at the school door to bring the children in from playtime. If anyone was misbehaving in the playground, he only had to knock on the window to call the culprits to order.

In 1963 MRS ETHEL TWIST became Infant teacher, with special responsibility for music. She had about 24 children in her class. The room was large with a fireplace at each end and half of the room was for leisure activities and the school piano - "a good one". The day began with assembly, taken by the Vicar on Thursdays, then followed registration, news chat and reading and writing until 10.30am. After playtime it was maths until dinner time. Excellent meals were served in the "Horsa" building, having been prepared in the kitchen there. At dinner time the children were supervised by the Dinner Ladies. There was a happy family atmosphere with no bullying. In the afternoon art, craft, music, dancing, and nature continued until playtime, which was followed by story or drama before the children went home at 3.30pm. At Christmas there was a Nativity Play and a Carol Service. The latter alternated between Antrobus Church and the Methodist Chapel, with all the children participating. In Spring the children took part in the Schools Group Music Festival and later in the year the Country Dancing Festival. Sports Day (with house trophies) and a swimming gala were held. The children went to Stockton Heath for swimming lessons each Friday. Jointly with Great Budworth School a football team was raised to play against other schools. The teachers were on duty at the Annual Village Fete for childrens sports, fancy dress, art competitions etc. and the Maypole Dancing. Mrs Twist also spent an hour a week introducing the top Juniors to French

conversation.

MARGARET HIGGINS, (nee Plant), remembers Mrs Twist as her first teacher and her classroom being the "Horsa" building. The school had only 40 -50 pupils at this time. Mrs Barnes taught the next class in the present school library. She caused a lot of amusement by chasing some chickens (which had escaped) across the school field followed by the children in her class! Mrs Hayes then taught the older children developing in Margaret a love of books which has remained with her. The strangest memory she has is of stepping backwards into the pond and ending up fully immersed with a stickleback swimming in her blouse! Margaret's Father also attended the school and her Grandfather was on the Board of Governors when she was a pupil. Now her daughter Kelly-Anne is in her first year at Antrobus School.

ROSALIND HODGKINSON started at the school in 1983. At this time all the Infants were taught in the Horsa building by Mrs Dibb. The food being cooked could be smelt all morning! She particularly disliked the outside toilets (not buckets now), which were cold, damp and full of spiders, so she tried to wait until she got home. The best part however was going on a residential visit to Fox Howl at Delamere. She went on a "night walk" with torches, had a camp fire and barbeque and did lots of giggling.

By the time Ros was in the Juniors the school had a mobile classroom and she was in Mrs Blease's class. Anyone talking too much was sent to work in the cloakroom between the two classrooms. Beautiful books were made with Mrs Hayes and Mrs Barnes, who also read the Alan Garner books to the children. Poetry and art were done with Mrs Hayes.

The latter was also in charge of the production of "The Firebird" and Ros remembers all the problems to get it all right on the night. She remembers Maypole dancing and getting the ribbons tangled -the boys made to join in on sufferance. Mrs Hayes also took the children to Menai for four days. Ros remembers playing in the rounders team and reaching the finals but the match was cancelled because it rained!

CLARE JOHNSON is a 10 year old pupil at Antrobus School. She remembers starting school not being a problem as she played with her older sister at break time and had lots of friends from Antrobus Playgroup. Mrs Griffiths taught the first class and Clare remembers making a shadow picture of her head, doing lots of colouring and painting and hatching some chicks in an incubator. In Summer they went outside and Mrs Griffiths read a story while the children sat under a tree. In Class 2 they studied Ancient Egypt and visited the Museum in Warrington. Clare is now in the top class where she is taught by Mrs Brooke and Mrs Whitehead. This year they have started doing the Literacy Hour and in September the Numeracy hour will begin. The biggest change since Clare started school has been the new building. Before it was built the children had to line up and wait with a teacher until it was safe to cross the road to the Horsa building. She hated going to the toilet because it was very dark when she shut the door and there were lots of cobwebs. The new Hall is much bigger than the Horsa building and better for P.E. The new playground is brilliant and Clare loves playing netball especially against other schools on the new court. She will always remember the school plays because she loves acting and singing and everybody has lots of fun doing them.

MRS JANE GRIFFITHS – INFANT TEACHER

"Life at Antrobus School in the 1990s has been an ever-changing canvas, sometimes exciting and dramatic, sometimes traumatic, always demanding, never dull. In contrast and almost despite the changes, the threads of constancy have bound the whole together. First, and most importantly, there are the children of the school, both from the village and further afield, who continue to respond, work, play, grow, develop and move on having benefited from and contributed to the school community. Secondly, there are the members of staff who strive to work successfully with national curriculum, OFSTED inspection, literacy hour, numeracy hour and still smiling, to provide a stable and stimulating environment for the children.

There have been several notable milestones and special events in the life of the school during the last few years. In 1994 we celebrated 150 years since the school opened in 1844. The May weather was disappointing but the festivities were uninhibited, with children, staff and parents dressed in Victorian costume to welcome visitors.

My own proud moment came when the children entertained everyone with maypole and country dancing.

The 'Ribbon Dance' - a favourite with the children - was recognised by Evelyn Bolshaw who remembered dancing it when she was a pupil. She even has a photograph to prove it! OFSTED inspection added extra zest to December 1996. As is often the case with long-awaited events, the anticipation proved to be worse than the occurrence and we survived with a satisfactory 'pat on the back.' The children in my class were quite disappointed that the 'special' visitors were only staying for a week.



In 1995 the parents and governors made the momentous decision to change the status of the school and in January 1996 we became Antrobus St Mark's Grant Maintained School. With much determination and hard work the project to replace the outside toilet blocks and the HORSIA building with a new extension to the old school building, gradually came to fruition.

At Easter 1998 class 2 and class 3 gratefully moved in to their spacious new rooms, and we all enjoy the amenities of the new hall.

The new buildings were opened in June 1998 by the Bishop of Chester. One of the mobile classrooms was refurbished and Antrobus Pre-School Nursery moved in. A corner of the garden was developed by nursery staff and parents to provide exciting outdoor play facilities for the pre-school children. The wonderful facilities of our new hall have increased the scope for school music and drama productions and for P.E.



We have taken advantage of the national TOPSPORT initiative which provides equipment for a wide range of sports skills.



The children take part in rounders tournaments, cricket festivals, swimming galas, football and netball matches undaunted by the competition from bigger schools.

Looking back to 1988 I remember the ideas, planning and hard work that inspired the whole school when the 'Wild Area' was designed. Over the years it has grown into a magical place providing an ever-changing natural resource for science and art and a perfect backdrop for imaginative play. A major facelift is nearing completion using funds from a successful bid to the Manchester Airport Community Trust Fund.



Celebrating the latest Wild Area Developments.

1999 has brought a huge expansion in computer capacity in our classrooms. We have always given the potential of computers high priority starting with the first three B.B.Cs 18 years ago. We now have 14 computers between three classes and networked internet access. A change of government has brought us yet another change of status. From September 1999 we have chosen to be a Church of England Aided School which will retain the local control of the school.

We enter the 21st century with enthusiasm and confidence that we are providing the best education for the children of Antrobus.

New classrooms, hall, kitchen, offices, staff room, entrance hall, cloakrooms and INSIDE toilets at last in 1998.



ANTROBUS PRE - SCHOOL NURSERY

The Pre-School Nursery has seen many changes since it was set up as a playgroup in the early 1970s and is probably now totally unrecognisable from the way it was in its early days. It was originally founded as a non-profit making organisation to help bring local children together and give them opportunities to socialize and make friends in a stimulating environment. The doors opened to 11 children in December 1971 and from then on Playgroup grew into an established part of village life based in the parish hall. In 1979 the Playgroup moved into the newly constructed Village Hall.



The Tenth Birthday of Playgroup



The Pre-School
Nursery in 1999



When the Village News started publication in 1982 Playgroup was then able to keep the Village informed of its activities. In the early 90s just as Playgroup celebrated its 21st anniversary the number of children on the register dropped to 9 and it was on the brink of closure so some desperate action was needed. The name was changed to Antrobus Pre-school Nursery and adverts were put in shops, clinics, estate agencies etc.

At the same time hours were extended and that seemed to do the trick, the numbers shot up and have stayed up ever since. Playgroup/Nursery has always run on a tight budget with much of its income coming from fundraising and with most of its staff working as unpaid volunteers or low paid supervisors.

Social Services now carry out annual inspections to make sure guidelines set down by the Children's Act are followed. Health and Safety Officers visit and policy documents have to be produced to show that all their requirements are met. The government stepped in a couple of years ago with huge demands for pre-school groups. A curriculum had to be planned, worksheets made, records of the children's progress kept, and set standards of learning had to be met. As many as possible of the positive aspects that were the foundations of the original playgroup have been maintained, community and parental involvement, friendly atmosphere and opportunities for parents and children to form life-long friendships. There have also had to be changes and developments in order to meet the demands of the government and many of today's parents.

In true Antrobus style this was all done with determination and hard work. At first there were doubts about "educating" such young children but the only real changes involve directing their play a little. The move into a classroom at school last year was one of the most important events of Playgroup's existence. For the first time equipment and furniture does not have to be set up and stored away at each session and displays can be put on walls. All groups with young children, Mother and Toddlers, Playgroup (for 2 - 3 year olds) and Nursery now have their own place and can

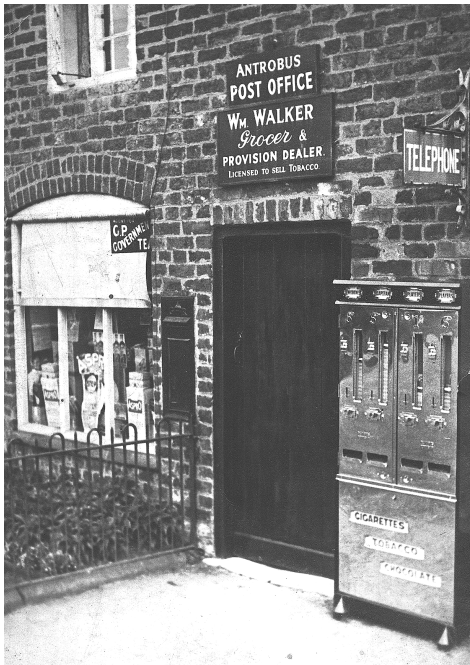
be open at times to suit them. Nursery is now established on the same site as school and is thriving. The close integration with school has helped the children to start 'Big School' as a natural progression without tears.

Nearly all the children and parents in Antrobus have had some contact with playgroup with many happy memories, and The Pre-School Nursery moves forward with confidence to the new millennium .



The Pre-School Nursery now in its own premises within the school

THE VILLAGE SHOP



Up to 1962 the Post Office and shop was run by Mr William Walker and his sister Emmie.

She used to deliver the post in Antrobus by bicycle after it was brought from Northwich. He had a market garden where The Old Orchard is now.

The part of the building to the right which is now living accommodation was the whole shop and Post Office. It had a very limited range of services.



In February 1962 Reg and Doreen Collins took over the premises, just before their daughter Susan was born. The shop was extended to take in a large living room.

It had an unusual feature – an impressive fireplace with a chimney that only went as far as the first floor.

Reg and Doreen soon increased the range of services and began deliveries of groceries. An off-licence was obtained. Reg remembers that bread sold at 6p and cheese at 14p per pound.

Doreen's sister-in-law, Lilian, helped in the shop for about 20 years when her confidence was shaken by a robbery which took place while she was alone behind the counter. When they retired in 1989 Reg and Doreen handed over the running of the business to their son Trevor and his wife, Sandra. The Post Office counter was moved to the other end of the building and the display of goods was altered. The greenhouse was demolished to create a garden for the young Collins children. The opening hours were extended and trade was reasonably good. The shop continued to provide an important social centre and meeting place for villagers to exchange gossip.

Since then, people's shopping habits have changed and trade has decreased over the years. Competition from Tesco, Sainsbury's, Aldi and Morrisons and the increase in use of cars for one-stop shopping have all had their effect on village stores. Overheads have increased leaving little with which to restock the shelves.

In 1997, Trevor sought advice from The Rural Development Commission, Vale Royal and Retail Advisors and managed to obtain a business development loan. The shop was refurbished and restocked. The villagers were asked what services they required via a questionnaire and Trevor did his best to provide them. This was a great improvement and business picked up for a while. Sadly the increase in trade was short-lived and in May 1999 the decision was made to limit the size of the shop and trading hours. Trevor returned to his trade of joiner leaving Sandra to operate the Post Office and sell a small range of essential

items.

The Village Shop remains an important hub of village life. Local events are publicised, advertisements are displayed and it is a collection point for items for The Village News. It is hoped this valuable service will be able to continue for many years.



The Shop in 1999

ANTROBUS VILLAGE HALL.

In 1932 a proposal was put forward to start a club for the young men and lads of Antrobus and district, aiming to start in the winter months. The newly appointed vicar, Rev O.M. Tyndale supported the idea and offered to help achieve this aim. In July, however, the proposal was modified and it was decided that if funds permitted a permanent Village Institute should be built near the centre of the parish, in time for the winter of 1932. The building would supply the village with a much needed social centre open to all who wished to use it. Most of the village supported the scheme and so a committee was formed representing every side of village life.

An appeal was circulated around the parish stating that no contribution would be too small, nor, of course too large !! The trustees of the fund were Mr. Richard Bolshaw, Mr John Burgess, Mr Chas Sutton and Rev Oliver Tyndale.

By October, after a vicarage garden party and various donations the Building Fund totalled £45.11.0d. By the end of 1932 the grand total of £79 had been raised by means of whist drives and dances held at the school. Major and Mrs Boyd donated prizes and refreshments. Mr Richard Bolshaw and his sister Mrs Richard Frith most generously promised to donate a site in the middle of the village, opposite the village school. The school building was at that time used as a reading room and meeting place for social gatherings, etc.

In 1933 draft plans were submitted to the Runcorn Rural Council for a brick built structure, an ambitious project.

Times were very hard in the 1930's. Most people were working in Agriculture and wages were low. The parish was also fund raising to build a new Methodist Chapel and St. Mark's Church was in need of repair. It must have been very difficult trying to support everything.

It was 1939 before sufficient funds were collected to enable the Village Hall to become a reality. The plans were modified and a timber construction 75ft x 25ft was proposed with a main room 45ft x 25ft.



Original village hall
before part was demolished in 1979

The following is an extract from the WARRINGTON GUARDIAN dated Saturday 25th February 1939.

'Parish Hall Opened. Generosity of Mr & Mrs Stewart Brown'.

"An event of considerable importance, the New Parish Hall was opened on Tuesday afternoon by Mrs H. Stewart Brown of the Pole. The hall, a spacious room, has been erected by voluntary efforts, about £430 having been raised during the last three years. The Committee comprised, The Rev. Oliver Tyndale. (Chairman) Messrs. J Burgess Snr., B. Bolshaw, F Hindle Snr., L. Mounfield, C. H. Sutton, J White, Miss K. Walker, G Birkenhead, H. Dickens, Mr. Taylor, (Secretary) and Mr W Walker. (treasurer)

At the opening Ceremony, Mrs Clements, who presided, outlined the efforts for the hall and referred to the kindness of Mr R Bolshaw & Mrs R Frith in giving the land, and the generosity of Mr & Mrs Stewart Brown who had contributed freely. Mrs Stewart Brown, opening the hall, said the people would feel a just pride in their work. It was labour rewarded and would be a great help in the social life of the parish.

The Vicar, proposing a vote of thanks to Mrs Brown, said everyone was grateful to her for opening the Parish Hall and also the great help which Mr and Mrs Brown had given financially. Mr F Hindley Snr. seconded. Mrs A Taylor, wife of the secretary, presented Mrs Stewart Brown, a golden key, the gift of the committee, and to Mrs Clements a pencil from the wives, sisters and daughters of members of the committee. Songs were given by Mrs Brennan. Tea was served."

This timber building served the village well for over 40

years. It was quite a focal point for miles around. Many young men serving in the armed forces who were stationed in the area came to the dances. The Lancashire Fusiliers manned a searchlight site at Morris Farm, Knutsford Rd, Antrobus. The R.A.F. Regiment manned a 'Dummy Airfield' at Aston by Budworth, Marbury Park had a contingent of troops, and of course at Appleton Thorn there was the Naval Air Station, H.M.S. Blackcap. Young ladies came along to Antrobus Parish Hall weekly dances on foot, by bicycle, and by taxi. There were 'Shilling Hops' (5p) and Whist Drives and Dances for 1/6d (about 7p) At Christmas, 'Fur and Feather Whist Drives' were extremely popular, with over 40 whist tables placed around the room, even on the stage packing the hall to capacity. Mr & Mrs Arthur Taylor, were secretary and caretakers. They kept a strict control on its use. No intoxicating liquor was allowed to be consumed on the premises. This ruling was slightly amended in 1959 when it was agreed that intoxicating wine could be consumed, but only at a wedding celebration held within the hall and just to toast the bride and groom at the wedding breakfast. In 1975 the trustees could apply for occasional licences, providing that earlier functions had been conducted to the satisfaction of the committee. At that time the bars were serviced by local publicans, who also obtained the licence and staffed the bars. The hall did not receive any of the profit from the bars. In 1976, stricter regulations about the numbers of persons allowed in public buildings, particularly old timber buildings, and high maintenance and repair costs, made the committee put forward plans for a larger and more permanent building of brick construction.

Please Read This!



A PUBLIC MEETING

will be held at

The Parish Hall

on

Tuesday, 30th November, 1976

at 7-30 p.m. to discuss the building of the New Hall.

♦♦

Please Come Along . . .

. . . Everybody Welcome

The public meeting organised in 1976 was well attended and with the support of the parish, plans went forward for a new larger village hall which could accommodate approx. 200 people. A building fund committee was formed and a variety of events and functions were planned. The estimated cost of the new building was approx. £32,000. At that time grants were available from various sources. It was hoped that up to £24,000 in grant aid could be obtained, and about £8,000 from fund raising.

The committee were most fortunate to have Coni and Bill Sutton and Bryan

and Gillian Bane to enthuse them with some very ambitious ideas for fund raising. Besides the usual dances, discos, sponsored walks, auction sales, and the like, they suggested a 'Country Fair' at Antrobus Hall Farm, This entailed a tremendous amount of work and planning.



Help was enlisted from all around the parish. Ladies of the Women's Institute formed little house groups, making 'Craft' items and needlework, baking cakes, pies and goodies to be deep frozen to sell at the fair. Other helpers made stands and frontage for stalls and side shows. Sign boards and many direction signs were painted. The ladies of the 'Friendship Club' were enlisted to help with needlework, make cakes and help prepare, cut up and wrap the mountains of sandwiches to feed the crowds. Posters were displayed. The local radio and television publicised the event. Special arrangements for traffic and car parking had to be arranged.

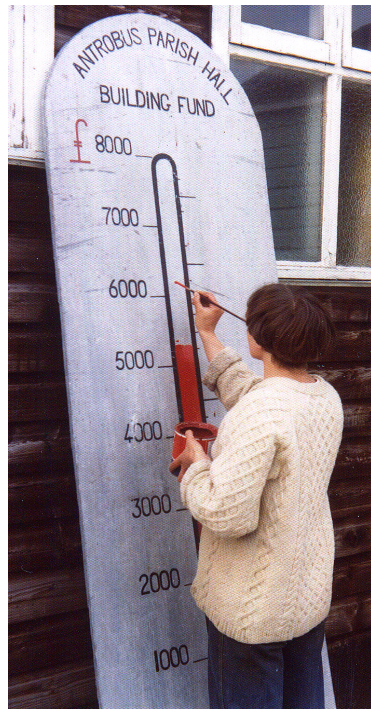
The village had never seen anything like it! Crowds turned up in thousands to take part in a full day's entertainment from early morning until dusk.



It was a great day out for all the family at a very reasonable price of 40p including a 36 page programme. There were all the usual country events; show jumping, gymkhana, ponies, dogs, traction engines, archery, bale pitching, welly tossing, clay pigeon shoot, arm wrestling, bowling for a pig, ducking stool, craft stalls, bric a brac, trade stands, model girl competition, fun fair and sideshows. Sponsors and advertisers helped pay for the cost of marquees, special attractions and prizes. All the hard work was very much worth while and the committee were delighted to have raised £2,000 in the one day. However, shortly after the success of the fair, they learned that due to the economic situation, grants were to be restricted and Antrobus did not qualify. A public meeting was called and it was decided to use volunteer labour to build the new hall. It was fortunate that among the population of 700 people, it included a number of craftsmen and qualified professional men, along with any number of individuals prepared to graft in their spare time. They were welded into a team of considerable acumen as well as 'muscle.'

The spring of 1977 saw a Great Auction Sale which was held at the Old Pole Farm. This raised £1,100.

Plans were submitted to Vale Royal Council for the building of the new hall and approval was



given. Other fundraising events followed. After the success of the first 'Country Fair' it was agreed to go ahead with another, this time over two days in September 1977 at Antrobus Hall Farm. It was felt that not much more work would be required to run the event over the two days.

1st May 1977 saw the lifting of the field hedge at the rear of the old hall and the first 'sod' was cut. At last the new hall was to become a reality.

About the same time the Old Dutton Workhouse was being dismantled and so arrangements were made for the best of the old bricks to be salvaged and cleaned. Then someone came up with the idea of contacting the Governor of Appleton Thorn 'Open' Prison to ask if it would be possible to have help from some of the prisoners on a 'Community Help Scheme'.

The following are the minutes of the first meeting of the building committee 10 May 1977:

Present:- M.Bracegirdle, J.Bradford, R.Collins, R.Evans, K. Hazlehurst, E.Wright, L.Storey.

1. Chairman elected:- M.Bracegirdle Proposed by R.Collins
Seconded by R.Evans

2. Duties:- Overall Supervisor, M.Bracegirdle
Work Supervisors, M.Bracegirdle,
K.Hazlehurst, L.Storey, E.Wright
T.Wright to be contacted by K.Hazlehurst and
R.Collins.
A.Tickle to be contacted by E.Wright.
Treasurer, R.Evans
Materials, J.Bradford
Labour, K.Foster
Equipment, R.Collins
Catering, S.Evans and Another
Diary, Member of W.I.

3. A hut has been promised by Mr Riley. R.Collins to arrange for collection and placing in area as tool and office shed.

4. Tools:- M.Bracegirdle will arrange for 6 spades and 2 barrows to be available. R.Collins to be responsible for the safety of these.

5. Meals-Break Drinks:- Materials will be provided. Working party will make their own. When prisoners are present, lunch will be prepared by ladies. (Usually 5, 2 building team and 3 prisoners.)

6. Labour:- Normally only 2/3 building team with 2/3 prisoners. (Numbers must be matched.) One person will collect and return prisoners at appointed times and be responsible for them on site.

7. Materials:- J.Bradford will be told well in advance when materials are required and he will be responsible for arranging for them to be available, or informing supervisors.

8. Working Hours:- Saturdays 9.00 to 16.00
Sundays 9.00 to 15.30

Programme this week:-

Set out area, levels etc. Hazlehurst,
and Wright or Storey.
Check work. Bracegirdle and E.Wright
Saturday Morn. Super. Storey
Requirements; 2 Tractors & trailers
1 Digger & Driver
4 men
Sunday Morn. Super. Storey
Afternoon Super. Bracegirdle
1 Digger & Driver, 4 men

21/22 May. Continue to dig out footings, prisoners required.

28/29 May. Concrete may be required at 8.30am for footings. Large party required.

NOTE. The building work by the community went on for 20 months, from May 1977 until early January 1979.

He agreed and allowed a few men to help at weekends and in the evenings. One of the prisoners was a qualified bricklayer. Transport and supervision of the men had to be arranged. The ladies of the village provided meals for them at weekends and in the evenings. The Building work was organised and supervised by Martyn Bracegirdle. John Bradford was the supplies officer. It was most fortunate that the



spring weather in 1977 was glorious whilst the preparation for the footings and base proceeded. From the start teamwork and community spirit were much in evidence. Rotas were set up for working parties, many people picking up skills that they had not previously tackled. Derek Hazelhurst was enlisted to lay the first brick on the 30th May 1977. The long hot summer days meant that the brickwork progressed and by September the roofing timbers and trusses were in place, then the roofing felt and tiles, allowing interior work to carry on in the winter months. Many of the tasks were quite time consuming, plumbing and

pipework for the central heating, many weeks of back breaking work installing the wooden ceiling, each board fixed with invisible nailing and then treated with fire proof varnish, several coats. The semi sprung floor was laid by professionals at a cost of £4,000.

There was a hive of activity and industry in the hall by the first two weeks of the new year in 1979 as volunteers painted radiators and doors and put up curtain rods. The Women's Institute ladies brought along sewing machines and ironing boards, working late into the evenings with yards and yards of curtain material and linings spread across the hall floor for measuring then sewing.

The first function in the hall was arranged for Friday 15th January 1979.

B.B.C. 'Look North' came along to feature the community spirit of Antrobus and the building of the new Village Hall.

Alistair McDonald interviewed Reg Collins and Albert Lowe. It was a proud moment for the village.

The old wooden hall was still used for a cloakroom and toilets, a committee room/lounge and kitchen until further funds could be raised.



Half the original wooden hall was retained for amenities. Between 1976 and 1981 six Country Fairs were organised. Each year there was a new attraction. Mary Chipperfield's Camels came to race on Reg Collins' Manley Farm Fields in 1979. The last two fairs were held at Old Mill Farm. These featured KickStart Motor Cycle Events and Giant Tractor Pull. The project won an award given by Shell U.K. for Community Spirit. A float depicting the country fair won first prize at the Warrington Festival.



Warrington Festival float 1979

The six 'Country Fairs' raised a total of £29,500.

1976	Antrobus Hall Farm	£2,000
1977	"	£4,000
1978	Manley Farm	£5,000
1979	"	£5,600
1980	Old Mill Farm	£6,200
1981	"	£6,700

ANTROBUS COUNTRY FAIR ACCOUNTS 1979

INCOME		EXPENDITURE			
	£				
Gate	3412.27	Tea-room & Ice-cream *	414.48	Radio Piccadilly	250.00
BBQ	430.15½	Trade Stands	86.50	Dog Show Licence	2.50
Potato Bar	107.84	Grand Draw	441.13	Badges (J.Wilkinson)	29.20
Craft & Produce	692.06	Adv. Programmes	33.70	Alpha Tent Hire	127.50
Camels, tote	71.11	Arm Wrestling	4.00	Tombola No2 (Bolshaw)	44.09
Clay Pigeon	246.24½	Not Identified	39.55½	Advert (Our Dogs)	9.00
Tombola No1	273.09½	Donkeys	12.00	St John's Ambulance	30.00
Tombola No2	116.02	Hamburgers'n onions	7.25	Antrobus CF Mugs	61.50
White Elephant	29.72½	Barratt Homes	300.00	Cash & Carry (Sutton)	25.51
Teddy Raffle	66.08	Williams Motors	200.00	Lime (C Sutton)	1.10
Pony Rides	84.66	Pooles	100.00	Paint & Brushes	11.55
Balloons	95.64½	A.J.Clarke	100.00	Envelopes	0.60
Bubbly Roulette	250.32½	I.C.I. Mond	10.00	Makro (C.Sutton)	213.52
Ferret Roulette	72.92	Anonymous	30.50	Cash & Carry (Sutton)	8.23
Ski Ball	29.79	Edward Wright	35.00	J Consterdine(P.A.)	80.00
Horse Shoe	3.55	Manchester Auction	1.95	Custom Cars Prize	8.00
Darts	26.06	Friends of School	10.00	Camels	724.50
Bale Pitching	11.41	Fairground	30.00	Dink International	55.00
Bowling for a Pig	69.41	Playgroup	3.38	Gas (Balloons)	25.00
Rat in a Drain	13.10	Cacti Show	5.00	Cashier	5.00
Krazy Kitchen	49.95	Advertisers	443.00	Makro (Phillips/Harrison)	123.52
Moon Walk	115.49		<u>9692.51½</u>	Reliance Press(Draw)	55.20
Rifle Range	35.35			Peeks Rosettes	25.30
Ducking Stool	76.80			Prestfield Fabrics	107.93
Hoop-la	23.40			T.O.W. shields	12.96
Coconut Shy	52.81			String thing Prizes	154.10
String Thing	419.56½			Printing	825.00
Three in a Bog	46.81½			Terrier Prizes	5.50
Greasy Pole	11.90			Shire Horse Prizes	99.00
Gorilla Ball	35.13			Dog Show Prizes	13.35
Gymkhana	331.75			Tombola No1	80.00
Terrier Racing	2.49			Marston Youth Club Tent	45.00
Dog Show	48.40			Makro (Bane)	4.02
Shire Horses	18.00			Eggs& String	2.98
Lurchers & Terriers	15.75			T.F.Hughes (Coal)	140.00
				R. Collins	244.00
					<u>4052.53</u>

*Free teas to the value of £130.00 were issued.

About the time that the hall was completed, the field alongside the new building was put up for sale. The Village Hall Committee agreed to purchase it. The field has been an asset to the village. The Village Fete now has a site on which to hold the event each year. £10,000 was spent on surfacing the car park.

In the last couple of years, after a vast amount of work by the Secretary Grace Greenough and Heather Sutton, £40,000 was awarded by the 21st Century Halls of England, an organisation which allows grants of up to 50% of costs of substantial improvements to Village Halls to celebrate the Millennium.



The new entrance to the Village Hall

In the summer of 1998 further improvements were made to the hall, providing a new entrance hall, kitchen, cloakroom and toilets, including disabled facilities and a multi purpose room costing about £90,000.

It was officially opened on Saturday 16th January 1999 by Cllr. Keith Musgrove, Mayor of Vale Royal and Mr. Martin Bell, M.P. Grants also came from Vale Royal, Cheshire County Council, Antrobus Parish Council, Antrobus Trustees. Many people, too numerous to mention, have helped to fund-raise and continue to arrange functions and organise whist drives, the manning of the bars, short-mat bowling and taking the bookings. Antrobus has a 21st century village hall to be proud of.



A View from the Village Hall Field

ARCHITECTURE

The architecture of Antrobus is a tangible survivor of times past and can provide us with a wealth of information about the lives of its inhabitants. The early peasant houses were built with inferior materials and did not last; they were gradually replaced with substantial buildings and these, more permanent dwellings, serve as an indication of the growth of wealth in our community. Built to meet local demand and made, of necessity, out of local materials, these dwellings appear to relate to, and belong to, this particular area, providing local character and giving a unique regional personality. The materials used were those closest to hand; earth, wood, stone and from around 1600, local hand-made bricks.

Cheshire is famous for its black and white timbered buildings, this was in some part due to a lack of good quality brick. The local clay had too high a salt content which caused problems in the baking process. This produced poor quality, friable bricks and left the builders with no alternative but to carry on the tradition of building in wood. Antrobus, and its surrounding area differs from this due to 'better' quality clay. This in turn led to the building of our lovely Georgian farmhouses.

Dairy farming has been the principal agriculture in this part of Cheshire for centuries. The farmers turned their excess milk into cheese as a way of preserving it. Without any form of refrigeration, there was only a very local market for milk before the advent of canals and railways. With these forms of communications, came an increased market, provided by

the expanding urban areas around Liverpool and Manchester and wealth flowed into the village. With their new found prosperity, the farmers began to improve their houses. Humble cottages were rebuilt or extended in better quality materials, bricks made from local clay. Many fields still carry the name 'Clay-pit field', and 'Brick-kiln field'.

Clay was dug from local fields in the winter months and left so that the frost could break it up. In the spring it was wetted and trodden out on hay or straw, strewn on the ground to prevent it sticking, until all pebbles and other foreign bodies had been removed. It was then placed into wooden moulds and left to dry for a month or so before being fired for approximately a week. As clay was often dug and fired adjacent to the building the results reflect the locality, the colour of bricks dependent on the local clay, which gave rise to a distinctive dusky brown and red brindled effect which harmonised with the surroundings.

The Georgian farmhouses were based on the Palladian architecture so popular during the eighteenth century. Symmetrical facades and window grouping around an imposing entrance were features copied extensively throughout the area. Palladio's original buildings, designed for a hot climate, were adapted to suit the rigours of Cheshire farming life. Giacomo Leoni was employed to redesign Lyme Hall, Cheshire, in the style of Palladio's villas in 1720. Perhaps this influenced our farmers in their choice of architecture.

Tiles were also made in local kilns, these were nailed or hung by moulded ribs from battens, the pitch upward of 45°. From the many beautiful Georgian farmhouses remaining in the village there is one which has retained many of its original external features as well as still having an original cheese store inside.



Grandsires Green Farmhouse

Grandsires Green Farmhouse built in 1810 on a stone plinth, is a very early example of this imposing architecture.

It is a double-pile, three-bay building with a Tuscan porch supported by a semi-circular radial bar fanlight and a triangular pediment. Built of local brick it has distinctive stone quoins. The sash windows have rusticated keystone wedge lintels and projecting stone sills. The chimneys on most of these buildings are flush with the gables. Buildings such as these were regarded as a status symbol, an outward sign of wealth. A supply of good quality clay meant that farmers in this area could show the world, or at least their neighbours, their new-found wealth. The continued existence of all these attractive houses should not cause us to forget the poor people's housing. The oldest surviving dwellings are the 'cruck'-built and timber framed houses of one up, one down or single storey construction. Even these were likely to have been the houses of relatively well-off workers, such as farm foremen or craftsmen. The labourer or unemployed person would have lived in a wattle and daub constructed building with one room. The Overseer of the Poor's accounts for 1758 tells us that 'the families of Mary Ellison, Sarah Ellison, Martha Jones and Hannah Robinson must be confined to one house'. It is difficult to imagine what conditions in these houses must have been like.

Even in the 1900s, families had lived in wooden huts such as those erected during WW1 in Moss-side Lane. In the 1930s these were occupied by Arthur Littler, his parents and the Stocks family. One is still in use and the other two collapsed and burned down respectively.

We are fortunate today that virtually everyone has a comfortable home, whatever their financial position.

THE OLD ORCHARD

The area of land behind the Post office, now known as Old Orchard, belonged to Mr William Walker. He used it for a market garden and orchard while he ran the Post Office and shop. His produce was sold on market stalls in Northwich and Warrington. Mr Walker died in 1961. He had no relatives and his estate was left to the Birkenhead family of Antrobus in recognition of the help they had given him over many years.

On 5th April 1973, the land was sold by auction for £165,000. A Liverpool builder, Woods and Partners, bought the 3.34 acres and obtained planning permission for 31 detached houses and 3 bungalows.

The Parish Council wanted the development to be phased over a few years and requested that there should be a mixture of properties, some moderately priced so that young people of the village could afford to stay in the area. They also proposed that the land fronting Knutsford Road between the Church and the Post Office should be used for council houses. The County Council refused.

Plans were finally approved in June 1973 but the next 13 years were full of problems. Four developers were involved and plans concerning drainage, roads and styles of houses were all modified.



The final bungalow was occupied in 1986. The homes went on the market with a starting price of £17,950 and were described as “Luxury detached houses set in the heart of Cheshire countryside.”

Since then dwellings have changed hands fairly regularly. Many have been extended, some with conservatories.

In 1999 some of the houses have come on the market at around £100,000.

MANLEY CLOSE AFFORDABLE HOUSING



At the Parish Council meeting in July 1988 Ray Lawton, Chairman, read out a short article from the Northwich Guardian on Government thinking on Affordable Houses for Villages. At that time young people with strong links with the village were finding it difficult to buy or rent homes in Antrobus because of the high cost of property. They were leaving the village and in so doing weakening the existing and future community.

A working party was set up in September with Ray Lawton as Chairman and Ann Barlow, Coni Sutton, Stan Owen and Roy Read as members. Following meetings with Vale Royal

Planning Officers and others, a Needs Survey was compiled and 298 forms were distributed with the Antrobus Village News. In January 1990 148 of the forms were collected on cold, wet and snowy evenings and weekends, each house in the village being visited up to three times. Twenty-eight questionnaires were returned with a requirement for affordable housing. An Open Meeting was held in the Village Hall in May. This was mainly positive and a decision was taken to proceed further with the project.

That month Ann Barlow became Chairman of the Housing Working Party and Ron Mounfield joined the group.

Three Housing Associations were interviewed by the Parish Council and Merseyside Improved Houses was chosen as our partner in the scheme. Specific demand was ascertained by a second questionnaire and as a result of this the Housing Corporation made funding available for six houses in June 1991. An architect was appointed and all seemed to be going smoothly when a problem was encountered with the original proposed site and an alternative plot of land had to be found. In February 1992 land was purchased from Reg and Doreen Collins without whose support the scheme would not have materialised. The Lettings Policy (106 Agreement) was drawn up to ensure that the houses would be available for people with strong connections with Antrobus. It was written in the belief that it will be binding in perpetuity or for as long as the houses exist.

The plans for the houses and the location of the site were unveiled at an Open Meeting in the Village Hall in March 1992. Parish Councillors, M.I.H. and Vale Royal Planning and Housing staff were all in attendance. It was a lively evening with many searching questions being asked. From this point there was some opposition to the scheme resulting in letters and articles in the Newspapers. The Antrobus Village News was invaluable in keeping parishioners informed of progress and lively correspondence for and against the scheme was published.

Plans were submitted for 6 rented and 4 shared ownership houses in May 1992. For a variety of reasons including changes in the housing / mortgage market affecting shared ownership these were withdrawn and resubmitted for 6 rented and 2 shared ownership. The protestors to the scheme increased their activity but at a noisy and disrupted Vale Royal Planning Meeting in November 1992 the application was approved and the scheme went to tender. A peaceful sod cutting ceremony was held in February 1993 and the houses were occupied in November of that year. Later two further houses to rent were built to complete the scheme to its original specification. One interesting fact is that when the houses were allocated there were 27 applicants, not all from the original survey of need.

Following the merger of M.I.H. and Riverside Housing Association Riverside became responsible for the



Ron Mounfield Chairman of Antrobus Parish Council with the Mayor at the sod cutting Ceremony in 1993.

houses. Prospective tenants still have to register with Vale Royal and the 106 Agreement is still in force. In the booklet produced to accompany the sod cutting ceremony Antrobus Parish Council made the following statement:

“The following pages give an outline of the scheme, the steps forward and the times when progress was very slow. It is a statement of the work carried out by a relatively small group of people. However, it is impossible to convey their determination and vision. Soon the building of the Affordable Houses will become a small part of Antrobus history. Antrobus Parish Council believe the houses and their occupants will strengthen and enhance our community.”

It has proved to be so.



Manley Close in 1999

SENIOR CITIZENS BUNGALOWS (Lowe Crescent)



1973 saw the initial plans for the senior citizen's bungalows put out to tender. The Parish Council recommended that they be sited between the Post Office and Church Cottage, fronting Knutsford Road but the District Council would not approve this. The ground on the opposite side of the road behind the private houses and linking up to the school playing field was finally agreed. The development comprised seven bungalows for single persons or married couples, with kitchen, living room (with outlook over the fields), bathroom and bedroom, with overhead heating and a separate house for the warden. During the building, workmen had various problems, not least the fact that the site became waterlogged for six months due to subsidence.

However, they were finally ready in February 1975 and the residents moved in. They were officially opened in March by the Chairman of Vale Royal District Council, Councillor Albert Lowe and his wife, Barbara and the whole was named Lowe Crescent in acknowledgment of service Mr. Lowe had rendered, both as a Parish and District Councillor and of the leading part he had played in pressing for the bungalows to be built in the Parish.

In 1985 the subsidence trouble returned and one bungalow in particular suffered and had to have extensive repairs. So much for the choice of site.

In 1986 Vale Royal District Council set up central monitoring at Hartford of all Council bungalows.

THE ANTROBUS ARMS



An early picture showing the hitching rails for the customers` horses.

This inn, formerly known as The Wheat sheaf, was a staging post on the Warrington to Northwich road in the 19th century. The stable with stalls for eight horses still existed in the 1950s, along with two ostler's cottages, pig sties and a brew-house. These were situated across the yard from the inn. The landlord in 1846 was John Bell and for a long time the inn was an important meeting point for the community. For example, a copy of the 'Schedule of claims and objections, with the decision of the valuer, for the Inclosure of Whitley Reed' was deposited there on 1st September 1849 by P. Barton for the valuer, Mr Henry White of Warrington.

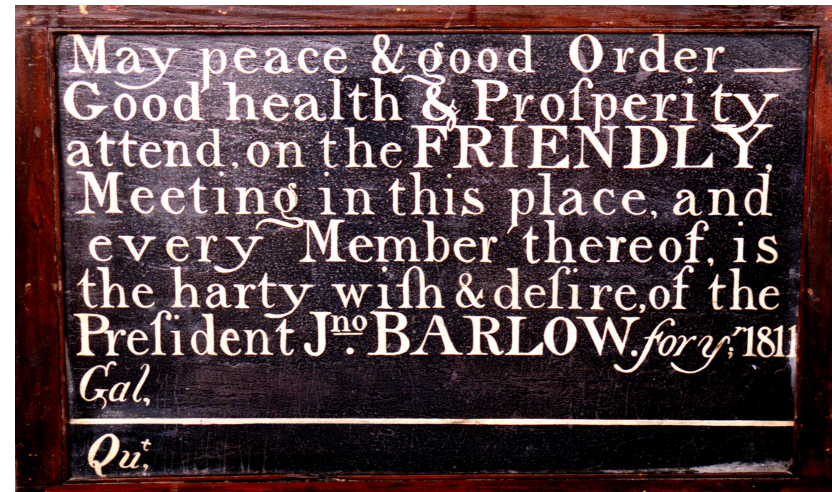


The pig sties, brew house and ostler's cottages in the yard of the Inn.

Previously a meeting had been held there in June 1845 to hear objections to the allocation of 8 acres of the Reed for Exercise and Recreation and 4 acres as allotments to the Labouring Poor. The Ancient Order of Foresters also had a lodge there about this time which continued for about a hundred years. The stairs from the rear of the yard lead to an upper room which was the meeting room for the Court Wheat Sheaf No 745 of the Ancient Order of Foresters. The Friendly Society Movement arose in the late 18th century in an attempt to meet the need caused by loss of income through sickness. An annual financial report dated 1873 shows that sick pay was at 1/8d per day and funeral allowance was £2.

Quite a number of families from Antrobus and neighbouring parishes were members of the society. A membership fee was paid quarterly, the amount paid in depended on the age on joining. An example of fees is indicated in the amendment of rules dated 13th day of June 1927. This membership fee entitled the member 'to receive sickness benefit of up to 26 weeks at ten shillings per week. If illness continued they could receive five shillings per week for the next 26 weeks and if afflicted for a longer period he shall receive two shillings and sixpence during the continuance of the illness'. It is unclear when the Court Wheat Sheaf 745 was established. A slate notice used to hang in the upstairs 'Court' room at the Wheatsheaf signed by the President J Barlow dated 1811, however a financial report dated 1904 indicates an establishing date of 1839.

Beside the quarterly meeting when fees were paid other meetings, meals and social events were held, even the occasional church parade. However after the Beveridge Report in the 1940s and the start of Social Security, membership slowly dropped off. By the late 1960s membership of Court Wheatsheaf had fallen so much that the District Officials decided that the branch should be amalgamated with a 'Court' at Marston, Northwich. Eventually that 'Court' was also closed and transferred to Middlewich. Many locals over the years were involved in the running of the Society, including Sam Cowap, Richard Coppock, Fred Renshaw and Thomas Plumb. At the time of closure of Court 745 the officials were James Hewitt, Arthur Vernon, Jack Youd, Arnold Ridgway, Fred Thurwell with Roy Read as secretary.



The slate notice which hung in the upper room.

Kath Rees(nee Holt) believes the tenancy of the Wheatsheaf was held around 1900 by her great-great-aunt, Ann Powell. She remembers her father used to speak of staying at the Wheatsheaf as a small boy. He was born in 1886. The next tenant from 1907 to 1937 was Mr Edward Plumb who was also a wheelwright and had workshops beside the pub. He was succeeded by Mr and Mrs Tuson. At that time mild beer was 2.4p per pint (equivalent) and until 1974 all beers were carried from the cellar in large jugs. The cellar was later converted into a ladies toilet.

When Mrs Tuson retired in January of that year mild beer had increased to 11p per pint. The pub was closed until Easter for modernisation.



During 'Modernisation'.

It became open plan with lots of decorations including brass.

Terry and Sybil Clarke came in, on a lease, until May 1983 when, again, alterations were made. The building was extended into the yard and the Club House, used by the Foresters until the mid-1960s, became a restaurant. New living accommodation was provided upstairs and car parking extended.

The Antrobus Arms was formerly known as 'The Wheatsheaf Inn'. The change of name was made in the mid-1980s, amid some controversy, on the initiative of the landlord, Steve Goulden and his wife Jackie.

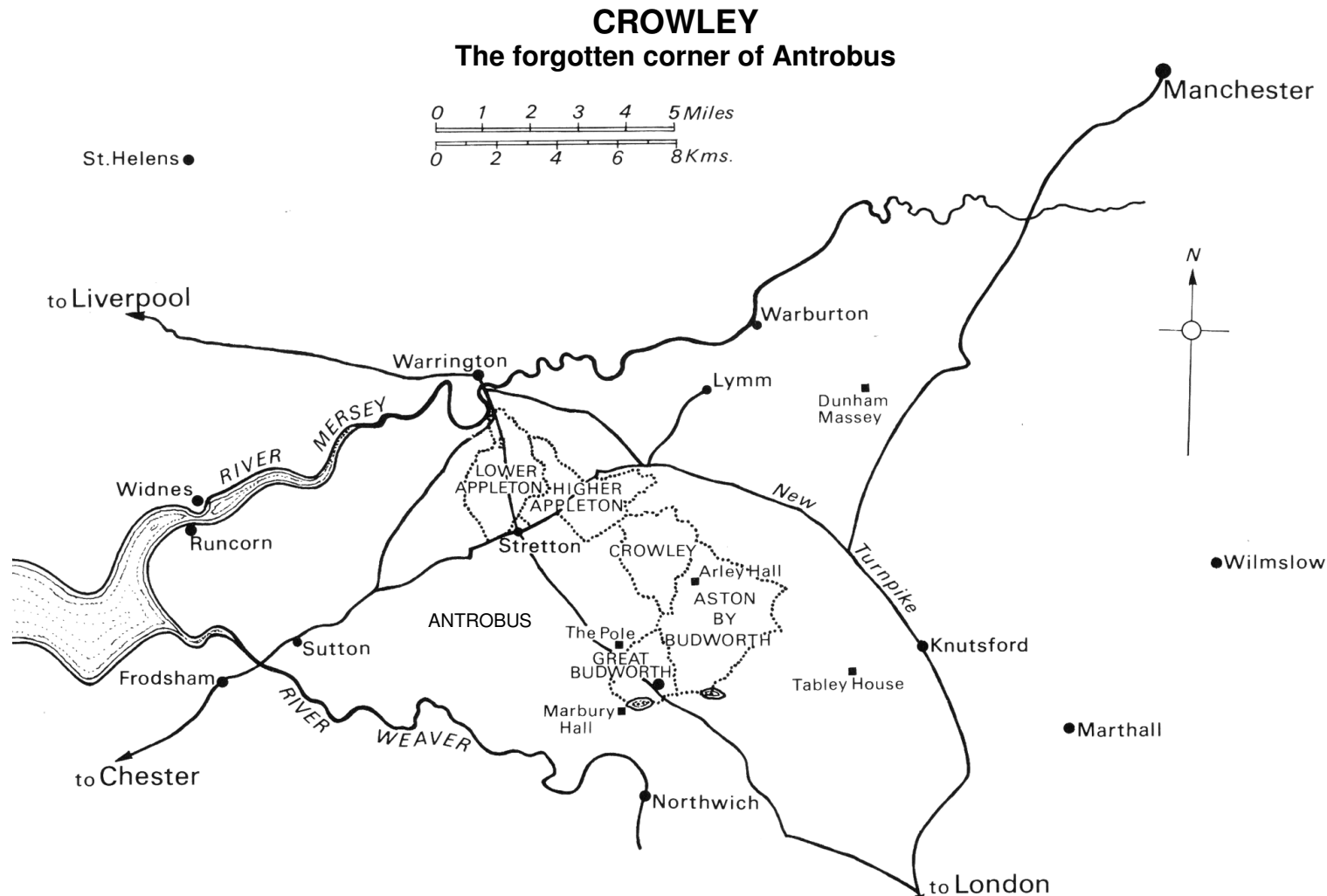
After the Gouldens left in 1986 Alan Wynyard and John Morris took over until July 1988. They had provided good bar snacks and meals in the restaurant.

Steve and Pam Lee came next, with their three daughters and by this time mild was 81p per pint.

The present landlord is Ian and his wife Pat Littler and the price of a pint of mild in 1999 is now £1.58.



In 1999 with the hanging sign of a Wheatsheaf and children's playground at the rear.



Crowley was one of the five townships along with Over Whitley, Antrobus, Sevenoaks and Cogshall which comprised the Crown land of Whitley Lordship which was administered by the Duchy of Lancaster. On the north and east side of Crowley were the other neighbouring Townships of Lower Appleton, Higher Appleton, Aston by Budworth and Great Budworth as shown in the map above.

Crowley was originally part of a fenced hunting park known as Northwood Park until 1510 when the Warburton family purchased a 100 year lease which they later extended up to 1656. The township of Crowley comprised 1,400 acres. In 1627 the Crown sold the freehold of Crowley to The City of London. In 1656 when the Warburton lease expired, the various parts of Crowley were sold and the major freeholder was Pickering who owned Crowley Hall. In 1750 the Warburtons gradually bought parts of Crowley starting with Garland Hall. Mr Lyons of Parr and Lyons Bank in Warrington had bought land and buildings in Crowley but because he wanted to develop Appleton Hall, exchanged the land and farms he owned in Crowley for those in Appleton owned by the Warburton family. Thus the Warburtons (and Arley Estate as it became) came to own most of Crowley. In 1650 there were thirty to forty farms in Crowley which were reduced to seventeen freeholders in the 1740s and to only thirteen by 1800. Many houses were demolished during this time. The population of Crowley increased steadily from 147 in 1801 to 182 in 1901 but unlike the neighbouring townships Crowley never developed into a village with a focal point such as a Church, School or Pub. In 1936 it became part of the parish of Antrobus which had all three. In the first half of this century almost all the people living in Crowley worked locally on the land or for Arley Estate. It is now the odd exception for someone living in Crowley to work the land. Cars were a rare sight and horses were the main source of power to work the land. Each farm had one or two heavy horses compared with the massive tractors used now where horsepower is measured in hundreds!

The main fuels used were coal and paraffin. In living

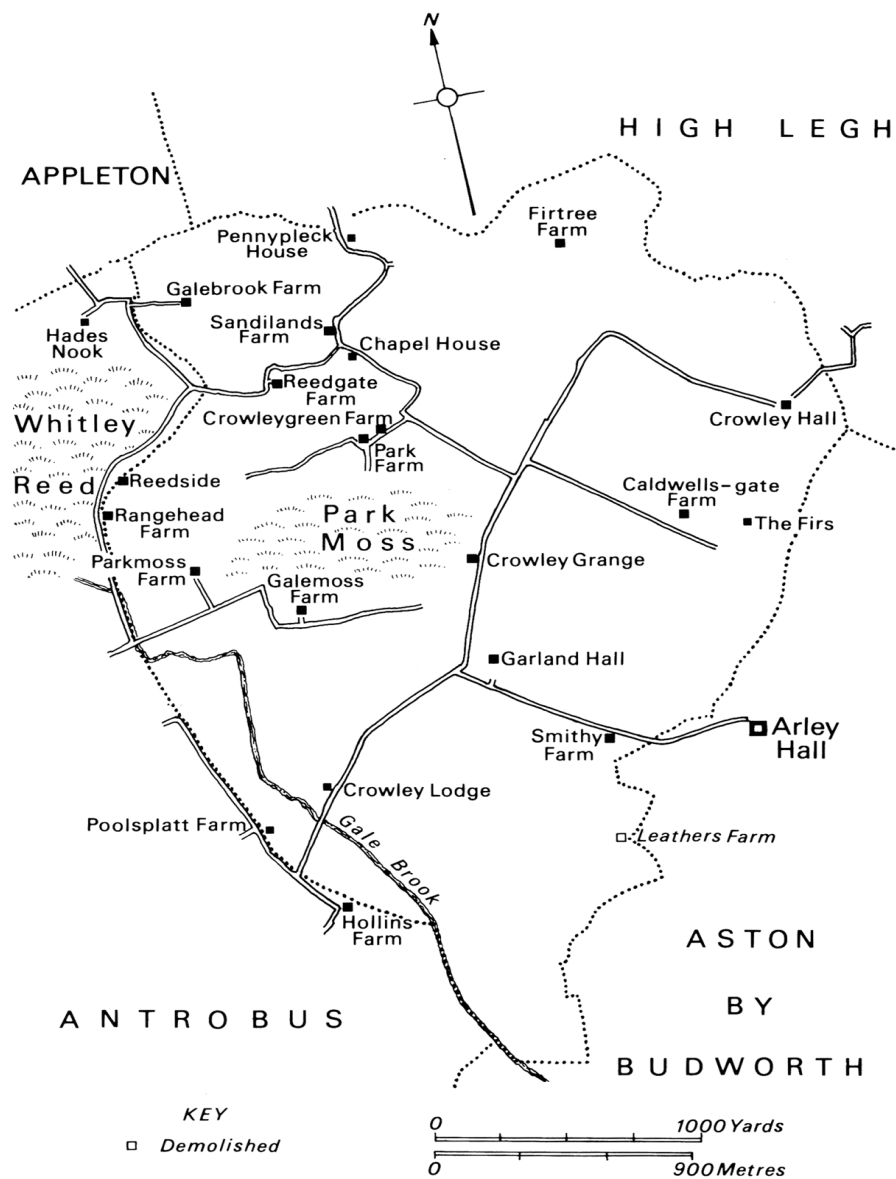
memory these were delivered by Mr Beckles from the Stretton / Hatton area and Mr Woodward and his son Len from Appleton.

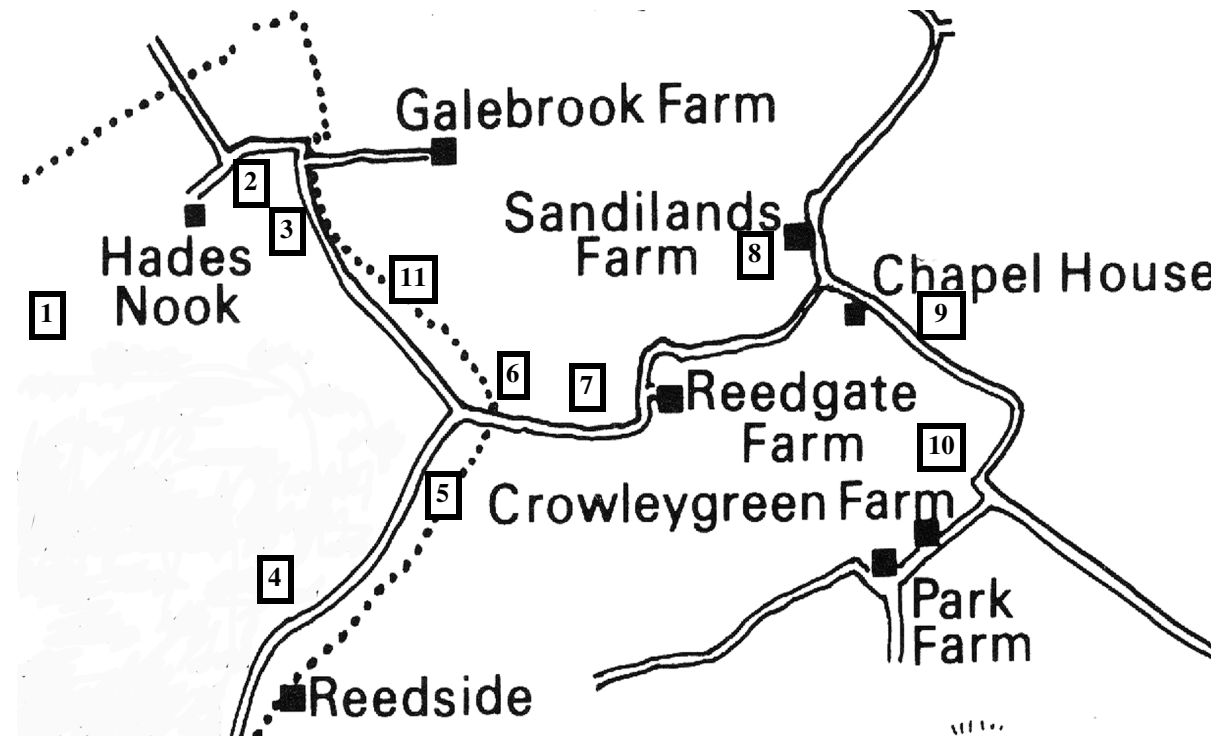
Every other Wednesday Mr Dixon the chandler from Lymm and Altrincham would call at each home with his motor wagon which had pots, pans, candles, cord etc. on one side and sewing cotton, elastic, buttons, ribbons, laces, pens, pencils, rubbers, stationery, etc. on the other side. At the rear was a measure for paraffin oil. There was also an old sloping top desk with sherbet, liquorice and sweets for the children.

On Tuesdays Mr Ainsworth (known as Fishy) called in an open touring car with a dickey seat which had a box with kippers and smoked haddock. On the back seat were ladies stockings, men's shirts etc. and bread and sweets were on the front seats. Bread and cakes were also delivered from Northwich and Warrington. Electricity did not arrive in Crowley until 1950 and prior to that the supply terminated at Oak Lodge on the Antrobus side of New Road.

At the millennium there are now only a handful of working farms with the remainder converted into private houses and in many respects Crowley is the forgotten corner of Antrobus.

This document sets out to record Crowley within the living memory of its present inhabitants and those who have lived here in recent times. The maps of Crowley have been reproduced by kind permission of Charles F Foster.





**The northern part of Crowley has changed the most since the mid 1700s.
The houses built since then are numbered above and identified below:**

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1. Fairbank Farm | 6. Reedgate Cottage |
| 2. Oak Cottage | 7. Council Houses |
| 3. Whitley Reed Cottage | 8. Sandilands Shant Conversion |
| 4. Laurel Farm | 9. Cartwheel Cottage |
| 5. Whitley Reed | 10. Park House |
| | 11. Rising Sap nursery (construction of new house) |

CALDWELL'S GATE FARM

In the mid 1750s Caldwell's Gate Farm was owned by Peter Rylands and comprised 76 acres. Sadly it was demolished during the 1950s and the only indication of its existence is the recently erected roadsign. A ghost known as Spinning Jenny who was supposed to be seen sitting on the actual farm gate seems to have gone as well ! The Norcotts were tenants of Caldwell's Gate for generations. Emma Norcott's tenancy passed to Jess Norcott shown on the right (the grandfather of Len Norcott who farmed Park Farm). He was the last Norcott at Caldwell's Gate prior to James Collins taking the tenancy in 1929. Stanley Norcott who was the last Norcott to be born in Caldwell's Gate farm in 1927 was christened in Arley Chapel and now lives in Ollerton.



These photos show two generations of Norcotts on horseback outside Caldwell's Gate Farm in about 1900. Jess is in his Cheshire Yeomanry uniform and his son Harry born in 1893 obviously wanting to be like his father. At that time membership of the Cheshire Yeomanry was a necessary qualification to be eligible to rent a farm from Arley Estate. Note the black polished hooves on the military horse.



Jess Norcott (born in 1868) with his wife Alice outside Caldwell's Gate Farm. The smallest child is his son Harry (born in 1893) and the older boy is an orphan called Frank Shakeshaft.



James Norcott who was born in 1899 is shown here with a bull on a pole outside Caldwell's Gate Farm . He was one of the latest conscripts for the army in World War 1 and spent one day in France when he was shot in the knee. He never returned to the fighting and his name can be seen on the Roll of Honour on the gate at Budworth Parish Church.

Reg Collins (owner of Antrobus village shop) has fond memories of his Uncle Jim Collins and his Aunty Polly who rented the farm at 16 shillings an acre from Arley Estate until 1944 when James died. Polly Collins made butter and cheese using a stone cheese press and Winnie Percival (nee Norcott) who lived at the next farm (Roadside Farm) can still remember the excellent taste of the cheese she made. She also recalls Tommy Glynn and Ginger Gavin the two itinerant Irishmen who worked for James and lived in the shant on the farm and another shant dweller Tommy Manion was known as Old Goose by the local children of the time because of the way he rode his bike. He never had lights on his bike and when the kids rode towards him with their lights on he would dive into the hedge bottom to avoid them.



James Collins
outside the piggeries at
Caldwell's Gate.



Charlie Percival

The last tenant before Arley Estate demolished one of the oldest farm buildings in the area was Charlie Percival, Winnie Percival's brother in law.

She remembers Charlie borrowing his father's new tractor and plough, which was one of the first in the area, but unfortunately he ended up in a marl pit with it!

As we reach the millennium, older residents of Antrobus still have fond memories of Caldwell's Gate, the old lane where it stood and in particular the traditional Cheshire cheese made there by Polly Collins. And would you believe it, the ghost of Spinning Jenny also lives on.

CHAPEL HOUSE



Chapel House was a smallholding in the 18th century with only 19 acres. Ernest, Arthur and Emily Earle were the last tenants of Chapel House. Ernest was a bricksetter on Arley Estate which had its own distinctive style of window surrounds and chimneys. Chapel House was bought from Arley Estate in 1967 by Michael Pickard who now lives at Garland Hall. He renovated it and rented it for a while, then sold it to Sir Eric Driver in 1970 for £10,000, who in turn sold it to the present owners Ian and Marlene Stratton.

CARTWHEEL COTTAGE



John O'Connor bought the field on which Cartwheel Cottage was eventually built in the late 1940s. There was originally an orchard with a well in the field and he kept pigs in wooden sheds. The thatched roof of Cartwheel Cottage suggests an historic building when in fact it was thatched for John O'Connor by his friend John Burke in the 1970s when it was built as an agricultural worker's house. It was extended in 1981 by its present owners.

CROWLEY GRANGE



The ancestors of Revd.Thos Brotherton had owned what is now called Crowley Grange and its 41 acres from the 17th century and in 1749 the tenant was W.Shakeshaft. It was called Roadside Farm. In 1880 Rowland Eyles Egerton Warburton became the owner and Alfred Earle was the tenant. At the turn of the century, ownership passed to John Egerton Warburton with the tenancy held by John Chrimes. Winnie Percival (nee Norcott) who now lives in Little Leigh was born at Roadside Farm in 1925. She lived with her parents Rowland and Edith Norcott until her marriage to Tom Percival in 1952 when they moved into Reedgate Farm. Her brother Sidney Norcott continued to farm there with his father but did not take up the tenancy when his father retired in 1962. The next and last tenant of the house at Roadside Farm was J Halsall and the land was leased to Mr Bryan Joules, the tenant of Gale Moss Farm. The house and outbuildings with half an acre was sold in 1968 by Arley Estate to Mr & Mrs Leslie Marshall who renamed it Crowley Grange. They renovated and extended it to include an outdoor swimming pool and tennis court. The present owners Judith and David Butterworth bought the house with three acres in 1979. Recently they converted part of the barn into separate accommodation and have purchased additional land to bring the acreage back to the original 41 acres of 1749.

CROWLEY GREEN COTTAGE



In 1965 prior to extension

Crowley Green Cottage is halfway between Park House and Park Farm and was known as Crowley Green Farm. It was built in the 1500s originally as two thatched cottages which were eventually combined. Some of the internal walls are the original wattle and daub. It had 37 acres at that time and the outbuildings still contain the original cart horse stables, cow stalls, loose box and barn. The original well is still there with a plentiful supply of water. The last tenants before it was sold in 1964 by Arley Estate were the brothers and sisters Tom, Bill, Dot and Annie Pickering. Tom was renowned for hiding in the hedgerows and jumping out at the last minute to frighten passers-by.



In 1999 viewed from the lane.

Annie Pickering married Mickey Drew and moved into Arley village. When it became empty, Arley Estate had originally set out to demolish Crowley Green Farm but Len Norcott of neighbouring Park Farm turned away the contractors. Michael Pickard who now lives at Garland Hall then bought the farmhouse from Arley Estate for £2000. It was dilapidated and had only one cold water tap and no electricity supply. He renovated and extended the cottage and bought the outbuildings five years later from Len Norcott. It was then sold on to Dr Hughes, then Gerald Bullough and then to its present owners.



The pond at Crowley Green Cottage where one of the Pickering family supposedly drowned.

CROWLEY LODGE

In the mid 1700s Crowley Lodge was one of the larger farms in the area with 132 acres. Mr Jeffs, the Owen family and then George Stringer were successive tenants and George's brother, Frank Stringer, was the last tenant and farmer of Crowley Lodge Farm. It was sold as a derelict building by Arley Estate in 1942 to Bill and Alison Wyndham. Like Garland Hall, it is no longer a working farm and is known as Crowley Lodge. The outbuildings and barn have been converted into Barn Cottage and Oak House as shown below:



Before

**BARN
COTTAGE**



After



Before

OAK HOUSE



After

THE FIRS



The barn at the Firs showing the same curved roof as used at Caldwell's Gate over the far door.



The Firs in 1999



James Collins
haymaking in the
field at the side of
the Firs.

The Firs was originally three farmworker's cottages each with its own little piece of land and adjoining pig sty. The main building has been made into one cottage and what was the worker's cottage for the neighbouring Crowley Hall Farm is now used as a barn.

Noel Howell was born in the Firs in 1926 and he still lives there with his brother Peter and his sister Dorothy. The Firs is still owned by Arley Estates.

CROWLEY AND ARLEY VILLAGE



Life as it was at Home Farm in the early 1920s



Arley village and Home Farm in 1999



The old township of Crowley (now part of Antrobus parish) included Home Farm, Smithy Farm and Arley Village. It was separate from the rest of Arley (which is in Aston by Budworth parish). Smithy farm was a small farm in the 18th century with only 16 acres and is now no longer a working farm. The fact that Arley Estate still owns most of the properties in this corner of Crowley and its proximity to the splendid Arley Hall is a reminder of the great influence which Arley Estate had and still has in this part of Cheshire.

FIR TREE FARM



Fir Tree Farm is on the northern edge of Crowley and was a relatively large farm in the 18th century with 127 acres. It is now one of the largest dairy farms in the area with over 200 acres. Annie Stringer was born here in the 1850s and Harry Stringer was the last tenant of Arley Estate in the 1960s when it was sold. Harry Stringer then moved to Crowley Lodge.

REEDSIDE AND PROSPECT COTTAGE

These two semi-detached cottages were used for Arley Estate workers and had a small amount of land with shippens and piggeries. In the 18th century there were only 7 acres attached to Reedside.

When Jim Blain died, his wife and son Harry carried on as tenants of Reedside until they both died. Jeff and Hazel Monton moved into Reedside in 1957 and ran a market garden until Jeff's retirement. They still live there.

Next door at Prospect Cottage, Peter Hankey was succeeded by Alfred Earle and his son Thomas and daughter Alice. It was bought by his other son Robert Earle for £1100 in 1949 so that Robert and his wife Dora could have Park Moss Farm to themselves.



GALEBROOK FARM



Galebrook Farm had 34 acres in the 18th century. In more recent times the Shakeshafts farmed Galebrook followed by Mr & Mrs Bill Wardle and then by the current owners.

Galebrook is on the edge of Stretton airfield which was built in 1939 and finally abandoned in the 1960s. The airfield was known as HMS Blackcap and was a training base for the Fleet Air Arm. The main runway ran east/west but there was a runway at right angles which was marked out as the deck of an aircraft carrier pointing straight at Galebrook. The aircraft were modified Spitfires called Seafires and single engine Barracudas. After taking off from the main runway they would practice landing and take-off on the 'carrier deck' flying directly over Galebrook.

One of the planes mis-judged the landing and flew over the head of Bill Wardle who was unloading corn. He was terrified that the plane would crash into the farmhouse where his wife and child were, so he ran to the house only to see the aircraft crash in the field beyond the house killing the pilot. A sailor was put on guard overnight by the wreckage. Next morning Bill Wardle put the kettle on and went out to tie up the cows ready for milking. His five year old son Arthur went to look for him and ran back to his mum saying his dad was asleep on the floor of the milking parlour. Mrs Wardle then sent Arthur across the fields to Vera Brocklehurst at Laurel Farm to telephone the rest of the family. Bill had died of a heart attack presumably brought on by the shock of the crash.

CROWLEY HALL FARM 1999



Richard Rutter of Moore bought Crowley Hall in the mid 1600s with 175 acres. There are two datestones on the building, one with the initials of John and Ann Rutter and the other with the initials of Rowland Eyles Egerton Warburton. The Rutter family and their descendents owned the farm until 1813 when it was sold to John Braithwaite for £8,500. He in turn sold it to Rowland Egerton Warburton in 1874 for £10,200. The farm buildings are on the eastern edge of Antrobus very near to the M6 motorway and its fields extend westwards towards Arley Hall. T S Lowe owned Crowley Hall Farm in the 1930s but it was farmed by Fred Gleave.

Fred's wife Annie was renowned for working hard and even the stone cobbles outside the farm were pristine. On one occasion when Elsie Norcott visited her from Caldwell's Gate Farm next door she told Annie that she would make herself ill by working so hard. Annie replied, "Yes, I could be ill, so I have cleaned everything up ready." The Savage family rented it from Arley Estate in 1934 and the four brothers Stanley, John, Clifford and Ernest lived there until the present owners bought the farm in 1989. It is one of the few remaining working farms in Crowley.



Stan, Ernest and Cliff Savage with their father
beside the Fordson Major Tractor

LIFE AT CROWLEY HALL FARM IN THE 1930's

Pigs enjoying the
freedom of the
farmyard



Ernest Savage with one
of the working horses



Stan Savage with his
father stooking corn

GARLAND HALL



**Garland Hall
Farm
in
late 1800s**



Garland Hall Farm was one of the larger farms in the area in the 18th century with 102 acres. It was farmed by the Whitlow family for four generations starting in 1829 when John Whitlow leased Garland Hall Farm from Arley Estate. He employed two labourers and his wife Mary had a house servant. At the age of 46 in 1846 John died by drowning and his son James took over the tenancy. Both John and his wife Mary are buried in Great Budworth churchyard. Their son James married Ellen Pendlebury at Stretton and had ten children but only five survived.



1999

One, a son also called James, married Annie Beecroft and took over the tenancy in 1878 on the death of his father. James and Annie's son John who was born at Garland Hall Farm in 1893, in turn took over the tenancy. When John retired having no children to pass the farm on to, he rented a house on Arley Green until he died in 1978. In 1975 Arley Estate sold the house and 5 acres to Sally & Michael Pickard and retained the remainder of the land. The house is now known as Garland Hall and is Grade II listed.

THE WHITLOWS AT GARLAND HALL



L/R on the steps of Garland Hall
are Ida, James (their father), John (the last tenant)
and Nellie Whitlow



James Whitlow who took over the tenancy of
Garland Hall Farm in 1878 with his wife Annie
outside the front of the farm. The children standing
behind them are L/R John, Nellie, James Beecroft,
Mary and Ida.

James and
Annie Beecroft
Whitlow
off to town



**FARMING
SCENES AT
GARLAND HALL**



Corn stacks ready
for the threshing
machine



James Whitlow shearing the sheep



HAZEL BANK



Before renovation in 1993



As it is now in 1999

In the mid 1700s Hades Nook, along with Reedgate, was owned by William Knowles and comprised about 50 acres. Hades Nook was auctioned in the mid 1800s and the sale poster described it as: ' 55 acres, only a days ride from Warrington town centre'. In the 1950s Francis Taylor, his brother Peter, daughter Mary and his other daughter Edna and her husband all lived at Hades Nook. Mary moved to 'Pennypleck' on her marriage.

Peter recalled that New Road was built on willow gathered from Arley Moss. The willows were grown on the sides of the ditches to bind the edges and keep the ditches clear. He gathered the willow and made baskets to supplement his income.

Peter drove the threshing machine down New Road to work on the farms of Crowley.

In 1961 Harry Davies, a local blacksmith, bought Hades Nook as his retirement home but his wife refused to live in a house called Hades Nook (Hell's Corner) and the name was changed to Hazel Bank. It was bought in 1993 by the current owners who renovated the main building.

They demolished the derelict outbuilding and added a new extension in its place in 1997/ 98.



The Laurels as a farmhouse in the 1940s

LAUREL FARM

The Laurels has always been part of Antrobus and its drive opens onto Reedgate Lane which is the border of Crowley. In spite of this, in the 1800s the Laurels was the centre of the social life of Crowley with dances held in the loft. Mr Francis Taylor and his brother Peter of Hades Nook played the concertina and fiddle. In later years the music was played by Albert Acton of Reedgate Farm. The Laurels was owned by private individuals and was never part of the Arley Estate. In the early 1900s Mr & Mrs Rowlinson rented the Laurels followed by their son Joseph and his wife May (nee Cooke). Mr & Mrs Lee Mather took over the tenancy in about 1939 and eventually bought the Laurels and renamed it Laurel Farm. It was sold to Mr & Mrs Clarke in 1959 who in turn sold it to Carol & Rod Wilson and for a while it was split into two separate houses. The present owners Phil and Carol Gartside bought Laurel Farm in 1985 when they renovated and extensively modernised both the house and the outbuildings.



Laurel Farm in the late 1970s showing the single storey extensions to the original farmhouse with the original brickwork painted white. The outbuildings and barn were almost derelict.



Laurel Farm in the late 1980s with the single storey extension at the side rebuilt to full height. The outbuildings and barn were almost totally rebuilt and refitted.

WHITLEY REED COTTAGE



Whitley Reed Cottage owned by the Farrell family has nearly the same name as its neighbour Whitley Reed on Reedgate Lane.

COUNCIL HOUSES



XXXXX moved into no.8 when the council houses were built in 1957. She moved next door to no.10 on her marriage to XXXXXX and is the only remaining original tenant of these houses which were built to house farm workers.

Garden Ground

Garden Ground was the name given by locals to the field on Reedgate Lane which was used as an allotment for many years up to the 1950s. It was used to grow vegetables and flowers and illustrates how self sufficient even the smallest cottagers were. It was in three strips rented last by local residents P Horley, H Blain and W Thomason for 2/6d a year payable to Antrobus Parish Council. Eventually it was farmed by Laurel Farm.

PARK FARM



Harry Norcott with his gang of potato pickers outside Park Farm



Park Farm as it is today.



Harry with his young son Len on one of the farm horses

In the 18th century Park Farm had 57 acres. The Earle family farmed it until 1917, followed by Harry Norcott until 1952. His son Len Norcott was born there. Harry built Park House at the end of the lane and retired there with his wife Lillie. Len married Marnie Percival and carried on farming at Park Farm until they retired to live in Park House in 1982. The farm with 72 acres was then bought and is now farmed by Ron and Joyce Jones and their son Philip.

PARK HOUSE



Harry and Lill Norcott
after their retirement
outside the newly built
Park House in 1952,
with their daughter-in-
law Marnie.



Park House with the porch and lower floor extension
built on by Len Norcott

Len and Marnie Norcott
(nee Percival)



PARKMOSS FARM



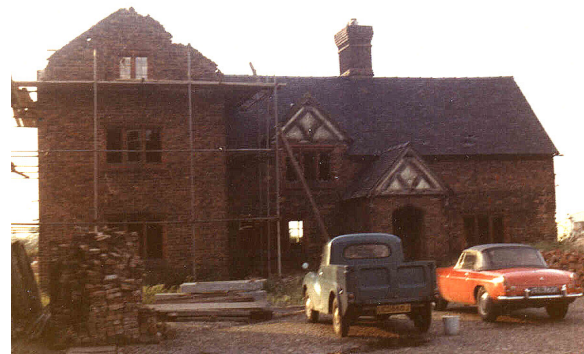
Robert Earle with his son Roger and daughter Judith on one of the first Ferguson tractors in Crowley in the early 1950s.

In the mid 1700s Parkmoss Farm had 74 acres. The last tenant of Parkmoss Farm, when it was owned by Arley Estate, was Alfred Earle's son Robert. He moved to Guide Post Farm again as a tenant of Arley Estate. Arley Estate then sold Parkmoss to Henry Lloyd of Parkgate Farm, High Legh. The buildings were left empty for 10 years and became derelict. Joe and Rita Smith purchased the farm in 1972 and renovated and re-roofed the buildings which are now Grade II listed. The land was drained and is still worked under their supervision.



In the 1950s prior to renovation

During renovation in the 1970s



As it is now in 1999

GALE MOSS FARM



A photo taken by Eve Joules for a
W.I. postcard

Gale Moss Farm is on the western boundary of Crowley and in the 18th century had 36 acres. Albert Yarwood farmed it as a tenant up to 1951 followed by Mr Bert Edwards up to 1959 when Bryan and Eve Joules took over the tenancy at a rent of £8 per acre for 47 acres. They gradually increased the amount of rented land up to 136 acres in 1980 when they left. The original buildings and 21 acres were then sold by Arley Estate for £165,000 and the remaining land sold as separate lots. The house has been renovated and extended by successive owners. It is no longer a working farm.

PENNYPLECK FARM



Pennypleck in the 1940s



Pennypleck in 1960

Pennypleck is on the northwest edge of Crowley and the boundary is the stream about 100 metres to the north. In the 18th century it had only 9 acres of land. It still has the well which was the original water supply. In the drought during the 1940s it was the only well in the area with plentiful water.



Pennypleck in 1999

Christopher and Mary Gibbons (also known as Polly) shown on the left owned Pennypleck prior to World War II. The advent of war led to the construction of the airfield next to Pennypleck and drastically changed the surrounding landscape.

The road to Swineyard Lane and nearby footpaths were diverted and never restored when the war ended. The road now utilises the disused south east taxiway and still has the original concrete surface. The airfield is now used as a test track and is flanked on the north side by the M56. The Gibbons sold Pennypleck to the Airfield Commander named Carlisle, who in turn sold to the Clarks. In 1960 they sold it to the present owners who have modernised and extended it.



Danny Percival from Sandilands Farm was taught to plough by Chris Gibbons who later taught Hubert Moscrop. This photo shows Hubert Moscrop in a ploughing competition in the late 1940s using Harry Stringer's horses (from Fir Tree Farm next door). Chris Gibbons must have taught him well since he went on to win many ploughing competitions in the area.

This Photo shows Chris Gibbons (also known as Bob) in the yard when Pennypeck was still used as a farm. The cobbled yard is now concreted over and used as a car park for the house. Chris Gibbons' brother was a gardener for A W Boyd which probably accounts for Mr Boyd's access to the farm.

Danny Percival is standing in front of the old shippon at the side of Pennypeck house. The open loft door behind him is where A W Boyd came each year to ring the young swallows and house martins whilst they were still in their nests in the barn rafters as part of his work in recording the natural history of the area. The shippon as it is now is seen on the other photo.



RANGEHEAD FARM



The start of renovation in 1984, with the original brickwork exposed.

The Revd. Thos Brotherton's ancestors owned Rangehead Farm and its 42 acres in the 16th century. In recent years Rangehead Farm was rented and farmed by Mr Woods then Mr & Mrs William Massey up to 1974. Mr & Mrs F Karl had the farm from then until 1984 when it was bought by the present owners. The new facade hides the fact that it is a typical Cheshire farmhouse. It was enlarged by its present owner who recut the stone facings from salvaged cut stone from Over Hall Winsford, the former Vale Royal Council offices. He recut the stonework to his own design based on classical influences.



The extended main building with a new facade in 1999.

The centrepiece above the front door is a cut stone shell in which the stonemason carved a goblet and wheatsheaf. This stonework came from Lady Clayton's house in Clayton Square, Liverpool. Lady Clayton ironically had connections with Appleton. The venetian window in the west facing front was salvaged from a Georgian building in Warrington. The roof was re-slatted with scallop edged grey green Cumberland salvaged slates. The brickwork contains original bricks apparently made from a local marl pit and salvaged handmade bricks.

REEDGATE COTTAGE



Reedgate Cottage in 1989



Reedgate Cottage in 1999



Elsie, Tommy and Martha Taylor outside Reedgate Cottage in the 1950s

The photo top left shows the original Arley design of wooden guttering on the roof which can still be seen on Crowley Grange. The two doors at the front gave the impression that it was two cottages, but the door on the right led to a wash house complete with water boiler.

The picture on the left shows Martha Taylor with her children Tommy and Elsie outside Reedgate Cottage in the early 1950s. The original brickwork and garden wall can be seen. Tommy Taylor worked for Len Norcott at Park Farm and he and his brother Frank bought the house from Arley. Frank died, followed by Tom in 1988 and the house was empty for a while until it was sold by their sister Mrs Dora Mosedale in 1989. The house has been modernised and extended by the present owners.

REEDGATE FARM



Over 50 years ago



In 1999



Tom Acton's son
Cecil and daughters May and Mary
Acton, outside Reedgate Farm

Tom Acton's tenancy passed to his eldest son John who was the last tenant of Reedgate Farm before it was sold in 1952 to Joseph Percival who was also a tenant of Sandilands Farm. Joseph's son Tom moved into Reedgate Farm on his marriage to Winnie Norcott who lived at Roadside Farm. It had only two small crofts attached to it, the remaining fields being sold off separately. Tom Percival's family lived there until his death in 1986 and the house was eventually sold in 1987. Since then until the present time, there have been three owners and the house has been gradually extended with the adjacent barn converted into a separate flat.



Tom Acton



Tommy Percival



Joseph Percival



Tom Acton`s other son, Albert Edward Acton, with his “King of the Road” bike on Reedgate Lane Crowley pre-1914. He also lived at Reedgate Farm and was a joiner on the Arley Estate.



Sandilands Farm about 1950



SANDILANDS FARM

In 1699 a Mr Birchall bought Sandilands which at that time had 55 acres. His son farmed there at least until the mid 1750s. In later years the Percival family were tenants of Sandilands Farm for over 200 years. Joseph Percival was the last tenant of Sandilands Farm. His son Danny carried on living there when he married Theresa Rotherham in 1952 but since the farm was still owned by Arley Estate they had to go to Arley Hall for a formal vetting by the then Lord Ashbrook.

In 1965 Joseph Percival bought the farm and its land from Arley Estate. Sandilands was a relatively large working farm and had a shant at the rear and extensive brick built piggeries alongside the house. Joe and Nellie Percival lived at Sandilands Farm the rest of their lives and Danny and Theresa eventually left in 1979 when the farmhouse was sold to Frank Harrison and the land to various neighbouring farms. Frank Harrison carefully restored and exposed the beams in the house. He removed floors and stripped them and the supporting beams back to bare wood. He then replaced them leaving them exposed in their former glory.

The current owners bought Sandilands in 1986 and completed the restoration and renovation to such an extent that the house, barn and piggeries are now Grade II listed.



Danny Percival

The piggeries



Sandilands in 1979



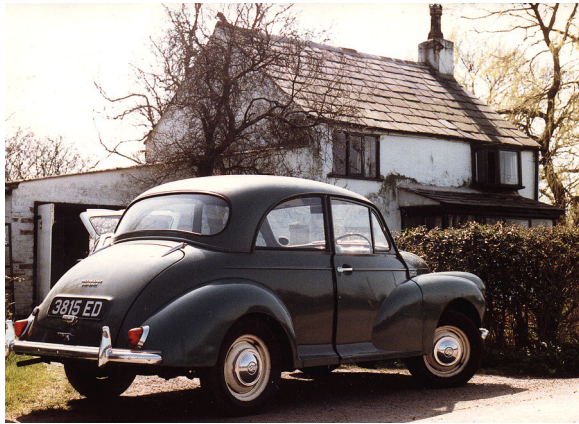
The range type fireplace in Sandilands was typical for the area in the early 1900s

The above photos show the original beams in Sandilands during and after renovation. Other houses in Crowley have similar beams which were reclaimed from old sixteenth century ships. During the renovation, Frank Harrison found Joseph Percival's diary for 1940 and on the 29 August Joseph had recorded that there was `Terrible bombing (*sic*) all night - dropped Bombs (*sic*) at Barbers`. The Barbers referred to were at Booth Farm on the opposite side of Stretton Airfield less than a mile away. Other bombs were dropped in the area, a land mine was dropped at Burley Heyes Farm at the top of New Road and two shire horses were killed.

In conversation with the late Danny Percival, Danny explained that the `easy go` main staircase had shallow steps so that it was easier to carry the two hundredweight sacks of grain up to the attic where they were stored. And what is more, the sacks were carried by the women of the family!

The farmyard is cobbled and one day in the 1980s Frank noticed a cobble was missing and dropped a stone down the hole when it plopped into water. Further investigation revealed that a well 6 feet diameter and 22 feet deep, had been covered with oak beams and cobbled over. The beams had rotted away and were collapsing. On hearing this, Danny Percival said he had often wondered why his father told them not to park waggons in that area !

WHITLEY REED



Whitley Reed before modernising
and extending



Whitley Reed in 1999



Hector Nicholls chatting to Tommy Percival
from Reedgate Farm in the early 1980s.

Brother and sister Mr & Miss Tickle lived at Whitley Reed on Reedgate Lane in the 1940s and are remembered as 'a true Gentleman and Lady'. One winter's evening Miss Tickle, who by that time was in her 80s, was ill in the cold upstairs bedroom and as advised by Dr. Love from Budworth, Mr Lee Mather from the Laurels carried her downstairs where the fireplace was their only source of heating in the house. Mrs Mather took some breakfast for them next day only to find them both dead in front

of the fire which had gone out. These facts give a good indication of what life was like in Crowley before the welfare state was heard of.

In later years Whitley Reed was always known by locals as 'Hectors' when it was owned by Hector Nicholls. Hector was a well known character in the area. Before his retirement to Whitley Reed he owned Victoria Garage in Warrington and in 1928 he was awarded the dealership for imported American Studebaker Erskine cars. The one he owned spent most of its time in the showroom window.

Whitley Reed is almost level with the adjacent pond and because of poor drainage the hall was often flooded to such an extent that visitors had to wear wellies. As a result when Hector died and George Gorst became the owner, he had to replace all the floors in addition to modernising and extending the house. The new extension was built to the full height of the original cottage and Vale Royal Council insisted that it should be lowered to the present level. The current owners bought it in 1994 and continued with the modernisation including central heating.

SHANTS in CROWLEY

Shants were a feature of most farms in Antrobus and provided self contained accommodation for itinerant workers. The name is probably an abbreviation of shanty. They were used mainly by Irish labourers who often remained at the same farm for several years.

Sandilands had the best preserved shant in Antrobus but in October 1998 it was converted and extended to form a new house. Prior to then it had one living room with the entrance on the side and one bedroom with its door on the gable end. The original fireplace with its integral oven and hot water tank was still there. It had the original limewashed walls with a picture rail.

The last known resident of Sandilands shant according to Theresa Percival, whose family lived at Sandilands Farm, was Joe Paulini a German Prisoner of War. He stayed there until the end of the war in 1945. His replacement as an itinerant worker was Paddy Feeney (known as Black Jack) an Irishman who, rather than sleep in the shant, preferred the warmth of the hayloft ! No-one ever seemed to know Paddy's age but he could have been 90 by the time he died in the old folk's home in nearby Lymm.



The original Sandilands Farm shant



Sandilands Farm shant in the process of conversion into a new house.



Crowley Grange shant

The shant at Crowley Grange is currently used as a store. The roof and fireplace are original and the shant is discretely located behind the original farmhouse. With the conversion of Sandilands shant currently in progress, it is now the most original in Crowley.

The shant at Firtree Farm by comparison is dilapidated and is currently used as a workshop store. The slate roof has been replaced by corrugated asbestos but the original fireplace is still in situ. The last known inhabitant of this shant was an Irishman called Michael Killelea who lived there when Harry Stringer had the farm. The fireplace is unique in that it is open on both sides i.e. with access from each room. Michael Killelea, rather than saw up a long piece of wood would put it on the fire with the ends sticking out into each room. As it burned he would feed it onto the fire. As with Sandilands shant the fireplace was used for cooking and water heating.



Fir Tree Farm shant

Michael Killelea the last inhabitant of Fir Tree Farm shant with a young Philip Monton in 1971.
(they had swapped hats for the picture)



Other shants in Antrobus included Crowley Lodge Farm's shant, which has long since been converted into a small bungalow and nearby Caldwell's Gate Farm which along with its shant was demolished long ago. Stockley Farm shant was also demolished along with one at the side of New Road close to Reedgate Lane. The foundations for the latter one can still be seen. The shant by the gate at Grandsires Green Farm has also disappeared.

There are lots of stories of the men living in the shants, like the one about the Irishman who wouldn't get up in the morning so the farmer would climb up on the roof and put a slate over the chimney and smoke him out.

Another farm gave the shant workers three days off to go to Chester races. The farmer's wife would get them in the kitchen of the farmhouse, give them a good wash and provide each with a "new" old suit which was then worn for the rest of the year.

Jeff Monton from Reedside recalls one of the Irishmen returning to Ireland and walking with his belongings in a wheelbarrow from Crowley to the station in Warrington. During the first half of this century these hardworking, hard drinking Irishmen provided the extra labour for the farms of Crowley and the shants were a second if not their first home.



Tommy Glynn

Tommy Glynn who lived in the shant at Caldwell's Gate Farm is seen here enjoying a bottle of beer, with another one by his side. He is sitting on the seat which was at the junction of New Road and Reedgate Lane. Until a few years ago it was a common resting place for the residents of Crowley before the motor car came to dominate our lives.

THE OLDEST HOUSE IN ANTROBUS



Broom Cottage in Hall Lane is reputed to be the oldest house in Antrobus. It is a 'cruck' cottage and up to the death of Phyllis Bell was in need of modernisation. It is a 2 up, 2 down Grade II listed building. When it was sold there was a lot of work needed to bring it up to modern standards. Planning permission to extend the existing building was granted and a local farmer sold the owners a small piece of land at the back of the house. The original staircase was removed and access to the first floor is now from the extension, floors were raised or

lowered as necessary and false ceilings on both levels were removed revealing the original oak beams. The character and appearance of the original cottage has been faithfully preserved.

Inside, the ground floor now has a modern kitchen and a dining room and upstairs there is an en-suite master bedroom with built in wardrobes. The extension blends in very well with the original and houses a lounge and an en-suite guest room. All have been very tastefully furnished.

COGSHALL LODGE

Cogshall Lodge was built by Peter Jackson of Cogshall Hall around 1830. Jackson wished to build a large estate Church to serve the Hall and the neighbouring villages of Antrobus and Comberbach. The Bishop of Chester would not give permission as he wanted a church to be built in Antrobus village, 1¼ miles away. He and Peter Jackson quarrelled. Jackson therefore built the lodge on one of the sites of his proposed church, the plan of the lodge symbolically forming a cross.

Apart from 1930-49 and 49-69 when Brunner Mond and I.C. I. respectively owned the lodge, it has been privately owned and independent of the Hall since 1925.

The present owner came to the Lodge in 1983. He designed a large extension that was completed in 1985. In 1986 the Department of the Environment declared Cogshall Lodge to be on the statutory list of buildings of architectural interest. It stands almost on the boundary between Antrobus and Comberbach.



GIBB HILL

In the south west corner of Antrobus there used to be a property known as Comberbach House. It was a large dwelling consisting of house, gardens, conservatory and vinery, stables and coach house, farm buildings and cottages. In 1935, the site was bought by the late Mr Thomas Ford (snr) of Brounslow Farm and in 1937/ 8 he had built five pairs of semi-detached houses on the site of the old house. Two were on Warrington Road and three on Gibb Hill along with a terrace of seven cottages. A boundary wall and the site of a pigsty still exist and several years ago a subterranean passage, which may have been for water storage, was found under one of the gardens.

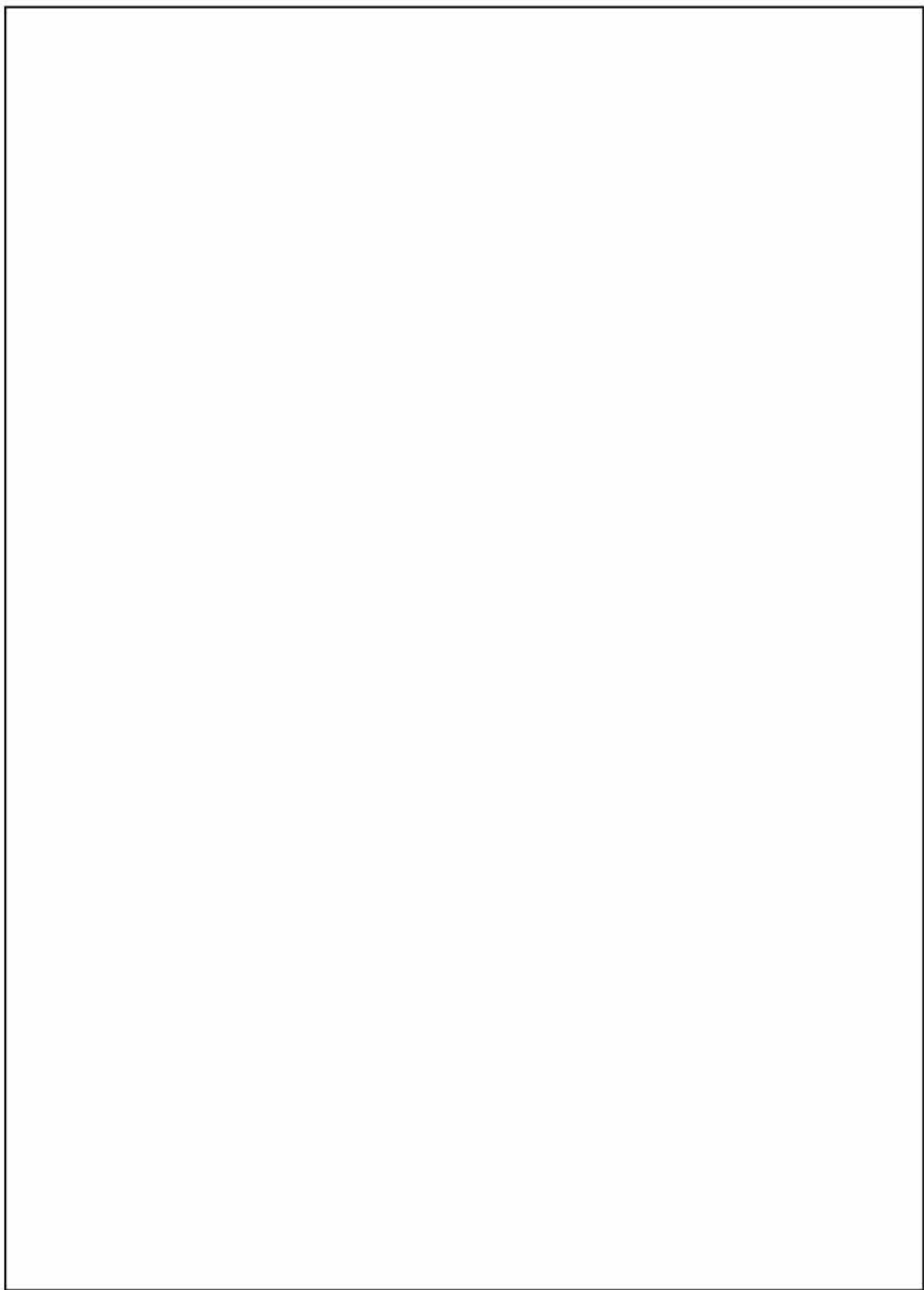
At the top of Gibb Hill there used to be a small garage and smithy run by Cyril Johnson. This is now Cassidy's Saddlery and Sevenoaks Sawmill. There are four more dwellings on Gibb Hill, three cottages and a bungalow. On Warrington Road and Pole Lane corner are Pole Cottage and a Grade II listed building known as North Lodge, Belmont.



Comberbach House farm building



People



THE PARISH COUNCIL

The first Parish Council Meeting was held in October 1894 but under the name of Sevenoaks. The amalgamation with Antrobus parish took place in 1936 when Crowley was also included, under the Minister of Health's revision of parishes order.

During the early days, before 1960, the Council was involved in the provision of water, electricity and main sewage disposal, as well as the setting up of a Post Office. Since then, the Council has, over the years, had to deal with more and more business, including many planning applications and dealing with official bodies.

Recently the Council introduced a Homewatch scheme and has been deeply involved in the Affordable Housing Scheme.

In 1964 the first Lady Councillor was elected, Coni Sutton, who became the first Lady Chairman in 1977.

Chairmen:

Mr J. McIntyre	1894 - 1897
Mr J.B. Bradbury	1897 - 1903
Rev. J. Holden	1903 - 1913
Mr J. Burgess	1913 - 1937
Mr J. Moore	1937 - 1944
Mr C.H. Sutton	1944 - 1961
Mr J.T. Barber	1961 - 1964
Mr E. Wright	1964 - 1967
Mr A. Lowe	1967 - 1970
Mr J. Bolshaw	1970 - 1971
Mr W.R. Read	1971 - 1972
Mrs C.M. Sutton	1972 - 1973
Mr J. Whyte	1973 - 1974

Mr J.R. Collins	1974 - 1975
Mr A. Barber	1975 - 1976
Mr R.B. Bolshaw	1976 - 1977
Mrs C.M. Sutton	1977 - 1978
Mr A. Lowe	1978 - 1979
Mr J. Bolshaw	1979 - 1980
Mrs C.M. Sutton	1980 - 1981
Mr J.R. Lawton	1981 - 1982
Mrs J. Greenhough	1982 - 1984
Mrs P. Brookes	1984 - 1986
Mrs C.M. Sutton	1986 - 1988
Mr J.R. Lawton	1988 - 1990
Mrs A. Barlow	1990 - 1992
Mr R. Mounfield	1992 - 1994
Mr W. R. Read	1994 - 1996
Mrs A. Barlow	1996 - 1998
Mrs C. M. Sutton	1998 - 2000

Parish
Council
1998



WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

More than a hundred years ago, in 1897, a Canadian woman lost a child due to her ignorance of food hygiene and child care. Her name was Adelaide Hoodless and she was determined that other women should not have the same experience. Hence the W.I. was born.

The first W.I. in Britain was in 1915 at Llanfair P.G.

Antrobus W.I. was formed in 1938 at an inaugural meeting on 31st March. President was Mrs. Dora Barber, Secretary was Miss D. Pearson and Treasurer was Mrs. L. Mounfield. Meetings were held in the school on the 2nd Thursday and by the end of the year membership had reached 52. Membership fee was 2/-. After World War II the meeting night and venue changed to 2nd Tuesday in the Parish Hall in February 1958 and by 1965 membership was 65. During the 1960s links were formed with W.Is in Canada, Seven Oaks and South Africa. During this period Canadian pen friends of Mrs Ethel Moores and Mrs Moss were entertained at Whitley House Farm, the home of Mrs Ellen Mounfield. A choir was formed under the leadership of Mrs Jolliffe, until she left the district. Unfortunately there was no one to take it over and it was disbanded.

In 1963 the W.I. celebrated 25 years in the Parish Hall with a meal costing 7/-. In 1967 the W.I. missed 2 monthly meetings due to Foot & Mouth Disease.

Hire Charges for the Parish Hall were:

Small room (kitchen)	10/- per meeting
Large & small rooms	£1.10.0d. functions (local)
	£2.0.0d. outside functions
W.I. special rate	15/-

The 1970s saw the W.I. joining a County project linked with the Townswomen's Guild. The members also celebrated the 40th Birthday with a buffet meal and entertainment. Six founder members were present. During the years the



members have supported many village activities including the Rose Queen Fete by entering the Fancy Dress Competition, providing a cake and produce stall and judging competitions. Certain members have had the honour of crowning the Rose Queen. At the Country Fairs members had Craft and Produce stalls and supplied refreshments, all to raise money for a new Village Hall.

In 1979 the first meeting took place in the new Village Hall, £4 rent and 15p tea money. A Chairman's table and a notice board were bought and in the 1980s 2 teapots were given for general use.

Members have taken part in many County events including the Cheshire Show in which they have been very successful over the years. Swimming Galas were also among their activities.

In 1988 the members celebrated 50 years with a dinner in the Village Hall. Former members, some from long distances away, were present as well as members' husbands and representatives from the County Federation. Guest speaker was Mrs. Betty Penney M.B.E. from Dorset. Last year, 1998, the 60th Birthday was celebrated in the



same way, the speaker being Professor Iain Gillespie. In the last 20 years the W.I. generally has catered for so many more interests of members, from sport to computers,

science to car maintenance and offers Proficiency Certificates to those who wish to use these skills in the future.

An Antrobus member entered a County competition "Women of Today" with the following verses:

Women today are a special breed,
Outgoing, righteous and able.
Men are our equals - or so we believe
Even though we still wait at the table!

Never before have we had it so good,
Ovens that cook food so quick.
Fancy gadgets to do this and that,
The chores are all done in a tick.

Opportunities for us are abundant.
Days of oppression are gone.
Always believe in yourself completely,
Your wisdom is second to none.

In June 1979 Committee members coming out of Merryfall Cottage saw the unusual sight of a fall of snow. Again in June 1983 at Greenfield Farm, a violent storm raged with hailstones as big as golf balls (and some larger), which dented cars and smashed windows and greenhouses.

In this year of 1999, the membership is 48. The running costs have increased but members support the fund raising events and it is hoped the W.I. will keep going for many years to come.

THE FRIENDSHIP CLUB

The Friendship club was founded on 1st April 1971 with Mrs Barbara Lowe as its first Chairman. Mr Walmsley from the Citizens' Advice Bureau came to read the proposals for the constitution of the Club. Membership fee was 12½p and admission at meeting 3p which included tea and biscuits. There were between 30 and 40 members including both men and women.

A full programme was drawn up to include talks, slides and films of local events etc., entertainment by the school children and trips to various places. For three years members enjoyed a week's holiday at the seaside.

When Mrs Betty Bradford became Chairman, day trips to various places were agreed instead of a week by the sea. After two years Mrs Bradford resigned but members were able to enjoy her lovely garden and afternoon tea every year.

Christmas dinners at the Birchdale Hotel have been enjoyed since 1976, the first one costing £2. They now cost £13.50 but are subsidised.

Membership today is 28 members. Many of the activities are the same with the addition of Bingo sessions and local people are often asked to give talks on their favourite subjects.

Present Officials:	Joint Chairmen:	Mrs P. Brookes Mrs J. Gibbons
	Secretary:	Mrs S. Yeoman
	Treasurer:	Mrs M. Cutler

THE MEMORIES OF MABEL CUTLER

Mabel and her family lived at Nook Farm where Mabel was born in 1920. The eldest of six children, she attended Antrobus School from the age of five to fourteen. She then went to Marsh's Commercial College until she was seventeen. Her first job was with W.G. Caldwell, Accountants.

When Mabel was about twenty-two she found out that her father had been refused permission to extend their farmhouse, due to the war effort. The reasoning was that Mabel and her sister were old enough to leave home "Cheeky Devils!!" While Mabel was growing up her parents employed a servant girl who helped with jobs around the farmhouse and with the smaller children. One day the girl fell down the well but managed to get out, suffering shock but no serious injury! Because they had no running water, when the well ran dry all the children had to get water from a stream. Their father took the spoils of their dry toilet in the cart to the midden. To get the food supplies, a man called Mr Millington used to take all the local wives to Northwich and bring them back again. "What a treasure!" One day Mother got everyone ready for a trip to Great Budworth fete, held at Belmont Hall. At the last minute little brother fell into the pigsty! Whatever next, the little imp!

All the children had a bicycle and one summer day Mother got really fed up because she had to bandage fourteen injuries!! During her teenage years Mabel used to hitch up her long dress to cycle over to the Spinner and Bergamot or Winnington Rec. for a Dance! The dance hall at the Spinner and Bergamot is still in use to this day.

And by the way, Electricity wasn't installed at Nook Farm until the mid-1930s.



YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

This was formed by Geoff, Susan and Christine Buchan in the late 80s. Children had to be 12 years old to join and it was a popular group for a few years. They celebrated the first year with a Christmas party at Fox Farm, thanks to Meryl and Andrew Philips. Then for the next 3 years they organised, with the help of parents and friends, the Crackerteria Restaurant in the Village Hall, where a hot meal was served, the members acting as waiters and waitresses. Those people having a meal donated to the chosen charity. By 1992 the members were older and reaching important examinations and although efforts were made to continue, the Youth Fellowship closed down.

ANTROBUS RIDING CLUB

In December 1979 a meeting was held in the Village Hall to establish whether the people who owned horses and ponies were interested in forming a Riding Club. Seventy people attended the first meeting. Reg Collins was appointed President, with J.Millington of Barnton as Chairman. Shows were held on the first Sunday in each month, the first one in April 1980 with the finals at the Country Fair, for as long as the Fair existed. A sponsored hack was organised in March 1980 to raise money and various local farmers offered fields for the monthly events. A set of rules was drawn up and membership fees were decided.

Since the early days the Club has prospered and a permanent ground for their activities was found at Aston by Budworth. The club has a charity show each year and has donated to Riding for the Disabled, Horses and Ponies Protection Association and other deserving causes.

In 1985 the Club entered the prestigious Robinsons Saddlery Inter-Club Championship at Haydock Park Racecourse and were runners-up. Between 1986 and 1988 they completed a hat-trick of 3 wins.

Social events are also held, the main one being at the end of the season when all the presentations are made. Reg Collins is still the President. The Chairman, Treasurer and one of the Committee members are also Antrobus people.

THE QUAKERS

Frandle Meeting seems to have originated in visits by early Quakers to William Gandy of Frandle Farm in 1653 and 1654, when in late October a 'mighty meeting' was held. If this should seem unlikely, it is perhaps as well to remember that the 17th century was a time of turmoil and civil war. The old order had been challenged, and people were beginning to want to be their own masters. Religious belief had been prescribed in various forms, and perhaps as a result, large numbers of thinking people had expressed dissent from the established church. Travelling preachers spoke to gatherings of these dissenters who came from miles around to hear them. In this atmosphere Quakerism was formed. Incidentally, the official title is "The Religious Society of Friends" but the members were soon given the nickname "Quakers" and two reasons are suggested. Firstly George Fox, having been arrested, told the presiding Judge that he too should quake before the name of the Lord. Secondly a Friend, who having sat in silence for some time and then feeling himself called to speak to the meeting, will often fidget in his seat for several moments before rising.

George Fox, the founder of the sect, records having addressed a meeting of 'about two or three thousand' in 1657 and also 1660, and was a regular visitor to Frandle. It is said that he preached from a large oak tree growing in Frandle Farm in what became the Meeting House grounds. This old oak, believed to be one of the seven oaks of the township, was blown down in 1970 and its stump remains in the corner of the grounds.

After these visits, locally organised meetings took place in Friends' houses often at Frandle. William Gandy gave land for a burial ground in Whitley, where the first interment took place in 1657. Then, in 1662 he gave land for the meeting house. A meeting house was built in 1676 for use by the men, the women meeting separately in a different building. In the early days women were not allowed into men's meetings, but the more usual practice was to make a building with a corridor across dividing the space into a larger and a smaller room. In 1668 the Meeting was formally established as a founder member of the Cheshire Monthly Meeting, which means that by this time, Quakerism had achieved the basis of the organisation which holds today. Various Friends hosted meetings in the early years and as Church attendance was compulsory such meetings were illegal and were often raided when heavy fines would be levied on those present. Eventually William Gandy lost his several farms and died in debt. From 1670 Friends recorded their fines and the value of goods distrained in a Book of Sufferings showing that the fines levied must have caused great hardship. For example Margaret Biggs was fined £6-10s for holding the meeting and with 6 other families, fined a total of £20 for attending a Meeting instead of going to Church. Margaret Biggs' fines in 1670 totalled £35-8s, a sum probably representing a year's income for a family and penalties at a similar rate continued year on year. The normal fine for attending Meeting appears to have been eight shillings.

Once, from Henry Burtonwood, 8 milk cows worth £24 were taken. Goods taken included, animals, cheese, hay, food, clothing and furniture, often disputed as far exceeding the fine levied. Between 1662 and 1689, when the Act of Toleration abolishing compulsory attendance at Church was passed, some 21,000 Quakers including William Gandy were imprisoned. Fines for non-payment of tithes and military dues continued until 1853. This drain on the resources of the area cannot but have had a long-term effect on the heritage, as this capital would surely have found expression in either enterprise, or richer artistic or architectural output.

Despite these hardships the meeting thrived and the ecclesiastical authorities recorded in 1669 that a large number of Quakers met twice a week in Great Budworth. Meetings also took place in Crowley, Lymm and Grappenhall. The land given by William Gandy apparently had a building on it although how it was used is not clear. In 1677 a meeting was broken up by Sir Peter Leicester and two hundred names were taken. This was recorded as taking place in William Gandy's house, but it could have been in the building on land adjacent, given to the Meeting. In the eighteenth century, however, the Meeting declined, attendance becoming as low as eleven. There is a list of members in Cheshire Records Office written in 1811 which lists 20 members only, mostly from a few families and membership continued at about this level until 1939.

The original men's Meeting house became unsafe and was replaced in 1881 by a building to the same design as Comberbach Chapel. Inside it followed Quaker practice of a small entry hall, with the meeting room divided into two

blocks of benches facing one or two rows of benches elevated for the elders of the meeting. Centrally, in front of these, would be a small table for the clerk. Windows were placed high to prevent detractors from easily disturbing the silence of their worship, or Friends being distracted by the



Friends Meeting House in 1999

outdoor views.

Perhaps it is unnecessarily large for the small gatherings expected, but it is possible that Friends would hope to host the Monthly Meetings, which rotated through a number of venues and allow for any future increase in the size of the

Meetings.

Funds were raised by the sale of land. The women's meeting house still exists. The lower floor that was stabling has been converted to kitchens, and the meeting room is now used for social functions. In 1887 in a somewhat untypical gesture for Quakers, a plaque celebrating the jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign was cast and fixed to the schoolroom wall. Seven oaks, symbolic of the Seven Oaks district in which Frandley was then included were planted. Historically, Frandley Meeting has served a wide area.

In the 1940s the deprivations of wartime Britain made travelling difficult and the meeting declined further. In the later war period and early post war era, the nucleus of local Friends needed help in the form of volunteer Sunday Meeting visitors to keep the Meeting alive on a monthly basis. However, this was successful and as restrictions eased more Friends arrived. The meeting began to revive once more with attendance of a dozen or so with up to forty attending on special occasions.

Members expect that Friends will continue to come from beyond Antrobus, since following the death of Bernard Hayes in 1998 no Members of Frandley Meeting actually live in the Parish. Friends expect the meeting to maintain its quiet contribution to the area.



Women's Meeting House in 1999

FRANDLEY, PAST AND PRESENT



On the brow of a hill sits Frandley, a small hamlet of twenty or so dwellings, separated from the centre of the village of Antrobus by the A559, once the parish boundary. 'Place Names of Cheshire' by Dodgson records the name as Franley in 1514 and suggests the name be derived from *leah*, a wood or glade and *Frani*, a person.

The Brow, as the residents

affectionately call it, is enclosed by three farms known as Frandley Farm, Well Farm and Frandley Brow Farm. The latter is the only remaining working farm.

The seventeenth century Friends Meeting House, still well attended each Sunday, has put Frandley well and truly on the map and gives it a strong link with the past. Until quite recently a signpost in the centre of Antrobus directed you to Frandley Sevenoaks so called because of the seven great

trees near to the Meeting House. George Fox is reputed to have preached to a congregation gathered under one which is sadly no longer there.

In the last hundred years Frandley has been the home of two schools, The Pinfold at The Cottage and Miss Lyons school at the Meeting House schoolroom.

It has also supported a thriving shop with many changes of ownership at Frandley Brow House. Some of the houses date from the seventeen hundreds, others from the 1950's. Farmers, wheelwrights, joiners, tailors, teachers, milkman and postman have all had their homes here. Today's residents consider it a fine place to live with a good community feel in 'Friendly Frandley'.

The completion of the M56 motorway in 1974 and the expansion of housing in Comberbach made a significant difference to the traffic that passed through the hamlet. Today enormous distribution vehicles and wide wheeled tractors fill the lanes and reduce the verges to muddy ruts in winter. *Concorde* is a noisy feature in the sky.

However, on calm autumn evenings, an owl can be heard in the great oaks. Geese return noisily to Budworth Mere and sunsets are magical from the Brow. Mrs Read's distant call of "Howup!" wafting over the fields on summer evenings as she calls the cows in for milking at Frandley Brow Farm, is a pleasant reminder that our local heritage is not all lost. Present and former residents who have witnessed changes to The Brow have shared their memories, photographs and documents with us to record the local heritage.

FRANDLEY FARM



The history of Frandley Farm can be traced back to the year 1654. It was in that year that the Quakers came to Frandley and William Gandy, the then owner of Frandley Farm, became a convinced Quaker and a friend of George Fox the founder of the Quaker movement. George Fox stayed at Frandley Farm on a number of occasions and Frandley and William Gandy are mentioned in George Fox's "Journal".

In 1676 William Gandy gave a plot of land containing a building to the Quakers for the use of the Frandley Meeting and the land is still in use today for this purpose.

William Gandy was a yeoman farmer and tanner who appeared to own land in a number of areas locally. Deeds dating back to 1719 in possession of the current owner of Frandley Farm mention land in Senna Green, Whitley Reed and Cogshall as well as Frandley and it can be assumed that the Gandy family, up to William's conversion to the Quaker movement, were reasonably well off. However, that was to change over the next 70 years as succeeding generations of Gandys were persecuted for their religious beliefs and fined for various offences such as non-attendance at Budworth church, or for holding outdoor meetings, deemed by the authorities to be "riotous gatherings". To meet the fines, it eventually became necessary to mortgage and then sell their property, until in the 1730s the family left Frandley and emigrated to North America. The late Richard Nixon, one time President of the United States, was a descendant of Mary Gandy, one of the original Gandy settlers in America.

The present farmhouse dates from about 1790 and is a good example of the classical Georgian farmhouse built in large numbers in Cheshire. This was the time when the French wars that followed the French Revolution brought prosperity to English farmers. It is not thought that anything remains of the original Gandy house or farm buildings, although it is possible that part of the existing brick built barn pre-dates the current house. A local map dated 1844, but clearly based on an older survey, does not show the existing farmhouse but appears to show what may have been the original farmhouse sited on the other side of the barn.

The last farmer to live and work at Frandley Farm was Harold Frith who retired in 1975. The farm was then sold. The land and the house were divided, as happened to many of the local farms. The farmhouse, with the outbuildings and small surrounding fields, was bought by the Maunsells who left in 1980, when the current owners purchased the property.



Mr and Mrs Frith

WELL FARM



Albert Lowe played a key role on Antrobus Parish Council and a new road in the village bears his name, Lowe Crescent. Sadly Albert died in 1998 but his son was able to pass on these memories of the farm.

Well Farm was built in the mid 1800s. Albert and Kitty Woodward lived there in the early 1940s and before them was a Mr Walmesley. When Kitty died, Albert took in a housekeeper – a Mrs Brocklehurst. The farm was owned by a Dr Willet, whose daughter eventually married Albert Woodward, but only after her father's death; it seems he did not approve of the match.

Albert Lowe bought the farm (four bedrooms, no bathroom) and 30 acres of land in 1942. The farm was primarily dairy with some arable. Over the years he kept cows, pigs, hens, ponies, sheep, bantams, dogs, cats, mice etc.

In 1949 the farm was extended to include an extra bedroom and a bathroom. This extension is even now referred to as the "New Extension". In 1960, a new 32 bay shippon was built and the village was introduced to bulk-milk tankers in 1965 with the installation of a glass pipeline milking system and bulk tank.

A barn fire caused substantial damage to the buildings with a loss of straw.

Well Farm was one of the first Antrobus homes to have a television set. The farm had the first pick-up baler for straw and hay and the first Land-Rover.

Albert Lowe bought and sold much of the land around Frandley. In 1945 he bought Sandiway Farm – 90 acres plus house and buildings for £9,000. The house, buildings and 40 acres of land were sold in 1960 to the Howard family. The buildings have now been converted to 4 dwellings and another farm is lost to us.

In 1955 two cottages and half an acre of paddock (where Autumn Cottage now stands) were bought for £725. Tom Littler, Albert's farm manager lived at no. 2 Frandley Cottages. An old widow, Mrs Maddock occupied number one.

Donald Lowe remembers – "There used to be a shop on Frandley Brow, owned by the Penningtons and then the Raybones. Every Monday I remember all the family had sixpence to spend on sweets in the shop – it was our regular weekly treat!"

FRANDLEY BROW FARM



Of the three farms that enclose Frandley Brow, this is the only 'working farm'. The farm has been in the Read family since the turn of the century.

Mrs Read was one of 6 children in the Birkenhead family who lived on Reed Lane in the house now occupied by the XXX family called 'Thackstones.' She was a pupil of Miss Pearson at Antrobus School. At age 14 she went to work as a land girl for Mr Bennett at Peel Hall Farm. In 1946 she married Claude Read from Hatton and they went to live in Comberbach in a house which stood where the telephone exchange is now.

Frandley Brow Farm was then worked by Gladys's grandparents, Mr and Mrs Birkenhead and her Uncle Bill. He was known locally for his unusual drinking companions – his horse and his dog! It seems he was so fond of his horse that he always cleaned him up after a day in the fields and walked him up to the Wheatsheaf for a drink.

In 1952 Claude and Gladys came to the farm with their baby son. They had 45 acres to work. Claude had worked for his father at 2/6 a week and remembers what hard work potato picking was in those days. A fork was used to lift the potatoes into wicker baskets, which were weighed in the field on a 3-legged scale.



They worked with horses until Claude bought a second hand tractor for about £100.

In 1999 the Reads farm 145 acres. They have 40 cows in their dairy herd. 70 acres are used to grow corn (wheat and barley) and 20 acres are used for potatoes. The varieties grown are Maris Bard, Premier and Pentland Squire. The remaining 55 acres are needed for grass, either grazing or silage.



Claude and Gladys Read carry on the farming tradition at Frandley. They are hopeful the tradition will continue with their grandson. At age 11 he already knows the dates of all the calvings and has names for all his granddad's cows, Sandra being his favourite. Antrobus School hatched out some chicks in the

classroom and the mature birds found a home at Frandley Brow Farm. Free-range eggs are sold at the farm.

George Gibbons' family lived at Frandley Bank Cottage and his father worked as gardener for A W Boyd at Frandley House.

XXX loads the sacks onto the potato merchant's wagon outside Frandley Meeting House.



The milking machine hums and on calm afternoons, Mrs Read's call of "Howup!" can be heard as she encourages the cows home for the evening milking.



FRANDLEY BROW HOUSE



The present owners have deeds dating back to 1750 which trace a fascinating history of the house and its uses. It has been the site

of a school, a brewery, a joiner's shop and a general store as well as a home.

XX kindly spent hours deciphering the contents of some of the deeds, which provide an intriguing history of one corner of Antrobus. Some extracts follow.

29th May 1750 William Rowlinson, schoolmaster - late of Seven Oaks but now of Warrington sells Pinfold School etc (building in 1999 comprises 'The Cottage' and 'Rose Cottage') to Elizabeth Kettle of Antrobus for £33-10-0 plus peppercorn rent. (tenant John Donbavand)
Frandley is described then as "Waste Lands within Over Whitley" and the land purchased was estimated as "twelve

perches or poles of land". Also included in the sale was "one Mossroom lying and being upon Whitley Reed within Whitley aforesaid formerly belonging to Robert Eaton of Comberbach, Blacksmith".
A church pew at Great Budworth, "adjoining to the wall of the north gallery between the form seats of William Johnson of Comberbach and the heirs of Richard Peacock deceased" were also part of the property as were "all outhouses, edifices, buildings, barns, stables, yards, orchards, gardens, ways, waters, watercourses, libertys, easements, privileges, profits, commodities, advantages, hereditaments and appurtenances whatsoever..."

15th Jan 1863 Sale by auction at the Cock Inn, Great Budworth. Bought by Thomas Fryer (farmer and innkeeper of Antrobus) for £250. Thomas Fryer was the licensee of the Wheatsheaf, Antrobus 1864 – 74.

14th Mar 1876 Thomas Fryer died. Property passed to Jane Fryer (widow) and Richard Littler Fryer (son farmer and brewer).

23rd Feb 1880 Valuation of £700 gives the first mention of a shop (now Frandley Brow House). "Freehold dwelling house and shop and two cottages" - the tenants were Joseph Eaton, Walter Oakes and Edward Clarke.
From various documents it is concluded that the shop/house was built after 1863 and before 1880 and that the "two cottages formerly one cottage and shop" were trading before the present "shop" was built.

26th Oct 1882 Drainage agreement between R.L.Fryer and Thomas Clarke Esq, Cogshall Hall. Plan shows shop/house, Brewery and other buildings and cottages.

4thAug 1887 Conveyance. R.L.Fryer (brewer) and Mrs Jane Fryer (his widowed mother) to Mrs Martha Banner Owens, nee Fryer, tenants Richard Littler Fryer, Edward Clarke and Thomas Bowyer.

30th Sep 1908 Martha Banner Owens marries Edward McCall the Younger.

2nd April 1937 Agreement between "The Estate Offices Ltd." and Mr W. John Green.



1946 The Home Guard marched from the church to Frandley Brow and disbanded outside Green's shop.

1st Dec1949 Martha Banner McCall dies in hospital, Liverpool leaving her estate (" a piece of land situated near The Pinfold, Seven Oaks, Cheshire with the messuage, dwelling house, shop and two cottages and other buildings erected thereon") to Mrs Sarah Ellen Ratcliffe.

25th June 1952 Agreement. Mrs Mary Green to Mr Dennis White (Builder) – use of barn (former brewery) as a joiner's shop.

2nd Mar 1953	Conveyance. Mrs M.Green to Mr W.J.Clare.
7th Jan 1957	Conveyance. Mr W.J.Clare to Mr and Mrs A.Crawford.
30th Jun 1958	Conveyance. Mr and Mrs A.Crawford to Mr and Mrs G.Bird.
11th Apr 1963	Conveyance. Mr and Mrs G.Bird to Mr Harry Pennington.
3rd Dec 1966	Conveyance. Mr H.Pennington to Mr and Mrs J.E.Raybone.
5th Apr 1971	Conveyance. Mr and Mrs J.E.Raybone to Mr and Mrs E.G.Hodnett.
	Frandley Brow Stores closed.

<p>C. HOLDEN <i>Builder</i> BELMONT SMITHY GREAT BUDWORTH CHESHIRE</p> <p>Telephone: <u>Comberbach 214</u></p> <p>PROPERTY REPAIRS. SECTIONAL BUILDINGS in stock and made to order.</p> <p>Funerals Completely Furnished.</p>	<p>W. J. GREEN Grocer and General Dealer</p> <p>Frandley Brow Stores ANTROBUS CHESHIRE</p>
<p>FIRST CLASS Radio Service Repairs to all makes of modern Radios and Amplifiers</p> <p>•</p> <p>All Equipment Returned as NEW NOT Just Working</p> <p>•</p> <p>Sets Loaned while yours is repaired We Collect and Deliver</p> <p>J. LITTLER POLE LANE, ANTROBUS Northwich, Cheshire</p>	<p>Monuments Cleaned and Renovated</p> <p>All Classes of Memorials Supplied</p> <p>B. DEAN MONUMENTAL MASON</p> <p>19 Greenfields Avenue, Appleton, Near Warrington</p> <p>★</p> <p>INSCRIPTIONS NEATLY CUT Phone: Stockton Heath 60</p>

Parish Magazine 1952

FRANDLEY BROW



This thatched cottage used to be right by the roadside on Sandiway Lane next to Frandley Cottages. In 1911 Charles Jackson Holmes and Ebenezer James Hall sold it, along with both Frandley Cottages and their land, to William Hulse, a farmer.

The Cross family were tenants in 1923 and Stan Cross, who now lives in Lowe Crescent, was born there in 1928.

He had seven brothers and sisters and the whole family of ten slept in the one room upstairs which extended over the shippon below. The cottage had no electricity and no water until cast iron pipes were laid in the 1930s. Water was drawn from the pump next door. His neighbours in 1934 were the Hignetts and the Goulbornes.

Paraffin lamps provided light. The girl in the photo might be Stan's elder sister Elsie Cross. He has many memories of his childhood in Frandley. His father was a tailor by trade and worked for Cowaps of Comberbach as well as taking in clothes for alterations at the cottage. He later sewed at the bag plant at ICI Wallerscote works. Mr Cross was also the local postman. This meant a bike ride into Northwich at 4 am to collect the mail.

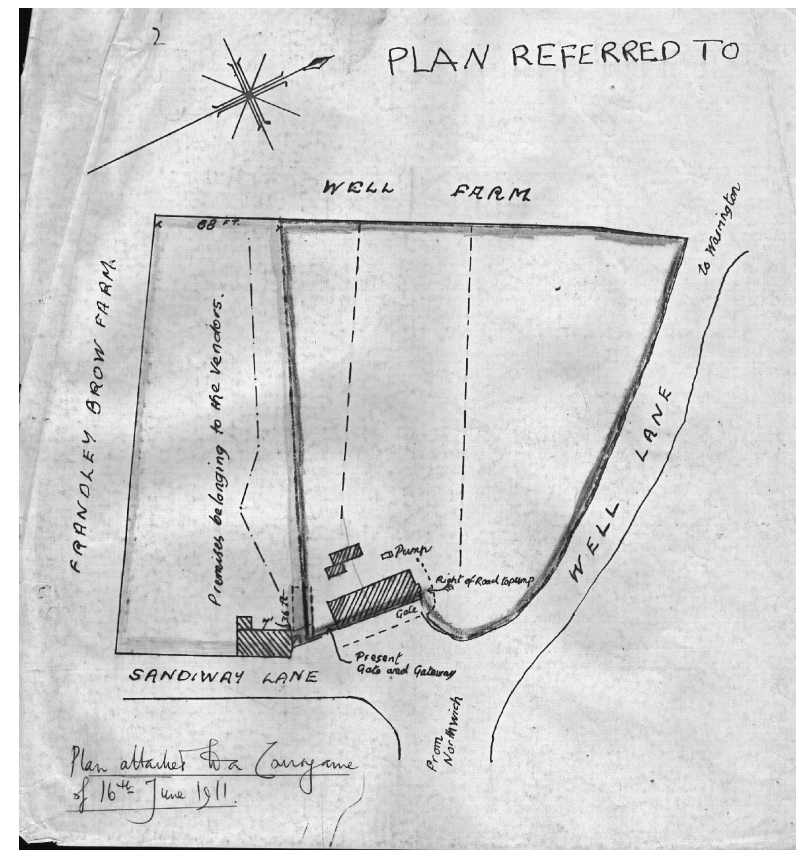
Stan remembers horse-drawn delivery carts for the butcher and breadman from Northwich and Mr Raynor's new coal wagon, which was commandeered for the war. A heavy snowfall in 1941 blocked all the roads making it impossible for the milk to be collected from the farms. Mr Woodward gave away a lot of his milk and Stan remembers having rice pudding every day for a week! Soldiers from Marbury Hall came to clear the roads.

The Sharpes managed the Frandley Stores, and their daughter Florence would cycle to Antrobus School, paper bags slung over her handlebars containing chips and peas for school dinners. Miss Pearson and Miss Stelfox ran the school then. Mrs Eaton the caretaker provided warm fires at school, and Horlicks could be had for 2½d per week.

Contemporaries at school with Stan were Harold Powell from Kiln Farm and George Gibbons whose father, Tom, was gardener for Mr Boyd at Frandley House. Stan was a pupil at Antrobus School from age 5 to 14 when he left to become an apprentice farmer working for Mr Bolshaw. He worked from 7am to 6pm for £1 per week and gave it all to his mum. He worked there until 1951 when a bad tractor accident put him in hospital for some months.

The Cross family left the thatched cottage when Stan was 7 years old and moved round the corner into Wheatsheaf Lane into the first council house built in Antrobus. They were the last tenants of the cottage, which was then condemned and demolished in 1935.

The owner of the cottage, William Hulse died in 1932 and ownership passed to his daughters, Martha Ellen Gibbons and then Margaret Birkett and on her death in 1950 to his grand-daughter Rosanna Margaret Ellen Hulse-Birkett who inherited the land and the two Frandley Cottages next to it. She sold the land where the thatched cottage had been to a William Jacques in 1952 and in 1956 Oaklands, a bungalow was built, the start of many changes at Frandley.



1911 Plan of cottages on Frandley Brow.

THE COTTAGE



Mr George Barr remembers...

Sid Smith sold The Cottage to him and his wife, Audley, in 1956. Dorothy and Len Martin were living next door then at Rose Cottage and their daughter, Heather, was born there.

Jim Wright who was the barrel man at 'The Wheatsheaf' followed them. For many years he took a leading role in the

Mummers play as the horseman. He lived at Rose Cottage after his retirement until his death in 1992. The house has lain empty since then but recently the new owners have started to renovate it with a view to coming to live at Frandley.

Opposite the cottage was a pit and a bit of a pond where cattle would drink. Harold Frith lived at Frandley Farm and

he kept cattle, pigs and poultry. Maunsells, who sold to the Olds in 1980, followed him.

Frandley Stores was a very busy and successful shop next door at Frandley Brow House. Mr. Green ran the shop. Clares, Crawfords, Birds, Penningtons and Raybones followed him. George Bird had been trained at Kendals and ran a good shop.

There were small items of clothing, bacon on the hook, a good beer selection, it satisfied all Audley's sewing and knitting needs and even had a van delivery and some tick. People came to the shop on bikes and after Chapel, the farmers would come with willow baskets to buy their beer. Several bottles ended up in the pit. The shop had a 7-day licence.



FRANDLEY COTTAGES



Number 1 Frandley Cottages was occupied by Mrs Maddock in 1955 when the pump by the back door was still in use. In 1967 Mr Lowe sold the cottage to Peter Burton for £1,500.

Mrs Cormack followed and then the Anderson family with several children. 1977 saw the arrival of Nick and Hilary Plews and their three sons. The house was then extended and they bought land from Well Farm to enlarge the garden. Peacocks made a brief appearance at Frandley, but had a tendency to escape.



The present owners bought the house in the 1980s and made substantial changes to the interior of the property. Deeds for Number 2 only go back to 1911 when the cottages

were bought by William Hulse and passed to his daughters and then his granddaughter.

From observations about its construction during recent renovations, it is thought the original house was a single storey timber framed building with brick infill, possibly similar in size to the thatched cottage which was next door. Wattle and daub was found in the walls. A brick skin was built around the house, probably in the mid 1880s and a second storey added.

Frandley Cottages and half an acre of land behind the demolished cottage adjacent were sold to Albert Lowe in 1955 for £725. The Littler family were tenants as Tom Littler worked at Well Farm.

In 1974 Number 2 Frandley Cottages was sold for £11,000 to Mrs Cussons who lived there with her two children. They were visited by an elderly lady, Mrs Alice Monaghan, nee Bell, who had lived in the cottage as a child. Her visit evoked a lot of memories about Frandley and the Northwich Guardian recorded them on their Market Place page.

The XX family bought the cottage in 1977 and over the last 20 years have made several changes.

THE SHIELING



Frandleley changed again in 1960 when a Comberbach builder, Denis White, put up two bungalows on the site of the pit.

In the 1980s The Shieling was sold to the present owners, who live there with their daughter. They have extended the bungalow considerably.



FOUR GABLES

The second bungalow was built in 1993, J



AUTUMN COTTAGE

Formerly known as Oaklands, this bungalow was built in 1956 on land where William Hulse's thatched cottage used to stand. William Jacques bought the land in 1952. Mrs Agnes Emmett was the first owner of the bungalow and she and her daughter, Maureen, lived there until poor health forced her to leave in the late 1980s. Mrs Emmett was a teacher at Antrobus School and would walk the children of the Brow to school at a brisk trot. In her retirement she travelled the world.

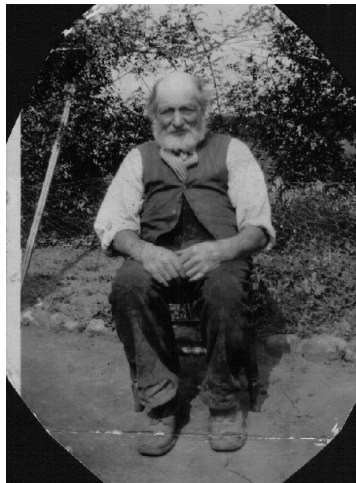
1992 saw the arrival of XXX who completely altered the exterior and interior of the building and renamed it Autumn Cottage.



FRANDLEY BANK COTTAGE



This was once the home of Mr and Mrs Gibbons and their five children.



Grandfather Gibbons is pictured left.

They were followed by Mr Mather, cattle dealer, the Isherwoods and the Fletchers.

XXX bought the cottage in 1986 and have altered it considerably.



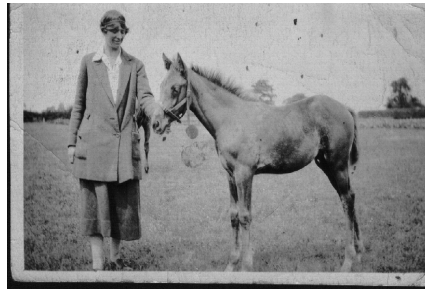
1986

FRANDLEY HOUSE



Frandlely House was the home of A.W. Boyd who was a naturalist, birdwatcher and collector of country customs and dialect. He wrote two books

about Antrobus and district. His wife also wrote poems and essays of local interest.



Mrs Boyd



A.W.Boyd

FRANDLEY BROW COTTAGES



The southern half of the cottages was occupied by Mr and Mrs Westwell



Poster announcing the sale of the cottages in 1864.

The northern half was the home of Mr and Mrs Stan Wright until 1986 when the XXX family moved in and extended the house.

WHEATSHEAF LANE



In the 1930s the first Council house in Antrobus was built at Frandley on Wheatsheaf Lane, home today to the XXXX family.

Mrs L J is the resident who has lived longest on Wheatsheaf Lane and she shared her memories of Frandley in the past.

"There used to be a thatched cottage on the Brow. The Cross family lived there before moving into the first council house on Wheatsheaf Lane. They stayed there until there was only one son left and now he lives in the old people's bungalows on Lowe Crescent. Where the Shieling now stands was a pit hole. Behind that I remember going and pinching pears as a girl. There was a big pear tree in there but we didn't dare go at night because the Irish men who



used to come over to work on the farms used to congregate there and get their bottles of beer from the shop opposite. There was a pump at Mrs Maddock's back door. My sister, Mrs Littler lived next to her at 2 Frandley Cottages. The cottage belonged to Mr Lowe of Well Farm and my sister's husband managed his farm while Mr Lowe was busy at Council meetings.

Mr Littler died suddenly and Mr Lowe's son was going to need the cottage. It never materialised because he didn't work on the farm because he couldn't go out in the sun.

The shop was Mrs Brindley's when I was a girl. Jones followed, then Sharpe, Green, Bird and Raybone. Goulbornes lived in the cottage where Mr Barr lives. He had a milk round. The shop had a big double door where the big window is now. They sold everything, and when rationing was on you got your rations there. They got a proper licence to sell spirits and everything. Mrs Green would sell bottles of Guinness.

Mr Whyte's bungalow was built first and then Mrs Hyett's. Round the corner at Frandley Bank Cottage lived Mrs Gibbons, then Mrs Isherwood and then Mr Fletcher. He was a cobbler in Warrington. Mrs Isherwood is in an old ladies' home and is about 90. Mr Cross who lived in the thatched cottage used to be a tailor and you used to see people coming and fetching clothes that had been shortened and taken in.

The cottage was occupied before by Miss Lyons who ran a school at the Meeting House for 2d a week.

I was 13 when I came here and now I'm 76. I was born in 1922 and came here just before the war with my mum and dad. I had three brothers and a sister.

I left school at 14 and went to work for Mrs Barber at Mill Farm. My mother had a big family like Mrs Cross next door. There were 10 of them living there. Nowadays children like a room of their own but my 3 brothers all slept in one room, my sister and I had the other one and my mother and father had the one at the front.

My sister had Geoffrey, John and Sam. They had hens because when my boys were little someone gave them a bantam and Tom Littler took it home to Frandley Cottages. There used to be old-fashioned railings in front of the cottages but they've all gone now.

The fete used to be held on a field up past Mr Lowe's. They used to run a double-decker bus from the village hall up there.

I used to be the caretaker at Antrobus School for 26 years. Mr Weir was the Head then and after him came Mr Hall, then Mrs Hayes. I broke my shoulder and so had to finish. I go to the over 60s and I went in the new school hall which is lovely.

These two houses were built first. They were left for a long time with just the wood showing. Mr Ryder built them. There's nobody in them now that was here then; they've all gone. There's only me. Mrs Wright, who had

the end one, she lost her husband and went to Australia, but her son is still in Antrobus. He's a manager at Harrison's Poultry farm. Eva Bates used to live on the lane but she died not so long ago. Mandy Arnold's grandparents, the Tomlinsons had one of the houses. There was a family called Steele and another called Sutch. Mr and Mrs Brookes have been here a long time.

I remember the Wheatsheaf had white stumps around the front where they used to tie the horses. You always went in at the front of the Sheaf. Everybody goes in at the back now. The Plumbs had the pub when I was a girl. Mrs Isherwood was a daughter from the Sheaf."

Ben and Phyllis Brookes

Mr and Mrs Brookes moved into Wheatsheaf Lane in 1958 renting the house from a Miss Ryder whose father had built the 6 houses. Later the houses were sold to the sitting tenants and Mr and Mrs Wright were the first to move in.

"In our early days in the lane, buses ran every hour past the old Wheatsheaf Public House. The Cooperative Stores used to deliver groceries, and a Mr Walker from Northwich delivered meat twice a week in his van."



REGULAR VISITORS TO THE BROW



Gordon Bennett, Milkman
and farmer of Sevenoaks
Farm.



Neil
Woodward,
Coalman.



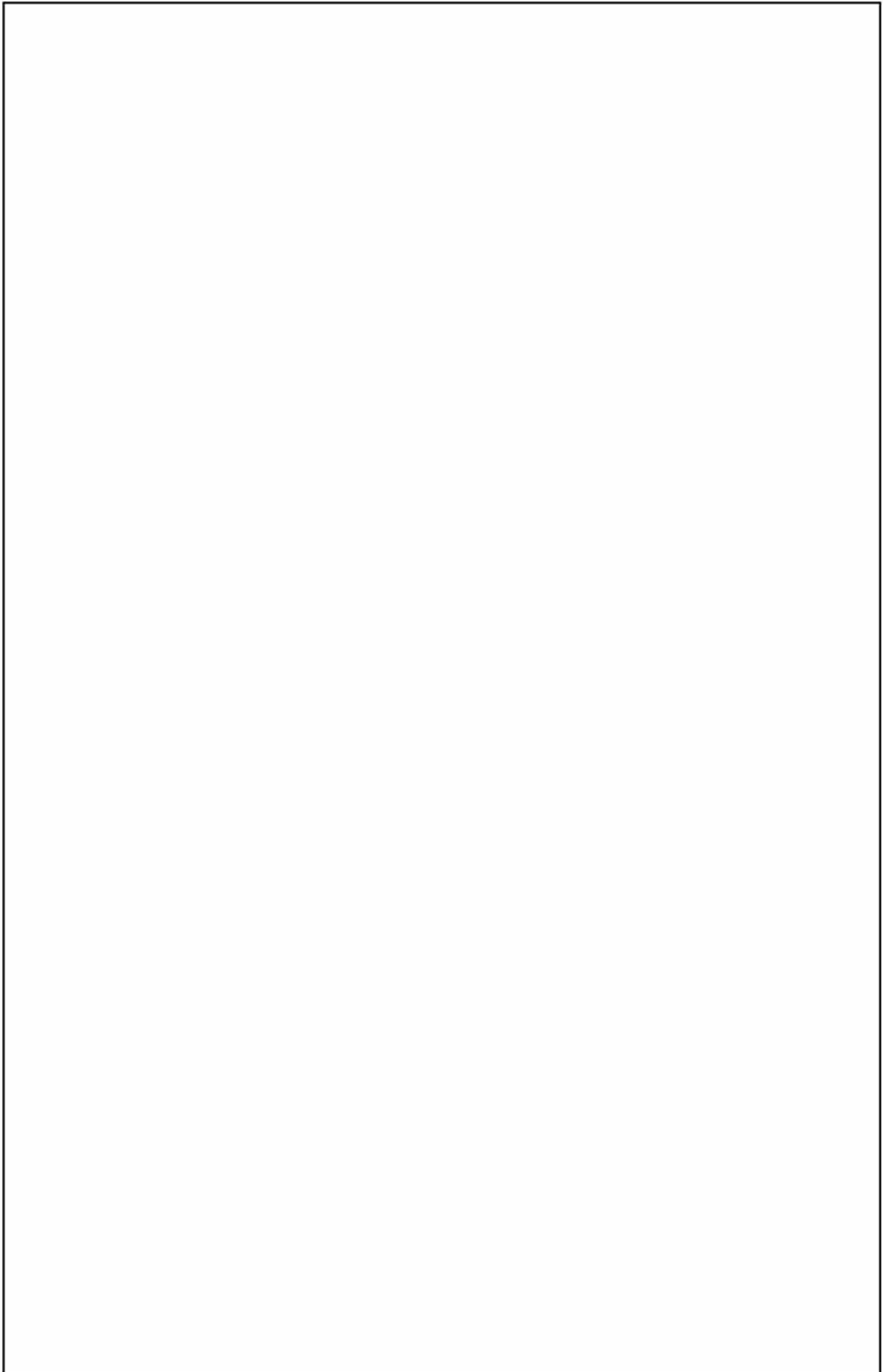
Peter Clarke,
Chimneysweep.



Peter, the
Postman.



Work



FARMING

“Agriculture is not merely one industry among many, but it is a way of life, unique and irreplaceable in its human and spiritual values.” (Trevelyan, English Social History p.554.)

The twentieth century started with a deep depression in agriculture; dramatic changes in rural life and attitudes were brought about by the Industrial Revolution, which encouraged people to move away from the countryside and farming to live and work in the towns.

Food was the currency with which foreign nations paid for English manufactured goods and this priced home-produced food out of the market. The Victorians laid no plans for the future and farmers were left to manage as best they could. The progress of the twentieth century brought about many changes in the fortunes of farming and in different levels of government intervention in the industry. It is also clear that at the end of this century, once again, farming is in decline with large numbers of farmers and farm workers leaving the industry and the houses, land and buildings being put to a variety of different uses.

At the turn of the century there were up to 50 farms and smallholdings within the parish of Antrobus. The farms were comparatively small and practised mixed farming. The main crop was grass that was used to feed the milking cows and the horses that not only worked on the land but were also needed for transport. Pigs and hens were also kept and potatoes as well as corn might well have been grown.

Most farmhouses had a small orchard planted in the previous century and providing fruit for the household.



Quite often a couple of drills in a nearby potato field were set aside for growing vegetables. There was a plentiful supply of manure to keep the land in good heart and to produce a bountiful crop.

Electricity did not arrive in Antrobus until 1936 and the farmhouses were lit with paraffin lamps and the outside work was carried on in the darker months by the light of hurricane lamps. Gas is still not available although some farmhouses now use 'bottled gas' for heating and cooking. Main drainage, which arrived in the village in 1945, is only available to a limited number who are close to the main sewer. The outside earth closets of former times have been replaced by indoor facilities. However, the 'lavender man' who emptied the earth closets was still providing this service as late as 1990.

The farmhouses were fairly substantial buildings often providing accommodation for more than one generation of the family, or in some cases for the labourers employed to work on the land. Many farms had shants attached to the outbuildings that were used to accommodate the Irish men who came to assist with the setting of potatoes and remained until the harvest had been gathered. The influx of Irish men considerably enlarged the population of the village early in the century. By the 1960's mechanisation finally took over the tasks which they had undertaken.

POTATOES have been an important crop in the area for over 200 years. The land adjoining Little Leigh produced some of the very earliest crops, the moss land usually being used to grow later varieties. The potato land would have been well manured by cows that grazed the fields during the summer months. The land would have been



Planting potatoes in the early 1930's

ploughed during the winter months and a man and a horse would have ploughed an acre in one day. Tractors arrived in the 1930's and with a one furrow plough would have ploughed about three acres in one day. The latest tractor with a five-furrow turnover plough can plough around 20 acres in a day.

The traditional date for starting to set potatoes was 17th March and in the 1950's the earliest varieties were being harvested at the beginning of June.

Later varieties, which were stored over the winter, were harvested much later in the season. Plastic, introduced in the early eighties was used to cover the newly planted potatoes and brought harvesting forward by as much as three weeks. Plastic was superseded by fleece, which had the added benefit of protecting the crop from early frosts and could also be used more than once, unlike plastic. (Severe frost could wipe out a whole crop and this has happened on occasions.)

Until the nineteen thirties, potatoes in 1cwt hampers from Antrobus were taken to the London Bridge Tavern in Stockton Heath. They were auctioned to merchants who shipped them directly to the Manchester markets via the Bridgewater Canal. As merchants acquired their own transport and collected potatoes directly from farms, the London Bridge market declined, but from this trade arose the Appleton Thorn potato exchange. A group of farmers and merchants met three times weekly in the potato-growing season to agree a fair price for trading potatoes, instead of fixing a price by auction. The Exchange flourished until the nineteen eighties .



Potatoes in hampers ready to go to auction
at London Bridge Tavern, Stockton Heath

As the merchants began to collect their own supplies from the farms, 1cwt hessian sacks were introduced and later superseded by ½cwt brown paper sacks. Sacks are now required to show the farm of origin and the name of the variety of potatoes. The methods used for planting and for harvesting have changed considerably. Early in the century all potatoes were planted by hand. Two people would carry a chitting tray containing the sets between them. They would walk between three drills and plant the two outside rows. When they got to the end of the field they would turn around and again, spanning three drills, would use the unplanted middle drill as an outside row. On occasions, children were employed and they would walk behind the two workers and plant the third drill.

As tractors began to replace horses, machinery was used to set the potatoes. Although the earlier machines still required men to actually plant the potatoes, the process



Fred Mounfield in 1954
packing potatoes in 1cwt sacks
with tractor and elevator potato digger in the background.

was speeded up. The earliest method of harvesting potatoes was for them to be forked out of the ground and then collected in wicker baskets by workers following on behind. Machines were later used to lift the potatoes from the ground, but they were still collected by hand. Developments in the machinery market brought about great changes after the war and potato harvesters appeared which lifted the potatoes onto a moving belt and

eliminated the backbreaking work of lifting the crop from the ground. The early harvesters still required manpower and provided seasonal work for many young people. Today big harvesters pick the crop straight into bulk carriers and the potatoes are graded and stored away from the field.

Potatoes are prone to disease and pest infection. Sprays are used to control infection and a common sight in the village during the seventies and eighties was helicopters used to spray the potato crop. The machines flew close to the ground and perilously close to telegraph wires. A specially adapted vehicle followed the helicopter, which then landed on top of it for refuelling. The danger involved in the operation eventually caused it to cease. Nowadays specialised vehicles are used to spray the crop, the booms extending up to eighty feet wide.

FRED MOUNFIELD

alias Farmer Bostock of Greenhollow Farm

The Daily Dispatch published a weekly series of articles on the Saturday Page from November 1953 to 27th October 1954. The series was written by one of their staff journalists, John Winter and was based on the life of the Mounfield family who lived at Whitley House Farm. Each week John Winter had a meal with the family and discussed the events of the past week. The following are extracts from the articles:

“CHRISTMAS 1953

Then there is the long programme of Christmas festivities. Country folk like to do themselves well and as Greenhollow lies quite close to three villages we get a treble dose. All the local organisations have a “do” of some kind, and

whether it is Women’s Institute, Young Farmers’ Club, Sunday School or day school, some member of our family seems to be going.

But the biggest problem on the farm itself is Christmas poultry. Every year when we buy in our young stock for fattening we say, “This time we’ll sell the lot to the butcher and let him have the headache of getting it ready.”

We said it again last spring, but now I can see we shall be just as busy as ever in Christmas week dressing and plucking birds ourselves. We started off with 23 turkeys and 50 cockerels and the butcher said he would be glad to take the lot. But first one person, then another came along and told us how much nicer it would be if they could get their Christmas dinner straight from the farm. And we yielded.

The cockerels are already down to 40, through odd ones being slaughtered for our own use or for sale. Last time I checked the turkeys there were six which hadn’t been ordered privately, so the butcher doesn’t look like having many to take away. It’s strange the demand should be so brisk when there are supposed to be more home-produced turkeys than in any year since the war.

A neighbour of mine, who specialises in poultry, is reputed to pluck a bird in three minutes, but it takes me an hour to get a live turkey ready for the oven. I put 5 shillings on the price of a bird for this, and I don’t consider that I am overpaid. I was just working out how long before Christmas I should need to start when my wife, who had gone to feed the poultry, called me to the door. “Come and look at the cockerels!” she said. Only a few seconds earlier she had thrown them some grain. When I arrived there was a free-for-all going on with wings thrashing,



Fred Mounfield
(alias Farmer Bostock from Greenhollow)
at Whitley House Farm in 1953
with a Shorthorn dairy cow and Friesians in the background

combs bleeding and the most blood-curdling squawks. These were birds which, less than four weeks previously had been caponised by the vet. The pellets he had injected were supposed to keep them docile for six weeks, during which they would pile on the weight.

I had noticed an odd one or two reverting to normal during the previous few days, but suddenly nearly all of them were back to fighting fettle. Their combs were red and angry and they were fighting like furies. The few which had not reverted were having a very thin time.

On the day of collection they were supposed to be kept locked up, but when John went to feed them he forgot and let them out. We couldn't seem to get them back. "We might as well wait until dark, then they'll go inside themselves," we said.

The butcher held a sack while I thrust the protesting birds into it. Five were as many as any one of us could carry, so we filled another sack and carried each to the garage doorway where the butcher had slung his beautiful stainless steel balance. The first ten birds weighed 90lbs. The butcher wrote the weight with his finger on the side of the van. When all had been weighed, he announced that 32 cockerels made 275lbs. That's an average of $8\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.

We then groped our way into the turkey loft, grabbed three of the smaller birds and weighed them – 34lbs. About half of the turkeys and cockerels left will be taken away in the feather by their buyers, but the rest we shall have to pluck and dress ourselves.

Always the last to be done is the one we are having, and that's usually the biggest. Outsize turkeys are always a bit tricky. Last year our top weight was 30lb. We had it and

had to cut the legs off to get it in the oven.

The night before Christmas we go out Christmas singing with the chapel choir. We call on farms and houses over a radius of two miles and the party travels around in cars.

We make Christmas as much of a holiday as possible for the men, only feeding, milking and cleaning out are done and all on overtime basis. Part of the tradition is a glass of rum on the Boss, to show that even among the clatter of milk churns we can keep the Christmas spirit.

SPRING 1954

150 fluffy brown balls of day old chicks arrived – born into a very inhospitable world of finance for the poultry farmer. Egg prices are on the floor. Costs of producing them are up in the sky;

150 chicks cost £26

Eggs remain at 4d each

3 weeks laying to recover initial cost.

We must have broken records for the speed which we sowed a 9 acre potato field with compound fertiliser and disced it. I was driving the little tractor, drawing an eight-foot fertiliser distributor, with young Tom sitting on a pile of empty bags on the tow bar to keep watch on the compound as it ran through. We were sowing about 15cwt to the acre, which meant frequent stops for replenishing. We started after dinner, carried on the following day and had finished well before afternoon milking. Bill, on the big tractor, followed us up and disced the whole field in less than a day. Boxes of seed have to be delivered to the field, the drills made and the seed covered after it is set. Setting – the best arrangement is for 2 people to work together walking along the drills and carrying the box with

one hand apiece. With the other hand each can set a drill with seed. Then they are covered with a small tractor fitted with skeleton wheels, which do not pack the soil and discs which turn the soil lightly over the seed.

PRICES OF FIRST EARLY POTATOES

The first potatoes lifted this year were a variety called Ulster Chieftain. They produced a yield of 3 tons to the acre. It took two Irish men 4 hours to fork out half a ton of potatoes by hand.

1954	£2 -16s per cwt			which equals £56 per ton	
1953	£2 - 4s	"	"	" "	£44
1952	£1	"	"	" "	£20
1939	11s	"	"	" "	£11
1938	12s	"	"	" "	£12
1934	8s	"	"	" "	£ 8
1933	6s	"	"	" "	£ 6
1932	3s	"	"	" "	£ 3

The table shows how prices were depressed before the war. An acre of potatoes grossed £168 and will have cost £80 - £90 to grow. An elevator type lifting machine cost £120 and the chain cost £17 to replace.

SUMMER 1954

I can hear the Cheshire countryside buzzing with the urgent throb of tractors. Reapers and mowers chatter busily behind the hedges, balers clank rhythmically and here and there a combine harvester steadily swallows the standing corn.

100 tons of manure had accumulated through the summer. The farmer drove the tractor with the manure spreader and took it straight out to the field where he is going to grow

potatoes next year. The spreader gets rid of a load in a few minutes. In one day two men, loading the spreader by hand, shifted 30 loads of 25cwt each and the whole stack was moved in 3 days.

While the weather is fine, there is nearly always a heavy dew, which makes the cutting of corn difficult after about 7p.m. When it is cut and set up in stooks it has to stay there for at least a week, even if the weather is perfect, to dry and mature before carting.

The perfect team for quick loading in a cornfield is four men, one on each side pitching up the sheaves, one on the trailer stacking them and the other driving the tractor. Three at the barn, one feeding the sheaves onto the elevator and two stacking them on top. They came trundling into the yard with their long trail of vehicles and went through the complicated process of setting up the thrashing machine. The awkwardness of this manoeuvre beats me. Here you have a big modern machine weighing more than four tons and to work it must stand dead level. There are two spirit levels at back and front to ensure this, but the only means of raising one side or the other is to lay planks of timber on the ground and back the machine onto them.

It took nearly an hour's shunting backwards and forwards adding or exchanging planks of varying thickness before the spirit level reading was satisfactory.

The threshing men manned the machine. The odd job man carried the bags of chaff away and Harry and Bill were taking off the sacks of corn, carrying them across the yard and upstairs into the granary above the shippon. They were moving about 20 sacks an hour all day. Each bag weighed 1½cwt. (1 Cwt. = 112pounds.)

We paid £94 for a swathe turner-tedder delivering the hay into a windrow for picking up by a baler.

27th OCTOBER 1954

It is a year since Saturday Page introduced you to Greenhollow Farm.

Farmer Bostock and his family, his farmworkers and their families have become familiar friends. The idea of recording their everyday experiences week by week sprang from the belief that deep in everyone there is a love of the land and a secret hankering to be a farmer. We said at the start that no one could tell how the story would develop, but we could hardly have chosen a more eventful period in the history of farming and especially in the life of Greenhollow.

To start with, it has been by far the worst year of weather Farmer Bostock has known. That has stopped you from getting an orderly account of the seasons, but you have read instead of his ceaseless fight to get his crops in, and in fact, to do any farming at all. When the story started last October nearly all the winter corn had been sown. Today Farmer Bostock has not even started to plough. Early in May (you will hardly believe this) he was short of grass on his pastures because of the spring drought and his potatoes were at a standstill. Since then, rain and lack of sunshine have constantly thwarted his plans. The potato harvest dragged on a month later than normal and he was haymaking in September, later than he has ever done before. His corn harvest was nearly a tragedy. Seizing the rare opportunity of a fine day, Farmer Bostock and his man worked around the clock and continued after dark by the light of tractor headlamps. Even so, he had to leave a small

area of oats unharvested for the first time in his life.

Amid all these anxieties he faced the worries of transition from control to a free market in meat and bacon and the changeover to T.T. milk production. When the story started, Greenhollow Farm had 30 cows which produced 100 gallons of milk a day. During the late summer Farmer Bostock gradually sold his herd, until it was down to 5 cows yielding 10 gallons. At the same time he rebuilt the interior of his shippin to bring it up to the required standard and began to assemble a new herd of attested cattle. He bought 11 more cows last week and now has 20 which produce 65 gallons a day.

The yield will climb as the cows settle in at Greenhollow and more will be bought until the herd is 30 strong again. To get an idea of the money side of farming, that will be about £2,500 worth of cattle and if any of them fail to pass the periodic tuberculin test, they've got to go. Now look at the human side. The story began with the arrival of Harry Jackson and his family at High Tree Cottage. Harry had come to work for Farmer Bostock, his first job on the land and we thought he was going to settle into farm life.

But that didn't happen. In July he decided to return to the town. The account of his departure proved the truth of our belief that all kinds of people want to be farmers.

A shoal of letters for Farmer Bostock arrived at the Dispatch office. They were all from readers who wanted to work at Greenhollow. He selected two for interview and one of them, Sam Birch, has been working for him for two months. He too came from a town and so far is enjoying

his new life. Bill, the tractor driver, between his struggles in the harvest fields has been helping to prepare the new wage campaign of the National Union of Agricultural Workers, of which he is the local secretary.

Farmer Bostock's family are all a year older – Jennifer 15, John 13 and Peter 7. Mrs. Bostock is fattening another batch of turkeys for Christmas. Her mother, Mrs. Worthington, has just stored away 40lb. of jam made from damsons from the orchard. We have followed the story of Greenhollow round the farming year. With some margin for the weather, farming operations will fall into the same pattern as they did a year earlier. But there will be events, unforeseen now, which makes the life of a farm changing, as well as changeless. There's always another year, says Farmer Bostock; with the philosophy which keeps farmers farming.

MRS. BOSTOCK

"At 10-30a.m. we have 'baggin' – our local name for a snack of tea and jam or cheese and bread. At 12 midday we have Dinner. In the afternoon at 3p.m. we have baggin and again at 4p.m. Any time between 6 and 7-30p.m. is teatime and we have another cup of tea before bedtime. In between meals and 'baggins', I interview callers and tradesmen when my husband is out in the fields. I provide 3 meals a day for 200 poultry and get on with baking (everything except bread), washing and making tempting salads of chickweed and dandelion for those delicate creatures, the turkeys. Housework, cleaning, dusting etc. usually gets done at night whilst we are waiting for the hens to go to bed – a lengthy vigil on these light nights."

Fred Mounfields two sons followed him on the farm, one of them leaving in the seventies to work at I.C.I. In 1995 the acreage had increased to approximately 150 acres and his other son Ron Mounfield and his son-in-law farmed this with seasonal help to plant and harvest the 40 acre potato crop. The milking herd had increased to 90 cows.

In 1995 the land was sold to a neighbouring farmer and sadly in 1999 Fred Mounfield died.

DEVELOPMENTS

Farming was the way of life for the majority of the village population in the early twentieth century. Social life revolved around the family and many of the farming families were related through marriage. As late as the nineteen sixties, fourteen out of the fifteen members of Antrobus Youth Club were related.

The Stretton Young Farmers Club was established in the 1940's and provided both educational and social activities for the younger members of the local farming community. The National Farmers Union was the farmer's voice in negotiating policy with the governments of the day. Several Antrobus farmers held various offices in the local branch. An annual dance was one of the highlights of social life in the district. During the Second World War many of the farms employed land girls to assist with the work. Farming was a protected industry but several farmers joined the Home Guard. Farming became more mechanised after the Second World War and fewer staff were employed to assist with the work. Slowly the larger farms swallowed the smaller ones and the farmhouses began to be sold off for residential use. As less labour was

needed and the pattern of early marriage established, bungalows were built to accommodate either the young family workers or the older generation. In the fifties and sixties, bungalows were built at Antrobus Hall, Whitley House Farm, Potternell Farm, Thellow Heath Farm, Fox Farm and Brow Farm. This development was curtailed by more stringent planning laws introduced in 'green belt areas.' Many of the barns, which had been required earlier and which were now largely redundant, began to fall into disrepair. A further development has now taken place and barns have been developed for residential use at Hollins Lane Farm and at Sandiway Farm. The pattern of farming in Antrobus has changed greatly over the century from the small family farms involving the whole family and providing an established way of life to the situation today where the greater proportion of these farms have now disappeared.

Few farms still have milking herds and none of these produce butter or cheese. The farming enterprises are now much larger and more specialised and include a factory that processes chickens for the supermarket trade. The chickens are produced not only on local farms but also from a much wider area. There is a specialist pig unit at Antrobus Hall Farm where the Wright family has farmed for many generations. Contract farming has taken over much of the work, which requires big and expensive machinery. Elegant cars, suitable for weddings, grace another redundant farm building. Land in the centre of the village is being used for horticultural purposes and land which was once farmed has been developed as a private airstrip.

There is no longer an expectation that a farmer's son or daughter will stay home and help on the farm when he or she

leaves school. The young people who grew up on the farms in the later part of the century are now scattered, not only over the four corners of Britain, but in other parts of the world and are undertaking a wide variety of careers.

Alf Barber,
Fred Mounfield and
Harry Hankey
former farmers of
Antrobus.



POTATO VARIETIES

The potato varieties listed below have been grown in Antrobus during the twentieth century

FIRST EARLIES	SECOND EARLIES	MAINCROP
Ninetyfolds	Ausonia	Cara
Homeguard	Estima	Desiree
Dundrod	Marfona	King Edward
Maris Bard	Maris Peer	Maris Piper
Minerva	Wilja	Pentland Dell
Ostara		Pentland Squire
Pentland Javelin		Romano
Premiere		
Rocket		

New seed potatoes were usually purchased from Scotland. The seed would arrive in hessian sacks and would be put into spritting boxes that were normally kept in the winter in the loft over the shippon. The warmth from the cows underneath rose and protected the seed from the winter frost. The new seed potatoes would be grown once and then stored over the next winter and planted again the following spring.

Appleton Thorn Potato Exchange

This developed out of the former London Bridge Potato Market, which traded by the roadside causing serious traffic hazards. In 1945 trading moved to Appleton Thorn and in 1957 the Exchange committee met in the pub.

There were 10 merchants, mostly from Warrington and 10 growers including 4 from Antrobus; Charlie Sutton (pictured below), J.T.Barber of Goosebrook, F.Mounfield of Whitley House Farm and Joe Bolshaw of Brow Farm.





Horse drawn hay rake 1930`s



Team of working horses 1920`s



Irish farm labourer
taking pails of milk to be poured over a
cooler in the dairy and filtered into churns



Free range turkeys



Family life 1941
The building in the background
contained the earth closet
with a double seat !



Tractor drawn binder



Combine harvester early 1960s



Horse drawn binder



Cutting corn with a scythe.
A `road` was cut round the outside of the field
in preparation for the binder



Spraying corn



Drilling corn 1990s



Combine harvester 1990s



Helicopter being refuelled



Plastic film being laid 1990



Crop spraying by helicopter 1980



Plastic film covering early potato drills



Tractor compacting the grass on top of the silage clamp



Friesian herd 1995



Milking parlour in use from 1979 to 1995

AN A TO Z OF ANTROBUS FARMS

ANTROBUS FARM, Foggs Lane

Mr & Mrs. Colin Axford purchased Antrobus Farm in 1955. It was 103 acres including an 11 acre wood called Cobblers Gorse, which was cleared in 1960. When the farm was bought, the headlines in the local paper read, 'Over £1,000 an acre given for Cheshire farm.'

The previous owners were Mr & Mrs Clement Lea and before them Mr. & Mrs. Wright lived at the farm with their three sons. One of them, Jim Wright moved to Frandley Brow and worked for many years for Mr. Tuson at the Wheatsheaf.

During the nineteen seventies and eighties, some of the land at Antrobus Farm became well known locally when it was used for jalopy racing.

The land belonging to the farm is now in use as an eighteen hole golf course.



Jalopy racing at
Antrobus Farm

ANTROBUS HALL, Barber's Lane

Records show that six generations of the Wright family have lived and farmed at Antrobus Hall since around 1800, namely: William born in 1792, Josiah 1832, William 1872, Edward 1905, Ernest 1943 and Christopher 1976. Thomas, born in 1733 and his son William may also have lived there.

The Venables family sold the original Antrobus Hall to Sir Edmund Antrobus in 1808. Around this time the Hall was demolished and the existing Antrobus Hall was built. Edward Wright purchased it in 1941 from Sir Edmund's executors for the sum of £2,800.



Antrobus Hall
before restoration

There has always been mixed farming at Antrobus Hall, but William, Edward's father, was a keen horseman and horses were brought from miles around to be broken by him. Edward had a milking herd of around 22 cows, 10 breeding sows, 200 laying hens and he fattened around 15 animals for beef each year. Timber and fruit from the orchard were sold which helped to provide extra income. Ernest took over the farm in 1970. The milking herd was sold and the buildings converted into pig housing.

However, recent Government legislation has meant that the pig buildings have had to be brought up to a certain standard. The pig herd has now been increased to 300 breeding sows and beef cattle are kept during the winter months. Part of the farm is laid down to grass which is made into hay and sold to Newmarket for racehorse feed. Cereals are grown on the farm and milled for pig feed and potatoes are grown for the local chip shops.

Christopher has just graduated from agricultural college and has returned home to take on the challenge of farming at Antrobus Hall in the twenty first century.



Antrobus Hall today

ANTROBUS HOUSE FARM, Barber's Lane



Tom Wilkinson owned Antrobus House Farm until the Cosgrove family bought it. They sold to the current owners, Patrick and Chris Ashall. The partly converted barn has lain empty for many years but has now been bought by Paul Sutton who will complete the renovations.

ASHWOOD BROW FARM, Reed Lane

Little is known of the origins of Ashwood Brow. The Gough family lived there for many years and had the cottages at Cobblers Gorse built for their workmen. The cottages are 130 years old and each one cost £80 to build. Miss Emily Gough of Ashwood Brow married Mr William Latham of Goosebrook Farm sometime in the eighteen eighties.

William and Polly Gough were Aunt and Uncle to Ellen Mounfield of Whitley House Farm.

Mary Maddock who purchased Senna Green Farm in 1905 was formerly a Miss Gough from Ashwood Brow.

The farm is today the home of XXXX who run a boarding kennels from the farm.



Ashwood Brow Farm

ASHWOOD TREE FARM, Reed Lane

This new farm which was built in 1997. Some of the outbuildings from Ashwood Brow are used and the farm now produces vegetables.

BIRCHMOSS FARM, New Road

This was started as a 'green field' venture in 1973 by Bill Welsh from Moss Lane, High Legh. He bought forty acres

of land from Dimond Evans at Fairbank Farm, built a bungalow on the site and had a small herd of beef cattle. After a short time he sold twenty-eight acres to Richard Barber and then, in 1985, sold the rest of the farm off to Lin. and Janet Featonby. Three years later it was bought by Derek and Sue Enfield, the present owners and 'Farm' was dropped from its name.

BIRKENHEAD SMALLHOLDING, Reed Lane

Harry Birkenhead married Miss Burgess from Old Pole Farm and made his home in Reed Lane in a two up two down with two acres of land. With his donkey, he cultivated the land for potatoes and peas, gathered in hampers by the family for the market. One of their six children was Annie who married Harry Hankey in 1940. Their two sons, Peter and David still farm in the Parish today. The smallholding was demolished over thirty years ago and in its place was built 'Thackstones' the home of the Bentley family today.

BROW FARM, Brow Lane

Brow Farm was built in 1815 at the same time and in the same style as Greenfield Farm, Barbers Lane.

A second set of buildings was put up at Brow Farm in 1877.

The Bolshaw family came from Pickmere to live at Brow Farm in 1890. Before that they had been greengrocers in Salford for 34 years. Joseph and Sarah were the first



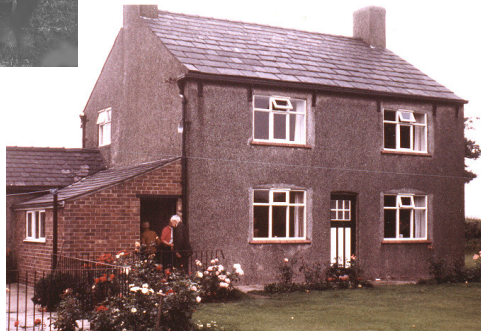
The Bolshaw Family from
Brow Farm

Bolshaws to live in the house and they died in 1924 and 1931 respectively.

John and his wife Lois followed them. Joseph and Ethel farmed there from March 1943 until their retirement. David Hankey and Kathleen (Joseph and Ethel's niece) took over in 1979. They still farm the land today.

FIR TREE FARM, Keepers Lane

The farm was in the possession of Rev. George Eaton in 1866. There are few records until 1919 when Thomas Burgess Jnr. and his sister Gertie moved to the farm. They



Brow Farm in the 1960's

remained until 1953 when Jim Greenhough took over and has stayed until the present day.

Mr Greenhough sold the farmland in 1995 but still remains living in the house with his wife, Jean. The farmhouse has been divided and XXX and XXX live in part of it and run their limousine / wedding car hire business from what was formerly part of the farmyard.



FLASH FARM, Flash Lane

(Nook Lane changes to Flash Lane at the bend in the road by the houses but there is nothing to indicate this change.)

Flash Farm is thought to have been built in about 1840 and was originally known as Peel Farm. The name was changed to Flash Farm, possibly in 1870.



Flash Farm

The Bennett family moved to the farm in 1921 and remained there until 1970. The farm, with 70 acres, was sold at auction to Winston Lloyd of Nook Farm who moved to Flash and farmed the land belonging to both farms. He gave up dairy farming in 1980 and sold the house and 14 acres of land as a smallholding to the XXXX family.

FAIRBANK FARM, Sandy Lane

Frank Bell farmed here until he retired just before the end of the Second World War. The property was then owned by Dimond and Pollie Evans until the 1970's when the house and land were sold off in lots. Andrew and Lizette Wilson modernised and greatly extended the house and in 1996 John and Sarah Backhouse moved in and made further changes. John's helicopter is a frequent sight in the immediate area.

FOX FARM, Northwich Road

The home of XX and XX, Fox Farm was at one time an inn and later two cottages. To make the farm, land was taken from Foxley Brow, which was originally a very large farm.

Sale particulars from 1913 note, 'A pleasantly situated dwelling-house containing two entertaining rooms, 5 bedrooms, kitchen, pantry, milk-house, cellars, wash-house, with large covered coal-house.

The outbuildings comprise shippoon for 5 cows, barn, 2 stall stable, loosebox, 3 pig sties and 3 bay iron Dutch Barn.'

The farm was at that time occupied by Mr. Frederick Woodward, as a yearly tenant, at a rental of £112. The tithe amounted to four pounds, three shillings and five pence of which the tenant paid two pounds, five shillings and sixpence.

The Bolshaw family was the last to farm at Fox Farm, leaving in 1972.



Fox Farm

FOXLEY BROW FARM, School Lane

The photograph was taken around 1935. During the Second World War, the railings were removed for the "war effort." The low part of the house was built in 1808.

At the turn of the century, the tenant was a Mr. Bradbury. Soon afterwards, Oswald and Margaret Frith (grandparents of Philip Wilkinson of Shawbrook Farm) moved from Whitley House Farm to Foxley Brow. The landlord was a Mr. Harrop of Llandudno.

Two teachers at Antrobus School have lodged at Foxley Brow, Mrs Hodge in 1912 and Miss Pearson in 1925.

On the death of Oswald in 1937, his son William Frith took the tenancy, then in 1950 he bought the farm. It was a typical North Cheshire farm of 104 acres. It had a dairy herd and potatoes, corn, grass and root crops were grown.

Life on the farm is recorded in detail in the Antrobus Scrapbook by Dora Barber who lived there as a child. After the death of William in 1962, his wife Dorothy continued to live at the farm and it was managed by Mr Harry Hankey who had worked at the farm since 1928. In 1978 the farm was sold to Mr Harry Sutcliffe.

The farmhouse has been sold in 1999 and the brick buildings converted to dwellings.

GOOSEBROOK FARM, Goosebrook Lane

The original part of Goosebrook Farm was built in 1714. It was constructed in the style of a cruck cottage and was built



Foxley Brow Farm



Barn conversion at Foxley Brow Farm

with wattle and daub, some of which is still remaining. It would have provided basic accommodation for a family with some land available for grazing cattle and sheep and growing crops. It is understood that a Mr Ralph Starkey was the first owner of the farm and it was let to Rebecca Burrows for a sum of £6 per annum. The farm stayed in the Burrows family and its tenancy was handed down accordingly.

In 1882, Mr William Latham of Wharton, Winsford, farmer and cheesemaker, came to Goosebrook. He extended the building to provide a shippin for the cows.



Goosebrook Farm
before and after
modernisation



At this time Goosebrook was recorded as being in the township of Seven Oaks in the County of Chester, and had a rent payable of £135 per annum. During the previous 100 years the farm had changed in many ways, the farmhouse had been extended and the total acreage increased to 66 acres. Goosebrook was classed as an arable farm.

Mr. William Latham married Miss Emily Gough of Ashwood Brow Farm. They had four daughters and one, Jessie Elizabeth, born 1889 at Goosebrook Farm, married John Thomas Barber from Old Mill Farm, Whitley and they made their home at Goosebrook with the Latham family. The front of the farm at this time was completely covered in ivy, which proved to be causing damp and was soon removed.

In 1916 John T. Barber took over the tenancy of the farm. John played an active part in farming the land and succeeded very well at a time when the war largely affected day to day life and conditions.

John and Jessie Barber subsequently had two children, Alfred and Ethel who were brought up on the farm very happily. (Ethel married Joe Bolshaw and lived at Brow Farm.) In 1927 the owner died and the farm was sold at the Blue Bell Inn in Warrington to a Mr B. Harrop (also the owner of Foxley Brow.) John T. Barber was named as the new tenant. The farmhouse was described as, 'commodious and well built providing 3 entertaining rooms, 5 bedrooms, cellars, wash-house, outside closets, a good range of outbuildings including a double shippin for 22 cows.' Alfred, from his childhood, enjoyed farm life and this was to continue into his teens and subsequently became his

life and his pride and joy. In 1954 he and his father bought the farm. They produced milk and potatoes and grew seed corn for Gartons, seed merchants of Warrington, until John Barber died in 1975.

In 1970 Alf developed a successful land drainage and farm contracting business, with up-to-date machinery and tractors. He ran the farm with the enthusiasm and drive he had from being a young man. In 1944 he became the second Chairman of the Stretton Young Farmers Club.

In 1993 they held their Golden Jubilee at the home of Mr & Mrs A.Hough of Fir Tree Farm, Stretton. He was very proud of Stretton Young Farmers.

Sadly, Alf passed away in 1998 but his son, John, continues the farming. His wife, May, still lives in the farmhouse and she considers Goosebrook Farm a very special place, small and beautiful.

GREENFIELD FARM, Barber's Lane

Greenfield Farm was built in 1815 by Thomas Burgess as a brick two storey, four roomed house with outside toilet and detached brick barn. The house and land (22 acres) passed to the Holt family in 1862, and they owned it for 99 years.

In 1922 a taller two storey extension was added on the east side for the newly married son and the first bathroom was added. In 1939 the cellar was filled in and new stairs installed in a small extension on the north side. In 1962 a major conversion took place. The house and barn were joined and in 1968 two further bedrooms were added between the house and the converted barn.



Greenfield Farm showing the original house on the left with the 1922 extension on the right



Greenfield Farm as it is today

The original house was identical to Brow Farm, Brow Lane, which was built at the same time. The property was sold in the nineteen seventies and became a private residence, now the home of XXX

HILL FARM, Barber's Lane (originally known as Hill House)



1910 The Moseley Family at Hill Farm

L to R Back row John, Thomas James (father), Arthur, Robert
Front row Alec, Sydney, Emily (mother), Olive, Leonard
Beatrice seated on mother's knee

Derek Moseley of Canal Bank Farm, Grappenhall recalls that his grandfather, Thomas James (known locally as Tommy Jimmy) came to Hill Farm, out of Manchester, about 1900. He rented it from Mr Walton, the tailor, of Gt. Budworth. Unusually, they had a gardener and a tennis court.

Thomas died about 1937 and two of the sons, Sydney and Leonard with sister Beatrice carried on until near the end of the war. Aunt Bea now lives in Knutsford and is in her nineties. The Maddocks came and took over after the Moseleys.

HOLLIES FARM, Hollins Lane

Bill Sutton, the brother of Charles Sutton of Reed House Farm went to farm at Hollies Farm during the First World War. The farm was an arable and dairy farm. Hollies Farm was sold in 1944 to the Howard family and Wilkinsons at Grandsires Green now farm the land.

LESTER HOUSE FARM, Goosebrook Lane

Lester House is marked on the map dated 1880 although little is known of the origins of the house. An American couple by the name of Lester visited in 1998 and believed that their predecessors, who had been Quakers, had lived in the house.

Mr & Mrs Harry Lovatt purchased the house in the nineteen fifties from Mr. Scott, an agricultural and hardware merchant from Warrington. They also purchased the nearby land known as The Meadows and Home field.

The Lovatt's started off with an egg production unit and the produce was sold in local towns. They also had beef cattle, pigs and grew potatoes. Mr. Lovatt recalls that he employed a number of women from the Latchford area of

Warrington who hand picked the potatoes.

Further land was purchased close to The Birch and Bottle to increase the size of the farm. Jonty and Allan Jones, daughter and son-in law of Mr and Mrs Lovatt now live in the house and farm the land. They no longer produce eggs on the farm and most of the land is used for corn and potatoes.

MANLEY FARM, Knutsford Road



Manley Farm
1999

In 1929 George Edward Collins of Pickmere bought the house and 22 acres for £1,000. He purchased a further 3 acres from Miss Ruth Gough of Ashwood Brow Farm. He started a milk round, delivering as far as Comberbach with his horse and cart. The farm remains in the Collins family to the present day. Reg Collins, son of G.E. Collins, took over and now his son, XXX, lives there with his wife XX and their family.

The family have deeds which go back to 1616 when John Pemberton of Over Whitley leased to Peter Ditchfield of Over Whitley, 'one half or moyetie of two closes or pastures called the two Thilles or Cocker's Thillages part of the copyhold inheritance of Peter Cocker deceased.' Peter Ditchfield paid £6 for the lease for a period of six years. He also paid £2 annually to the King. By 1663 George Eaton owned the land and sold two closes, estimated at 3 Cheshire acres, called Cockers Hayes for £56. Rent 3 shillings to the King.

The first mention of a dwelling is in 1685 when Amy Parnell of Chester sold to Peter Eaton for £223, "11 Cheshire acres and one cottage lately erected." The Eaton family are mentioned in documents until 1766 when it was left to William Ledward, whose daughter married Edward Catherall.

The farm was sold with 22 Acres in 1847 to Thomas Manley, a bachelor from Middlewich for £1,700. Possibly this is the origin of the name, Manley Farm.

MORRIS FARM, Knutsford Road

Morris Farm house was built during the eighteenth century and is a listed building. Originally it was known as Peel Hall and was farmed by the Eaton family. When it was sold to the Burgess family, the name was changed as there were two farms in Antrobus with the same name.



Morris Farm with
Peter Gerrard in his
pram in 1957

During the time when Joe Burgess farmed it, it had 66 acres. The farm was sold at auction in November 1953 and was purchased by the XXX family from Arley, who have remained there ever since. More land has been purchased from adjoining farms and it now has 192 acres and extended buildings. Morris Farm is one of the few farms, which still has a dairy herd.

MOSS SIDE FARM, Nook Lane

The house was built around 1870 and was originally called Moss Side House. Miss Horton lived in the house in 1914 and was related to the Hortons of Little Leigh, Potato Farmers.

The Hardy family farmed there from 1914 to 1960. (Ellen Mounfield, alias Mrs. Bostock, has a connection with this farm as her parents, Mr. & Mrs Walter Frith, lived at the house when they were first married, her mother being Amy Hardy.) The Schofield family moved to Moss Side in 1960 and remain farming there to this date.

NEW BANK FARM, Occupation Lane

This has always, in fact, been two cottages, constructed in the latter half of the 19th C. There was a pit in a field at the back where clay was reputed to have been taken to make the bricks.

Around the end of the Second World War, the Percivals lived in one and Jim and Dorothy (Dolly) Taylor in the other. The Taylors kept pigs and hens and grew various fruits, flowers and vegetables to take to Warrington Market by pony and trap. Mrs Taylor was well known for picking blackberries which were also taken to market. After their son Fred Taylor finished farming, the house was sold to Naylor, the toffee makers and both cottages have been ordinary houses since.



NEW HOUSE FARM, Well Lane

A small-holding and home to the Wilkinson family for many years, this farm was also known as Radical Hall after a variety of potato grown there.

NOOK FARM, Nook Lane

Nook Farm has been rebuilt entirely since the days when Methodism in Antrobus began there. It became a private dwelling in 1970 and is now the home of Mr and Mrs Brown.

OAKDALE FARM, Keepers Lane

Planning permission has been granted in 1999 for a new farmhouse to be built on this site. The land was sold to Noel and Zoe Gallagher when Jim Greenhough retired from farming at Fir Tree Farm. When so many farmers are giving up their business, it's interesting to see a new farm being created in the middle of Antrobus.

OLD POLE FARM, Knutsford Road

John and Sally Burgess were the last people to farm at Old Pole, John having taken the farm over his father Jack. The show of daffodils in the front orchard were a glorious sight every Spring.



Old Pole Farm
as it was



Old Pole
Farm after
conversion

In 1991 the farm was sold to Mr and Mrs XXXX. Extensive changes have taken place and the original farm is hardly recognisable

ORCHARD HOUSE FARM, Brow Lane



In 1939 Mr and Mrs Eaton, the grandparents of Terry Wright of Kirkside, lived at Orchard House, which was once a smallholding with a splendid orchard that disappeared over the years. In

1988 the present owners, Mr and Mrs XXXXX began to replant the fruit trees and they hope to restore it to its former glory. Orchard house is one of the few houses in Antrobus with a thatched roof.

PAYNES FARM, Reed Lane

The house is thought to be about 200 hundred years old. At the turn of the 20th century, the Bostock family owned the farm. Mr and Mrs Frith rented it and their daughter, Ellen Mounfield of Whitley House Farm, was born there. The family remained until Ellen was nine when they moved to Senna Lane Farm in Comberbach. 'Granny Bolshaw' (mother of John, Joe and Nellie) is said to have "acquired" it sometime after this date.



Evelyn Bolshaw
milking at Paynes
Farm

The farm has remained in the Bolshaw family and is still farmed today by Evelyn Bolshaw. The pattern of mixed farming continues with crops of grass, hay and corn and a small milking herd. The cows are milked in a shippon using a line system as opposed to a milking parlour. Evelyn's love of animals is obvious by the number of chickens, rabbits, cats and dogs who find a comfortable home at Paynes Farm.



Peel Hall Farm
1999

PEEL HALL FARM, Reed Lane

Peel Hall is thought to be about 130 years old. It belonged to John Bolshaw, grandfather to John Bolshaw of Paynes Farm who died in 1999.

The farm was tenanted to the Bennett family from 1930 to 1970. Gordon Bennett, the local milkman and his sister Dorothy Martin of Cobblers Gorse grew up at Peel Hall. When the Bennett family left in 1970, the house was sold to Hewitts (haulage contractors) with 7 acres of land for £13,000. After a succession of owners, the house is once again on the market in July 1999 with 1½ acres of land and an asking price of £462,500.

POOLS PLATT FARM, Pools Platt Lane

Pools Platt Farm was built in 1838. The Wilkinson family moved there in 1844 and remained there for over one hundred years. Mr. Ernest Wilkinson was a trustee of Antrobus Methodist Chapel for 50 years.

The farm was originally a cheese-making farm and there is still an old steelyard used for weighing cheese attached to a beam in the old cheese-room, now a bedroom.

POPLAR FARM, Barbers Lane



After being in the Naylor family for two generations, Poplars Farm is now owned by XXX and .XXX. The Land is used solely for their free-range egg business.



POTTERNELL FARM, Brow Lane



Potternell Farm
built in
1817.

Arthur Edgerley and his parents farmed at Black Jane Farm, Newton-by-Daresbury. When Arthur was seven, his parents died and his Uncle Louis Edgerley of Potternell Farm provided him with a home and love and security. He went to Antrobus School and then farmed along with his Uncle.

In 1939 Arthur married Lillian Collins daughter of George Collins of Manley Farm at Antrobus Church. The reception was the first to be held in the newly built Village Hall.

Arthur and Lily farmed at Potternell with a milking herd, potatoes and corn. The cows were sold and a successful agricultural contracting business was developed. They had two sons, Derek and Stewart.

Sadly in 1965 Stewart was killed in a road accident, a great loss to the Edgerley family and to the village. In 1969 Derek married Joyce Winstanley from Whitley and they moved into Potternell Farm and Arthur and Lily moved into a bungalow which had been built on their land.

In 1975 Arthur died but Lily remained at the bungalow, Lawn Crest.

In 1997 Derek and Joyce moved from the farmhouse into one of the barns which they had converted to make a home and business premises. The original farmhouse is now called Potternell Grange.

REED HOUSE FARM, Hollins Lane



Mr Sutton's milk cart outside Reed House Farm

Reed House was built in the 16th century of a cruck design. It is thought to have been the Manor House belonging to Grappenhall Hayes Estate. The existing house is the servants' quarters to the Manor House that was adjoining the front of the present house and must have been four times as big with a flat roof and battlements. The XXXX family has been owner-occupier since 1904, by which time the main house had been demolished and the remaining house rebuilt.



Reed House
and barn
conversion



Reed House Farm was a dairy farm up until 1959. For thirty years until 1989, it was a specialist pig farm. Mrs Sutton also ran a boarding and breeding kennels, known as Coni's Kennels. It became one of the largest in the north of England.

During the early 1990's, planning permission was secured for a barn conversion. This is now completed and there are four houses adjacent to the original farmhouse, called Antrobus Court.

REEDSIDE FARM, Reed Lane



Reedside Farm 1999

The deeds to the present property date back to 1786, but it is possible that there was an earlier dwelling on the site.

Mr Sam Littler, who had a local milk round and who lived for many years at the bungalow at the bottom of the drive, was told that Reed Lane had been a thoroughfare used by people going to cut peat on the Moss. The landscape of the

area had been changed considerably by the peat cutting. The agricultural census in the 1840's shows the farm as being owned by Foxley Brow Farm and let out with about 3 acres of land to a Mr. Smith who called himself a shopkeeper / farmer. It has been suggested that the house may also have been used as an off licence or brew house. The deeds also indicate that the property was mortgaged at some time to Cogshall Hall. The present owners have lived in the house since the 1960's.

SANDIWAY FARM, Sandiway Lane



Sandiway Farm and barn conversion

This was the home of the Howard family from 1960 when they bought the farm from Albert Lowe for £9,000. In the last couple of years, Mrs Howard left the farm and the buildings were turned into four dwellings, the house was modernised and the farmland was sold to other farmers.

SCOTCH HALL, Scotch Hall Lane

Scotch Hall was bought in 1974 from Mr and Mrs Bailey who had lived in the house for almost forty years. They were grateful to receive the original deeds from Mr A Littler who was born and raised there. The deeds record that the house was built in 1755 for Thomas Dodd on a three acre plot in the hamlet of Seven Oaks.



Scotch Hall
as it was



Scotch Hall 1999

In 1856, a total of six acres, two rods and six perches of land went with the property. Many local names are mentioned; generations of Friths, Whiteheads and Peacocks. The long farmhouse was built in the traditional Cheshire style of one room deep with adjoining barns and lofts. Since 1974, the buildings have been extensively altered.

SENNA GREEN FARM, Senna Lane

The deeds to the property first mention Senna Green Farm belonging to John Highfield Jackson of Cogshall Hall in 1851 although it is likely that the house is considerably older. In 1886 the property was left to John Highfield of Seven Oaks. When he died in 1905, the property was sold to Mary Maddock (formerly Miss Gough of Ashwood Brow) for £2,525 including, 'Dwelling House, outbuildings and land comprising 62 acres 2 rods and thirty nine perches statute measure.'

In 1942 Mr J.E. Harrison tenanted the farm from Mary Maddock. The agreement mentions Broome Cottage, possibly the oldest house in Antrobus, occupied by Webster with a weekly rent of 7 shillings. (The Webster mentioned was the father in law of Mrs. Olive Webster who now lives in Lowe Crescent and at ninety-three years of age is one of the oldest residents of Antrobus.)

Mr. Harrison paid an annual rent of £186 in 1942. The farming was mixed; dairy, cereals and potatoes plus pigs and poultry.

When Mr. Harrison retired from farming in 1976, the land was auctioned off and the house became a private dwelling. The farmhouse was sold once again in 1979 to Mr. Ian Harrison, nephew to Mr.J.E.Harrison. Senna Green Farm returned to an agricultural business producing pig and poultry meat.



Senna Green Farm 1999

SEVENOAKS FARM, Northwich Road

Little is known about the origins of Sevenoaks Farm. It is thought that the present building may have replaced an earlier house built on the other side of the drive. The well in the front garden is said to be 38' deep and is a natural spring well.



Miss Millington, who used to run the shop in Comberbach, remembers visiting the farm as a child and that there was another well in the dining room. This room is the only one in the house with a wooden floor.

The farm was purchased about 70 years ago by Mr and Mrs. Frith (parents of Evelyn Bolshaw of Paynes Farm.) XXX and XXX have lived in the house since 1960. Gordon still farms the land today, although he gave up his milking herd in 1989 and took on the new role of local milkman. The new potatoes grown on the farm draw a regular clientele, from far and wide, when the farm shop is open towards the end of May each year.

SHAWBROOK FARM, Keepers Lane



The house is about 150 years old although the date 1765 was found on a door lintel in the brick barn.

In 1915 Mr. Harry Walton, a tailor and undertaker of Great Budworth purchased the farm of 64 acres from, 'the Trustees of the Charities of Henry Antrobus and Francis Pigott.' At that time the family of the late Abraham Youd occupied the farm. Some of their carved initials were revealed on a door when the paint was removed. The following tenant was Mr. J. Fryer who worked the farm with horses until he retired in 1963. The ownership passed from Harry Walton to his son Harry in 1966, then to his wife Sarah and their daughter Anne in 1982. In 1963 Philip Wilkinson took the tenancy then in 1987 he purchased the farm and rented extra land. There was a milking herd of 90 cows and potatoes were grown. New sheds extended the range of buildings and a milking parlour replaced the shippon. The buildings and most of the land were sold in 1999. Philip and Kathleen Wilkinson retained the house and adjoining field.

SUNNYSIDE FARM, Foggs Lane

Little is known of the early history of Sunnyside Farm.

Mr & Mrs Robert Smith purchased the farm in 1975 and keep sheep, rare breed chickens and fancy ducks. Previously they also kept pigs on the 4 acres of land belonging to the farm.

WHITLEY REED FARM, Occupation Lane

This was started in 1940 by The War Agricultural Committee (War Ag.) who constructed the barns etc. Later they erected two pre-fabricated bungalows and the workers moved in from the 'Pumphouse', where they had been billeted. The farm was bought and farmed by Billy Upton after the war. When the War Ag. put the place up for sale for £10,000 in the 1950's. Billy moved to Poolsplatt Farm and the Swifts moved in. They had the farmhouse built about 1960 and had a milking herd and dairy there until 1993 when the land and a modern barn were sold to Peter Dutton for his contracting business. The houses and old barns are now private dwellings.

WILD ACRE FARM, Occupation Lane

During the Second World War this was the site of a naval radar station. The farm was built on the site in 1969 for Mr and Mrs Martin who kept about forty goats and bred rabbits for meat. They later switched to cattle and sheep but are now retiring due to the effects of the B.S.E. crisis.

EMPLOYMENT TODAY

As recorded in the chapter on Farming, the people of Antrobus used to work on the many farms in the parish. With the mechanisation of farming, fewer people were employed. At the same time people working in the surrounding towns and cities moved in to make their homes in this pleasant rural environment. The M56 and M6 motorways have made the village an attractive proposition for the city worker. In 1999 Harrison's Poultry is the biggest employer in Antrobus. The Antrobus Arms and Antrobus Golf Club provide work for some residents, whilst others have started businesses from their homes providing a range of services and in some cases, employment for others. The Village News is an ideal place for advertising these services. Some residents now work from home and use computer links to maintain contact with their employers who could be based anywhere in the world. In Antrobus you can hire a vintage car, a pony and trap or a team of shire horses and a dray for a special occasion. You can order a full banquet, a homemade pie or a wild boar burger. A racing car or a piece of furniture can be built or restored, or you can learn how to ride a horse or play golf. Trees, hedges, plants and hanging baskets are available for your gardens, flower arrangements and curtains are made to order. Your dog can be looked after, your car valeted and serviced and a builder, joiner and cabinet maker can all be found in the village. Milk is delivered to your doorstep and free-range eggs and vegetables are available from farm shops. Heavy plant can be hired for major works.

Local businesses in Antrobus in 1999:-

Antrobus Arms
Antrobus Golf Club
Ashwood Brow Boarding Kennels
Bates Car and Van Hire, Servicing and Valeting
Birchmoss Plants, Birchmoss Farm
Boosey's Trees and Hedging Plants
Brigdewood Builders, The Cartwheel
Cassidy's Saddlery and Pet Store
Dressmaking, curtains and alterations, Well Farm
Four Ways Furnishing, Les Warwick, Northwich Road
Foxley Brow Farm , Equitation
Grace Motors, Fir Tree Farm
Harrisons Poultry.
Hazel Rushton's Catering
Manley Farm Nursery
Plant Hire, Fir Grove, Northwich Road
Poplars Farm Free Range Eggs
Reg Collins, Post Office and Stores
Rising Sap Nursery, Whitley Reed Cottage
"Say it with flowers", Wheatsheaf Lane
Sevenoaks Farm Shop and Milk Delivery
Sharpe's Shire Horses, Nook Lane
Stanways Bakery, Startforth, Knutsford Road
Tickle, Builder, Pole lane
Totally Triumph, Firtree Farm, Crowley
Vin Malkie Racing, Hollins Lane
Wardall Landscapes, Nursery and Wild Boar Meat
Robin Yeoman, Cabinet maker, Sevenoaks Service Station

HARRISON'S POULTRY



T.Harrison moved from Tarporley to Antrobus in 1949 supplying day old laying pullets throughout the North West. The chickens were in small free range units for 100 birds. These were the 5,000 breeding flock from which the chicks were sold as commercial layers. Four people were employed. The firm was soon successful winning the following awards: Egg Laying Trials, Winner National Layer Trials, Harper Adams College Poultry Trials, BOCM Laying Trials, Lancashire Federation Trials. In the late 1950s and 60s they moved into laying birds, hatching layers and breeders. Bigger breeding units were built which together held 6,000 breeders and 12,000 layers. During the 1960s Harrisons built up a very good laying business with sales to shops and door to door egg rounds. All this time they were also



building up a chicken processing business. By 1970 they had a good wholesale and retail egg laying business and a good poultry processing business supplying dressed chickens to butchers in the local towns and to the pubs for chicken in a basket. They had also started supplying poussin to London through Smithfield Meat Market. In 1972 Fowl Pest, for which there was no cure, was running through the country and it almost wiped Harrisons out. So from 1972 to 74 they moved from laying birds to meat birds. 1976 was a turning point when new legislation from the Common Market meant that a new processing plant had to be built to EEC Standard. Output was half a million birds per annum.

CONI'S KENNELS

The new processing plant could only be viable if a substantial increase in output matched with increased sales took place. This meant an increasing interest in marketing which in later years became the great strength of the company. The new building was constructed in 1977 and double the existing output was reached in 1980.

Throughout the 70s all the poussin production was deep frozen supplying the catering trade. The 80s saw a move to chilled poussin aimed at the multiple retailers which culminated in the need to replace the factory in 1985. By 1988 production reached 3.5 million per annum supplying many retail and hotel chains. In 1989 Harrisons employed 75 people, many of whom were local and their motto for the 1990s is "Progress through Quality and Innovation."

The current production in 1999 is 6.5 million per year and at the present time employs 120 people. The processing plant has been re-developed and extended by over 50%. Most of the chickens are reared locally or throughout Cheshire. The product has been developed further into various ranges including the 'Spatchcock Poussin' and Boned and Stuffed Poussin. Over the past few years new export markets have been found in Belgium, Holland, Germany and Denmark, leading to the company winning the Food from Britain Export Innovation Award in 1996.

Mrs. Coni Sutton founded Coni's Kennels on Hollins Lane in 1963 as a boarding kennels. Later she expanded the business to breeding and boarding, specialising in nine breeds — Great Danes, Bearded Collies, Labradors, Welsh Terriers, West Highland White Terriers, Toy Poodles, Standard Poodles, Golden Retrievers and Rotweillers.

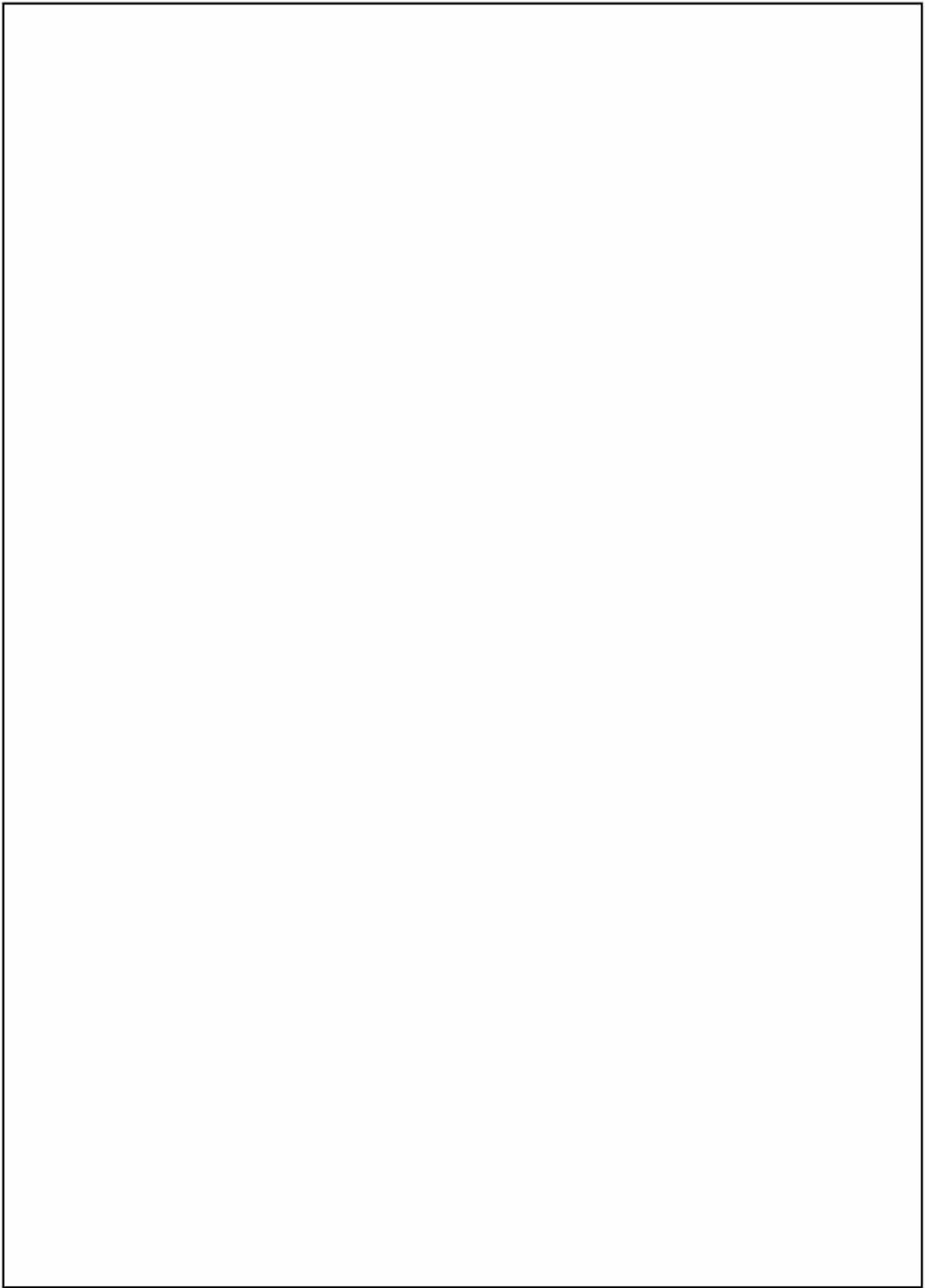
From working alone Coni reached around fifteen full and part time employees. The Kennels were probably the biggest breeding kennels in the North West and Coni exported dogs to Belgium, Germany, Spain, Canada, Zimbabwe and Australia.

After the death of husband Bill in 1987, Coni carried on until 1995, when the kennels were finally closed.

The kennels and outbuildings have been redeveloped as Antrobus Court, a group of individual homes with the original house still occupied by Mrs Sutton.



Special Events



ANTROBUS VILLAGE NEWS

Antrobus covers such a large geographical area that the Parish Council proposed the founding of a monthly newsletter. This would enable villagers to keep in contact and circulate information about village activities. Following a survey of organisations to judge reactions to the project the initial meeting of the editorial committee was held in February 1982. This was attended by two members of the Parish Council, Ray Lawton the Chairman, Jean Greenhough and three villagers interested in working on the Newsletter, Ann Barlow, Bidi Jones and Ruth Wright. After a couple of months Roy Read joined the committee and the team was complete. Over the years the committee has lost several members and gained others, but two of the original team are still happily involved with the production of the Village News, Jean Greenhough and Roy Read. John Corlett, Irene Barker, Nira Hodgkinson, Sue Singleton and Eric Haworth make up the committee.

The first Newsletter was produced in March 1982 on a borrowed typewriter and duplicator. Today the work is more sophisticated with a new Gestetner Copy Printer and grateful thanks are due to the Parish Council for their generous help in supplying this equipment.

The Newsletter is published each month. The first page is usually dedicated to an editorial, dates for your diary and notices. There are regular contributions from organisations in the village.

Sometimes there are items from our district and county councillors. There is a section for children. Gardening

notes appear when appropriate and recently crosswords and quizzes have been introduced. Items for sale and wanted are listed as are names and contact phone numbers of local organisations.

News is given or phoned to members of the editorial committee or left in the Village Shop. The committee meets once a month at one another's homes to discuss contributions, write the editorial and plan future articles.

The cover is prepared and 395 copies are produced. The copies are compiled and stapled then distributed to every house in Antrobus by a team of volunteers. Extra copies are made available in the Village Shop.

The Newsletter is self supporting from donations, advertisements and fund raising. In October 1982 a Quiz Evening was held to support the Newsletter and this became an annual event for several years, with Albert Lowe donating a shield to be held for a year by the winning team.

In 1984 Antrobus Village News entered the Cheshire Community Council Village Venture Competition. This brought press publicity as the newsletter was placed first in its class. At the final presentation a certificate and Merit Prize of £50 was awarded, confirmation that the Newsletter is established as a valuable village asset. Another event was the 10th Birthday when Cheshire Life included a write-up and a two-page photograph of the committee.

At the present time it has clocked up 17 years and all readers say "Long may it continue."

THE ROSE QUEEN FETE

The first Rose Queen of Antrobus was crowned in 1961 in an effort to breathe new life into the village fete which had been an annual event since the original 'fete' held in the summer of 1953.

As part of the Coronation Celebrations it had been decided to hold a tea and sports event with fancy dress competitions and fun. This event continued largely unaltered in format until 1960 when interest seemed to wane. Rather than discontinue the event it was decided that the fete "should be extended in scope and a marquee utilised".

The police authority gave permission for a house to house collection around the parish (records indicate that there were 182 households and 573 parishioners at this time) presumably to raise awareness as well as funds. The response was quite good and plans were made for the first Rose Queen Fete.

In the spring of 1961 the names of children from the parish were placed in a hat and drawn to select the Rose Queen Elect, two attendants, five retinue and two page boys. A marquee was hired and the fete was held at Well Farm in Frandley on the first Saturday in July.

The procession walked from the village hall to Frandley where Mrs Charles Sutton crowned Shirley Howard of Sandiway Farm the first Antrobus Rose Queen. Shirley was attended by Jean Howard and Eileen Wright, Lynda Barr, Susan Roughsage, Susan Frith, Margaret Bate and Susan Wright. The page boys were Donald Lowe and William Harrison.

Although the fete was held at Well Farm, the refreshments were at the village hall so a bus was provided to convey children and those without transport to the hall for tea.



1964 Fete

The Rose Queen Fete continued to grow for the next 15 years. Each fete was held on the first Saturday in July but at a different venue with all sorts of entertainment – fancy dress, sports contests, challenges between "North" and "South" Antrobus, tug o'war contests, Ukranian Dancers, Scottish Dancers, Maypole Dancing, Folk Dancers, Police Dog Display etc.

During this time there was no permanent place to hold the fete as the village hall was not big enough and there was no "village hall field". The fete committee tried to vary the location each year and due to the goodwill of local farmers marquees were erected in fields in Knutsford Road, Frandley, Barbers Lane and School Lane.

As it states in the Village Scrapbook, "There were always last minute worries when the weather had held up the harvesting of the grass or corn from the field allocated for the event and on one or two occasions the venue had to be switched at short notice".



Crowning the Rose Queen in 1967

However by 1976 the village decided to raise the money to build a new village hall and the first of the Country Fairs was held at Antrobus Hall. Again as stated in the Scrapbook "It is a tribute to all concerned that the village worked together and supported the July Fete and September Fairs during those six years".

By the summer of 1979 the fete was held on the village hall field and in the new village hall where it has been held ever since. There is an annual general meeting at the beginning of each year to elect a chairman and other officers and to plan out the "fete social" when the Rose Queen Elect and her retinue will be drawn. This is an exciting time for all the girls and some of the boys who have to be measured for their dresses and page boy outfits. Although the majority of the cost of the material and accessories is paid from Fete funds, there is a small contribution from the parents for the dresses. An allowance for the Rose Queen's dress is also given from Fete funds.

Rehearsals for the Rose Queens and their retinues begin in early June and while those responsible for the retinue work on head dress designs and bringing the whole effect together, the rest of the committee are hard at work organising the entertainment, prizes for the Grand Draw, refreshments, publicity etc.

The Rose Queen
and Queen elect in
1968



A week or so before Fete Day everyone in the village has the opportunity to donate something for the Tombola when there is a house to house collection.

The morning of Fete Day finds everybody working hard. The stage has to be erected and decorated, the bales to be put out to form the arena, the paintings by the school and nursery children for the competition to be displayed, the marquee to be put up for the tombola.

The procession starts after the 2pm bus has departed. It assembles outside the Village Hall and proceeds down Knutsford Road. It then turns around, which is no mean feat. There is a brass band, followed by the Rose Queen Elect and the Retiring Rose Queen with their retinues. Tractors with trailers, the Parish Council, the WI in fancy dress and street entertainers process back to the Village Hall Field where the crowning ceremony takes place. It has now become customary to have a barbeque in the evening allowing the fete committee members, their families and other villagers the chance to relax after a hectic but fun-filled day for everybody.

As a result of monies raised by the Fete, donations have been made to the school, to the village youth club and last year a party was arranged for the senior citizens of Antrobus, thus enabling everyone to benefit.

The 38th Rose Queen Fete has taken place this year.

It is thanks to the foresight of the committee in 1960 whose new ideas have made the first weekend in July a special date in the diary of the village children. The sun nearly always shines on Fete day and the festivities end with a special Fete Service alternating each year between the Parish Church and the Methodist Chapel.



The WI join in the fun in 1998



A few of the Antrobus Queens



ROSE QUEENS OF ANTROBUS 1961 – 1999

Year	Queen	Crowned by	Venue	Chairman
1961	Shirley Howard	Mrs Charles Sutton	Frandley (Lowe)	Ed Wright
1962	Susan Lamb	Miss Marjorie Stelfox (Schoolmistress)	Knutsford Road (Bolshaw)	Ed Wright
1963	Irene Hignett	Mrs Dorothy Frith	School Lane (Frith)	A Barber
1964	Marjorie Bate	Mr A Lowe	Frandley (Bolshaw)	A Barber
1965	Cynthia Lowe	Mrs Gladys Elderton	Frandley (Frith)	Mr Elderton
1966	Rosemary Maddock	Mrs Lena Wright	Knutsford Road (Burgess)	A Lowe
1967	Jennifer Whyte	Sandra Chalmers	School Lane (Frith)	P McCarthy
1968	Freda Thirlwell	Mrs Forster (Vicar's wife)	Knutsford Road (Burgess)	P McCarthy
1969	Susan Wright	Mrs Weir (Headmaster's wife)	Barbers Lane (Edgerley)	J Bradford
1970	Kathleen Howard	Mrs Vickers (Minister's wife)	Frandley (Lowe)	J Whyte
1971	Lynne Brookes	Mrs Rayner	Knutsford Road (Collins)	A Lowe
1972	Linda Read	Mrs Jean Greenhough	School Lane (Bolshaw)	A Lowe

1973	Debbie Sutton	Mrs James (Minister's wife)	Barbers Lane (Bolshaw)	B Stowell
1974	Janet Begbie	Mrs Elsie Tuson	Knutsford Road (Burgess)	C Cambell
1975	Sheila Gerrard	Mr Weir	Well Lane (Lowe)	C Cambell
1976	Heather Sutton	Mrs M Bennett (Vicar's wife)	Knutsford Road (Burgess)	C Cambell
1977	Jacqueline Cheshire	Mrs Coni Sutton	Knutsford Road (Collins)	S Owen
1978	Janet Wilkinson	Mrs Nicholson (Minister's wife)	Knutsford Road (Collins)	S Owen
1979	Helen Brookes	Mrs Ethel Twist	Village Hall Field	B Bane
1980	Helen Birkenhead	Mrs Doreen Collins	"	R Lawton
1981	Nicola Jones	Mrs Joyce Read	"	R Lawton
1982	Elaine Birkenhead	Mr A Lowe	"	R Lawton
1983	Janice Foster	Mrs V Pearson (Minister's wife)	"	R Lawton
1984	Tracy Smithers	Mrs May Barber	"	R Lawton
1985	Lisa Harrison	Mrs Ethel Bolshaw	"	R Lawton
1986	Nicola Wright	Mrs Phyllis Brookes	"	J Barlow
1987	Amanda Smithers	Mrs Jean Wilkinson	"	J Barlow

1988	Rachel Hankey	Mrs Jean Hayes (Headmistress)	“	Ray Collins
1989	Georgina Foster	Mrs Dorothy Martin	“	Ray Collins
1990	Margaret Plant	Mrs S White	“	Ray Collins
1991	Daniella Lang	Mrs Sue Buchan	“	Ray Collins
1992	Catherine Hill	Mrs Ann Barlow	“	Ray Collins
1993	Pippa Collins	Mrs Coni Sutton	“	Ray Collins
1994	Felicity Derbyshire	Mrs Val Brooke (Headmistress)	“	Ray Collins
1995	Samantha Cooke	Mrs Rose Owen	“	Ray Collins
1996	Lisa Singleton	Mrs Heather Dibb (Teacher)	“	Ray Collins
1997	Kate Smith	Mrs Evelyn Bolshaw	“	Robin Crow
1998	Rachel Lowe	Mrs Penny Old	“	Robin Crow
1999	Michaela Singleton	Mrs Elaine Smith	“	Richard Betts

SOULCAKING

Soulcaking is a long established tradition which, at one time, took place in one form or another all over the country. It is essentially a ceremony, in the form of a play, designed to scare away evil and to secure good luck and fertility for the following year. It is an oral tradition, it is not accurately documented, its existence from year to year (despite the dedication of its performers) is almost ad hoc and its value, at least for those directly involved, is its continuance in the present not its relevance to the past. If history consists of a variety of opinions and alternative interpretations then Soulcaking fits the bill perfectly and should please any historian. If on the other hand history is a search for truth then Soulcaking provides the scholar with little encouragement.

History, for a Soulcaker, has more to do with nostalgia and the recounting of amusing anecdotes rather than accurate documentation. At the same time however there is a pride amongst the men of Antrobus that theirs is the genuine, the longest surviving, Soulcaking tradition. It is therefore unique and thus assumes an even greater importance for them, their families and the village. In this sense, at least, it is important to have some record of the history of Soulcaking and if such a history cannot hope to be accurate it should at least aspire to capture the spirit of a unique, vital and magical tradition. If the most that can be hoped for is an agreed view rather than an accurate view of Soulcaking then such a view will probably fall somewhere between the academic, the conjectural and simple common sense.



Antrobus Soulcakers 1999

Copyright Peter Gore Photography

The academic view of Soulcaking is that it is a typical 'hero-combat' play found at one time throughout Britain and in associated forms throughout the world. It is a ritual that is likely to have its roots in pagan times and its use of mimetic drama seeks to secure good luck and fertility for the community through the celebration of the life cycle. Whilst such a definition may be strictly accurate it does present certain problems. In the first place it distances Soulcaking from ordinary people and denies its earthiness and its spontaneity. In the second place it invites almost as many questions as it answers.

Many academics reject the quasi-religious view of Soulcaking by pointing out that no Soulcaker has ever been recorded as viewing his role in connection with magic or fertility. Such an argument merely reveals how the academic has missed the point. Soulcaking is a living tradition which belongs to its participants. The performance and the continuation of the tradition is what is important and requires no knowledge of, or belief in, a hidden purpose.

Academics reveal an equal state of confusion when they try to accurately date Soulcaking. Through the work of, amongst others, Major A.W. Boyd the continued existence of Soulcaking, in Antrobus, from as far back as 1685 has been established. To take this fact, as some do, as direct proof that Soulcaking didn't exist prior to this date would seem, to put it mildly, to be something of a leap of logic.

As indicated above Soulcaking is an oral tradition. It is not concerned with keeping records in the Twentieth century, let alone in the Seventeenth century. Accurate records for any community the size of Antrobus prior to the Seventeenth century are few and far between, particularly records of activities not directly sponsored by the church. Whilst it may not exist in Antrobus there is ample evidence elsewhere of such traditions being in existence prior to 1685 so it is fair to conclude, at the very least, that Soulcaking in general dates back beyond recorded history and reasonable to suggest that the specific Antrobus tradition does the same.

The involvement of the church in shaping the history of Soulcaking is significant and may well have some bearing on the lack of evidence prior to 1685. It is widely accepted that over the centuries the Christian church has sought to

shape and influence the lives of its flock in keeping with its own beliefs and traditions. To this end the established church has often tried to ban or discourage more secular activities. Where this has proved impossible, and Soulcaking is a likely case in point, the church has instead sought to integrate or sanitize the activity and has 're-launched' it in a more acceptable form.

In consequence it is likely that a re-naming of some Soulcaking characters could have taken place at some time and this would explain the presence of such character names as, 'The Black Prince', 'King (Saint) George', 'Mary', the old woman and the vagrant Beelzebub. It could also explain the tradition that Soulcaking is never performed on the Sabbath.

Having been re-launched it is possible that historical links could well have been lost (or more likely discouraged), in subsequent years.



King George
fights the Black Prince

Having suggested the origins, albeit uncertainly, of Soulcaking the questions remain, what is it and what has it become? The answers to these questions are many and varied but there do seem to be areas of agreement that strike a note with all Soulcakers past and present. Soulcaking is a type of play consisting of nine characters which is performed annually, starting on Halloween, and continuing for the following two week-ends.

In essence the play is the story of the triumph of good over evil but within its somewhat disjointed narrative are contained the additional themes of fertility, resurrection and appeasement.

It seems likely that the purpose of the play was an attempt through magic, to secure life and good luck for the village at a time when everything was harvested, the earth seemed to be dying and the thought of spring was a distant notion.

The belief (which still prevails in some circles today) that spirits could walk the earth on All Souls' Eve (Halloween) and possess the bodies of the living or the recently dead was a strong one. Possession, by evil, rather than good



Mary

spirits would have spelled disaster for all concerned and would have brought an end to life and prosperity in the village. In response, therefore, the men of the village disguised themselves (so that they could not be recognized and possessed) and set out to beat the bounds of the village performing their play on the way in an effort to ensure the victory of good over evil.

As well as securing fertility, frightening away evil influences and defining territory, the play also had an element of pragmatism about it. Wishing to offend nobody and to cover every contingency the men carried with them an offering of appeasement. Taking a form somewhere between an oatmeal biscuit and a coarse flap jack this offering was known as 'Soulcake' and was given to anyone encountered on the Soulers' quest. If evil could not be frightened away then perhaps its goodwill could be purchased with a gift.

This notion of appeasement is made all the more apparent by the inclusion of the idiot 'Dairy Doubt' and the vagrant 'Beelzebub' in the action of the play.



Dairy Doubt

Whilst such people, under normal circumstances, might be less than welcome in the village they are, for the purposes of Souling, treated with equal reverence and accorded equal status.

The idea of buying goodwill was further extended by the tradition of the audience making an offering to the performers. This offering may have been financial but certainly took (and still takes) the form of the "ale and strong beer" referred to in the opening song. Being a Soulcaker and fighting evil may have had its dangers but it also had its rewards. Beating the bounds of the village took the Soulers to the biggest and the richest houses. Fostering the idea that an offering to a Soulcaker brought good luck was clearly in the interests of the performers and may well explain why the circle of performers remained small and why the privilege was passed on within families.

The personal gains attached to Soulcaking are further illustrated by the events surrounding the meeting of rival gangs. At any such meeting violence was in close



Wild Horse and Driver
Copyright Peter Gore Photography

attendance. The gangs often fought in an attempt to steal from their rivals the horse's head which is vital to the play. Without this essential item a Soulcaking gang could not operate, thus their territory, and any profit contained therein, could be taken by the victors, for that year at least. Clearly secrecy about such things as routes and the location of the horse's head came to have as much to do with economics as it did with ritual and magic.

It may well be that many of the traditions associated with Soulcaking are founded as much on practicality as on magic but to a great extent this no longer matters. The traditions such as never rehearsing, or the method of preparing the horse's skull, have assumed a significance in their own right so that the link between the play and surrounding customs has become seamless.

Whether the exact origin of every aspect of Soulcaking can be traced back to pagan times is largely irrelevant to the modern custodians of the play.

Antrobus Soulcaking is the longest surviving tradition of its type and it has survived because it has changed. Where once it was performed at houses it is now performed in pubs, because that is where it finds its audience.



Beelzebub

Where once its mystery frightened the spectator its mystique now enthralls them, but above all, whatever the changes, it is a living tradition and therein lies its importance.

It may well be that those from the past would not recognize all of the script and certainly the costumes have changed, but nevertheless, Antrobus men like to think that their forebears would recognize the spirit of the custom and that

they would understand the pride felt in the honour of being invited to join a privileged and elite group of people.

There is a bond amongst Soulcakiers that surpasses friendship. It is a bond which is born out of the sense of responsibility they feel as custodians of a sacred tradition. When, as tradition dictates, the Soulcakiers arrive and leave as spirits in the night, it is a sobering thought for them all to recognize that walking with them are the spirits of the past and, hopefully, those of the future.



King George

RECENT HISTORY OF ANTROBUS SOULCAKING

Reference has already been made to the interest of Major A W Boyd in rural studies and customs. As a local resident and historian he was encouraging to the men of Antrobus village in their willingness to continue Soulcaking. He took the matter seriously and Gang members recall having to make a silent approach up the shingle driveway since they were expected to represent the spirits which came out of the night. Major Boyd's displeasure on hearing the approach of a rival Gang to Frandle House is well known.

During the 1940s a number of young Antrobus lads expressed so much interest in Soulcaking that they were encouraged by the men to form a Youth Club Gang. With the help of Wilf Isherwood, who carved a wooden horse's head from one of the fallen oak trees of Sevenoaks, and Jim Wright who vetted their performances during practice, they gave shows in pubs, private houses, at parties and dances by invitation, even Soulcaking at the RNAS Stretton and Tabley Land Army Hostel. The Youth Club Gang were given permission to rehearse in the village church school by Parson Tyndale who even turned a blind eye to accidentally broken windows caused by an over zealous Wild Horse.

The Antrobus Soulcaking Gangs were merged in the early 1950s and two members of the Youth Club Gang are still Soulcaking today. They have vivid recollections of over 50 years of Soulcaking during which they have given shows all over Cheshire, performed in Oxford for the Tiddy Festival and for 'Dancing England' at the Assembly Rooms in Derby.

In the early days they used a variety of transport such as buses, motorcycles and pig trailers! It is the present custom for the Gang to travel together to venues in a minibus or van. This prevents the Soulcakers being split up by breakdowns or misdirections and helps to further develop that special bond between Gang members which has undoubtedly helped to foster their special closeness.

It is likely that articles and photographs in Cheshire Life (1946) and The Farmer's Weekly (1950) helped to draw the attention of a wider audience to the Antrobus tradition and interested people began to travel great distances to witness at first hand the only remaining Cheshire Soulcaking play. In due course this led to a film being made by Leeds University in 1974 and a constant stream of followers on Soulcaking nights, touring the pubs of Cheshire.

As a consequence of this publicity and interest, villagers from Warburton and Comberbach began to research their plays and revival gangs were formed in response to that part of their heritage which had fallen into decline. Unfortunately, plays once performed in many Cheshire villages like Hatton, Frodsham, Utkinton and Halton seem to have been 'lost' forever.

The strengths of the present 11 -strong Antrobus Gang are derived from their physical link with the past and the continuity of roles over the years. Their experience is best illustrated by the fact that in total the Gang have in excess of 200 years Soulcaking tradition between them. Six of them were born and bred in Antrobus and still live there, or in close proximity. In the Gang there are two brothers, six sons of former Soulcakers, two of whom have sons Soulcaking with them.

Furthermore, there are other family sons waiting in the wings to continue the third and fourth generation family connection.

There is also a strong link with the Wheatsheaf public house, now called the Antrobus Arms. The grandparent of one of the Gang members used to be the landlady. The local pub would at one time have been the focal point of all village activities and Soulcaking would be no exception to this. It is still the Antrobus Gang's base and they always gather at the pub before setting out on their travels on October 31st and during the rest of the Souling season. Furthermore, it is the venue of their final show each year, filling the pub to capacity.

Members of the Gang meet together twice a year other than on Souling nights, once in early October to decide on venues and a local charity to receive a donation and once after Souling to wrap things up. There are no rehearsals, new members being thrown in at the deep end in keeping with tradition. Since Soulcaking is not a theatrical production, but a continuance of an ancient custom, being true to the spirit of the tradition is paramount.

The future of Soulcaking in Antrobus lies with the present Gang members and particularly with the Antrobus people.



Quack Doctor

The number of residents having been born in the village and grown up with its traditions and customs is diminishing yearly. There is a need therefore, to encourage village newcomers to embrace a custom like Soulcaking and value it for what it is: a living inheritance, special to them, passed on by their ancestors as being of great value and worthy of preservation.

Opportunities need to be found, for the children of the village particularly, to accept Soulcaking as part of their heritage, as something unique to them as residents of Antrobus.

Members of the Gang educated at the village school can recall Soulcaking as being part of school life, an exciting time of the year.

Having seen the play annually throughout their formative years the words and actions of the Soulcakkers became ingrained in their memories and the Gang members known in the community. Consequently, problems of succession and recruitment for Soulcaking were non-existent. But what of the future?

The present Gang members seek to continue to find 'good nature' amongst the local community and hope that through education, knowledge and fertility the tradition will continue to survive.

Antrobus Soulcakkers 1999

Letter-In	Bernard Hurst
King George	John Birkenhead Pete Brocklehurst Ben Eyres
Black Prince	Mike Furling
Old Woman	Eddie Isherwood
Quack Doctor	Chris Eyres
Dairy Doubt	Ray Collins
Beelzebub	Ian Mc Cormack
Driver	Trevor Collins
Wild Horse	Eric Isherwood

ANNUAL CRICKET MATCH

'Antrobus Ashes were created at Brookside, Reed Lane on 26th August 1984. To be played for annually.' So reads the inscription on the display box which is in the Village Hall. The whole concept of the cricketing event in the village started in conversation at a dinner party in a private home in Antrobus. Since then for 11 years it proved to be a very enjoyable annual event with wives, sweethearts, relatives and friends supporting team members and providing refreshments. The rules of the game differ a little from the national rules and are as follows:

1. Two teams of 11 members, selected from the village, North and South of Knutsford Road.
2. Venue selected alternately, home and away.
3. Played on August Bank Holiday Sunday.
4. 30 overs per team.
5. Each member bowling 3 overs of six balls each.
6. Wicket keeper does not bowl.
7. No LBW unless the batsman deliberately hides his wicket.
8. The Umpire's decision is final.
9. Age or lack of it is no barrier to selection.

The last match was played in 1995, with Antrobus North winning. Antrobus South could not raise a team in 1996 and the tradition has lapsed for the time being.

Antrobus North 1988



Phillips Cosgrove Hankey Wright Martin Greenhough Bane Bolshaw Gaskin

Yeoman Hankey Pepperdine Barker Derbyshire

Antrobus South 1988



Phillips Buckley Jones Mounfield Harrison Bennett Bennett Strickland Gaskin

Jones Harrison Bennett Robinson Bracegirdle

V.E. DAY CELEBRATIONS 1995



The event was preceded by a dance on the Saturday night creating the happy atmosphere which prevailed throughout the weekend. Chapel on Sunday night was not quite as full as expected but nevertheless well attended and the service gave much to reflect on afterwards.

On the day, the ladies of the W.I. sandwich gang in the Village Hall were buttering away and singing with gusto to a tape of old wartime songs. A panic over cakes was soon settled by a few ladies baking over two hundred cakes in the lunch hour.

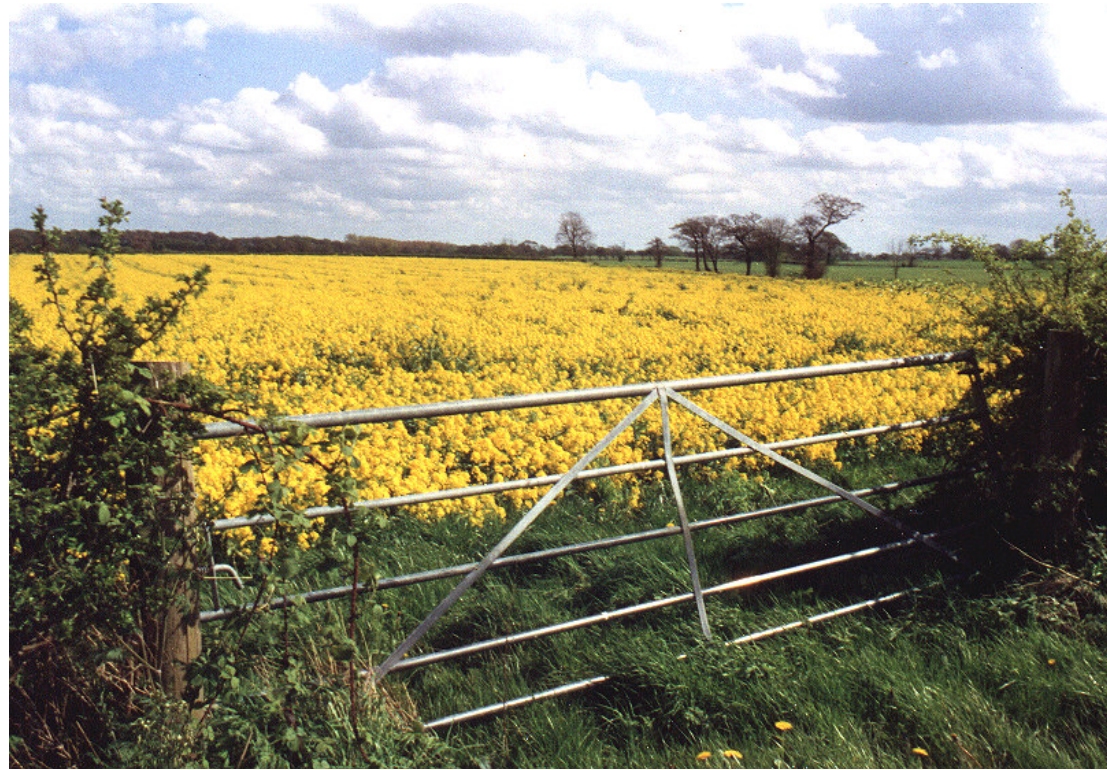
The procession, led by the Shire horses and the jazz band seemed to be over too quickly. The street entertainment which followed was brilliant, not forgetting the dancing talents of some brave folks prepared to 'have a go'.

Others were putting up and covering tables for the longest tea party in the area. The Guardian photographer had not seen anything like it. Despite dark clouds and wind, the rain held off and the tea went well. The food soon disappeared and everyone enjoyed a slice of the delicious cake donated for the occasion.

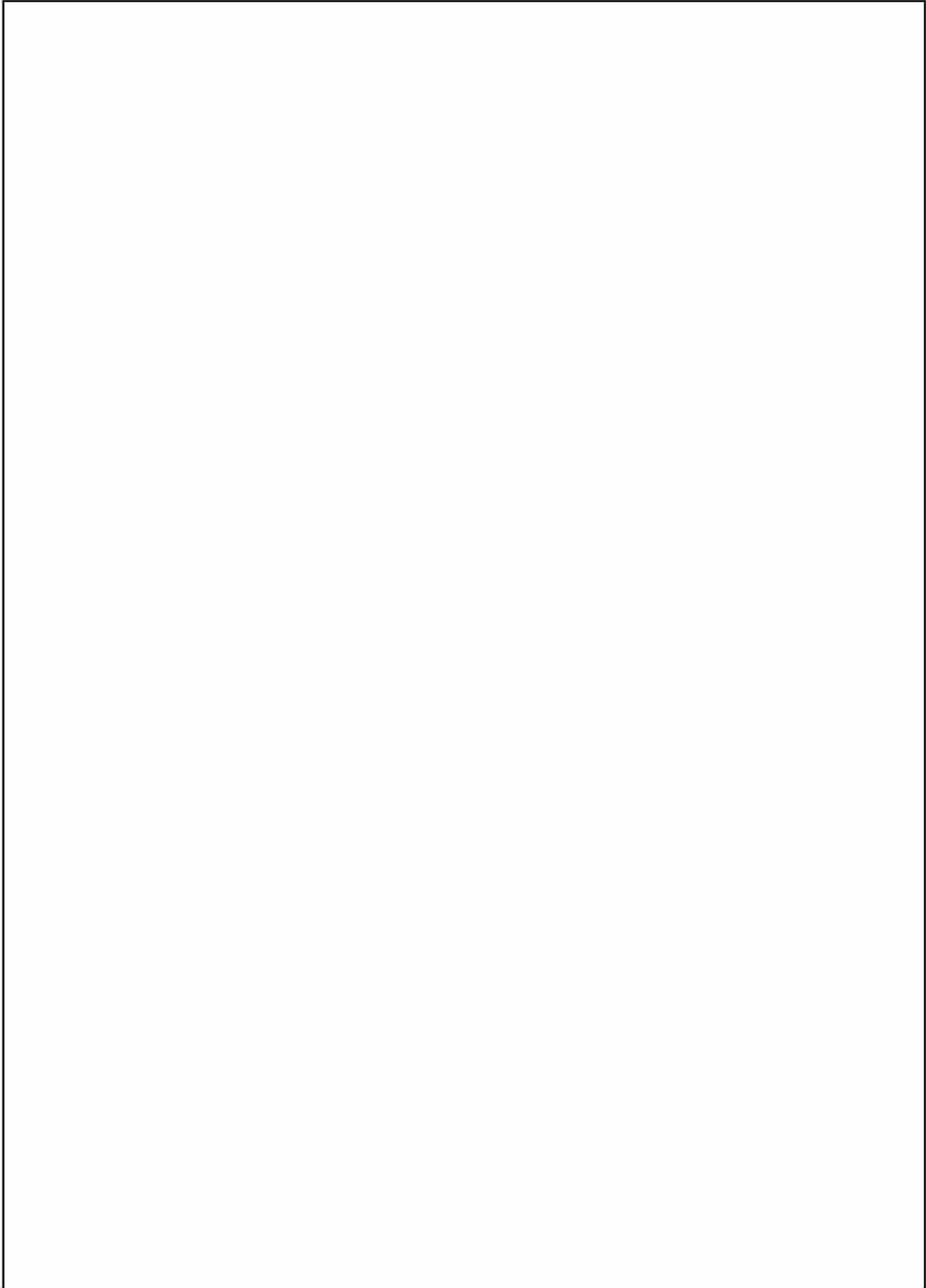


Then it was back to the hall for the Glee Party, great singing and a barbeque run by the young people of the village. Afterwards everyone went out on to the field to listen to a recording of Winston Churchill's VE Day 1945 speech. This was followed by two minutes silence. A massive beacon, which had been specially constructed, was lit and a great firework display ended a super day.

A most impressive part of the weekend was seeing the "old hands" from Country Fair days and the "new faces" working together in a spirit of friendly and cheerful co-operation.



Environment



WHITLEY REED

Whitley Reed was formed by post-glacial deposits overlying Triassic rocks. The upper layer is Keuper marl which is high in calcium carbonate. As vegetation grew and died, so a layer of sphagnum moss peat was laid down. This peat provided fuel from Roman times through to the middle of the last century. The marl was dug in the 18th and 19th centuries from areas around the mosses and spread as a fertiliser, hence the innumerable pits in Cheshire.

The Romans and others may have used the Reed as a short cut from King Street at Kinder's Smithy, the Birch and Bottle or Fox Farm to the 'Via' running from Stretton to High Legh. It is possible to make this journey today using mainly footpaths. A coin of Gallienus 43 A.D. was found by Tom Wilkinson in 1941 in a field near the junction of Reed Lane / New Occupation Lane.

Although no doubt somewhat wild and often very wet, the use of the Reed seems to have been quite strictly controlled. Beamont recorded several instances from Halton Court Rolls of actions taken to safeguard the owners' interests. In 1401 at Whitley First Halmote, when it was in Sir Richard Aston's demesne, tenants were forbidden to agist (pasture) cattle upon the 'Reede'. In 1481, at the Third Halmote, Constables and moss-lookers were appointed and many presentments were made for unlawfully taking turves. Again in Henry V's reign (1413-1422) a man was fined for pasturing a horse on the Reed.



In 1576 it was apportioned by a commission into lots as 'moss-rooms' or 'turbaries' among the copy-holders of the Townships of Over-Whitley, Cogshall, Crowley, Antrobus and Sevenoaks. Over the following years these rights can sometimes be seen to have been transferred upon the sale of an owner's property. For example, an indenture of 1773 between James Newall of Grappenhall and Margaret Prinkett of Lower Whitley included 'that moss-room in a place called the new division on Whitley Reed and lying between Taylor's and Chrimes's Moss-rooms'.

In 1792 a deed in Over Whitley recorded ' appurtenances including one acre of moss and Common of pasture and Common of turbary.'

The papers of Thomas Wright of Manley Hall Farm also contain an indenture of 1824 for the sale of buildings and land. In the latter was ' common of pasture and turbary in a place commonly called the New End with two rooms belonging thereto '.

The names of ' New End ' and ' New Division ' are amongst many in the documentation in 1849 for the enclosure of Whitley Reed. This was carried out by Henry White, Surveyor, of Bridge Street, Warrington and details the location and sizes of all the moss-rooms e.g. Number 7 Tibs Rank next to Hades Hill; Number 4 New Division, first Rank. The commoners were incensed by the allocation of the land to landowners in the five Townships.

Some damage was done to plot markers causing Henry White to publish notices threatening prosecution. As part of the enclosure ' three acres were set aside for exercise and recreation and four acres for allotments for the Labouring Poor '. This land was sold by Antrobus P.C. in the 1980s as no longer being required by the parishioners.

Drainage works were carried out and New Road was constructed having been surveyed in 1850.

Some of the land was used for pasture and potato growing but a lot was still rough with gorse, heather, reeds, brambles and Sweet Gale.

The latter gave its name to Gale Brook and Gale Moss Farm. Unfortunately, the bittern and the polecat disappeared after this time, although the locality was still a venue for such bodies as the Warrington Natural History Society e.g. Friday, 5th July 1850 ' Excursion to Arley, Budworth and Whitley Reed.'

The area continued however, to be renowned for its wildlife which included Snipe, Plovers and Corncrake. Major Boyd of Frandley House was amongst numerous birdwatchers who came to study them up to and after the War.

He writes of Wigeon and Dunlin on flooded fields, Snipe drumming and flocks of Redpolls among the birches. Further sightings were of Short-eared Owl, Brambling, Skylarks, Tree Pipit, Willow Tit, Whinchat and flocks of Golden Plover. He also recorded some of the plants there, such as Wood Betony, blue Harebells, Foxgloves and climbing Corydalis.

Boyd reports that a peat fire on the Reed on 14th October 1933 had been burning since the first week of September. There had been a drought that year. A previous one, some years ago, had burned until Christmas. In 1996 a small one in Sandy Lane lasted three or four weeks.

In 1940 the War Ag(ricultural) Committee lowered the water table on the Reed by diverting the brook at Arley Mill and built a farm, with two prefabs for workers, next to New Bank cottages. These buildings apparently stand on the solid layer known as ' fox-bent '.

A radar station was sited where Wildacre Farm is now and Bob Taylor tells how a mobile anti-aircraft gun sometimes used to come at night and park under a tree outside the War Ag. farm. It would let off a salvo at any enemy aircraft and then move on. To help the war effort, the small birch wood off New Road was felled to provide broom heads.

In the last 50 years the waste land has been further drained and cleared. It is now all cultivated for grass and silage or potatoes. Even over the last 10 years there has been a marked reduction in birdlife due to regular disturbance and the lack of cover. Wild plants have suffered a similar fate. The only havens left are the two small woods and the northern half of Old Occupation Lane, 'Green Occy'. On the latter are the three surviving specimens of Sweet Gale.

Individuals from Cheshire County Council and ornithologists have mentioned the possibility of returning the Reed to its natural state by raising the water table again. The cost of works and compensation for doing this make it an unlikely event in the near future.



BIRDS

Antrobus is fortunate in having a well-documented record of bird populations in and around the village. Firstly by A.W. Boyd and then by P. Schofield who lived in Reed Lane in the sixties.

In the last thirty years, the variety and number of wintering and breeding farmland birds have altered fairly dramatically, not for the better. Gone are the wintering flocks of Curlew, Lapwing and Golden Plover (although the latter two species can be found on the old Stretton Airfield). Gone too are the breeding birds such as Whinchat, Cornbunting and Sedge Warbler. Numbers of Skylark and Grey Partridge are under considerable pressure, although interestingly enough Red-Legged Partridge, probably escaped from the Arley Shoot, have established themselves around the village and are seen and heard regularly.

However all is not doom and gloom. Neither Boyd nor Schofield probably could have envisaged that Buzzard would be breeding locally, with six seen in the air at once within sight of the village. The original birds of this population were probably initially from North Shropshire, which has some of the highest breeding densities in Europe. These magnificent birds can truly be considered very much the 'farmer's friend', as a nest check last year revealed a virtual 100% rabbit diet. The recent increase in Sparrowhawk population may be considered less welcome! Woodland populations have generally fared rather better, with increases in Chaffinch, Greenfinch, Great, Blue and

Long Tailed Tits. Certainly Greater Spotted Woodpecker is now a relatively common sight at bird feeders and Lesser Spotted and Green occasionally seen. Even Tree Sparrows, which elsewhere seem to have undergone severe declines, appear to be holding on well, certainly if local gardens are anything to go by, with a 'best ever' count recently of over 30 in one garden.

It is encouraging to see Song Thrushes gaining ground again, their demise partially attributed to the use of slug pellets. Numbers of Owls have also held up quite well with both Tawny and Little Owls breeding around the village - at least 3 to 4 pairs of the latter. The Barn Owl was lost in the mid-sixties and is now considered one of Cheshire's rarest breeding birds.

Arley Moss, although much degraded from a bird point of view turns up interesting species - Quail, Hobby, Peregrine, Short Eared Owl, Blue Headed Yellow Wagtail having been seen in the last year or so. Also fairly regular are Jack Snipe, Woodcock, Little Ringed Plover and Oystercatcher. An adult Peacock was something of a surprise however!

It is hoped in future years that, in view of forthcoming E.U. changes in Agricultural support payments, that some of the species that have been lost may once again grace the village of Antrobus.

WILD FLOWERS

The wild flowers of Antrobus are typical of Cheshire, varying only with the type of soil and environment prevailing at any particular spot. Probably the most different plants are those found in the moss areas, such as Whitley Reed and Park Moss. The following observations of wild flowers growing mainly in the road-side verges in the parish of Antrobus were made in April 1999.

Most verges were lush with Dogs Mercury, Dandelion, white Dead Nettle, Ground Elder, Nettles, Daisy, Great Bindweed, Cleavers Greater Stichwort and Cow Parsley. There were great patches of Lesser Celandine in some areas, notably Keepers Lane, Well Lane, Scotch Hall Lane and Wheatsheaf Lane. In the latter Bluebells were just starting to flower with them. Red Campion was found in Ashwood Lane and Scotch Hall Lane and large clumps of Cuckoo Pint were in flower in Old Mill Lane. Jack-by-the Hedge was widespread in Goosebrook Lane, Knutsford Road (near Ashwood Lane) and School Lane where there was also some Japanese Knotweed. Comfrey was growing in Nook Lane and Scotch Hall Lane, by the stream. Nearby there was some Hairy Bittercress. Bluebells were frequently in the banks and there were some of the white form in Nook Lane, these may be cultivars as they were growing on the road side of a garden hedge bottom. Below the signpost on Senna Green was a mass of Plantain. The uncommon plant of Sweet Gale can still be found along the footpath which runs between New Road and Moss-Side Lane. Also Jack-by-the Hedge, Gorse and wild Raspberries. Bob Taylor now in his seventies who lived at New Bank Farm Occupation Lane as a boy, recalls the banks of the stream being thick with Sweet Gale. He also tells how he used to lie in the grass at the top of the bank and watch the water-hens and water-voles taking the apple he had thrown into the stream. There are some pond and wooded areas which are a picture at certain times of the year.

The copse off Old Hall Lane with Bluebells and Wood Anenomes, Newalls Rough in Keepers Lane with Wood Anenomes, Marsh Marigolds and Flag Iris, the Birch wood off New Road where Climbing White Corydalis and Foxgloves are abundant and the pond in Scotch Hall Lane which has a mass of Marsh Marigold and Flag Iris.

A walk down Bob's Lane revealed Greater Stichwort, Cleavers, Dandelion, Ivy, Cow Parsley, Lesser Celandine and Honeysuckle. In the bottom of the ditch were Ferns and just starting to come up were Rose Bay Willow-herb, Tufted Vetch and Red Campion. Meadowsweet, a pea family plant, Ramsons and Flag Iris were found in the watery end of the lane. One patch of Coltsfoot was seen in Keepers Lane and a lot of Great Yellow Cress along the ditch near Sandy Lane. For the last eight years there has been a record kept of the flowers on bloom down Bob's Lane on Midsummer's Day. The first year there were 43 species in bloom. Last year the number had reduced to 31. Some of this may be due to variations in the weather causing early or late blooming in some species. However there was no evidence of the presence of at least 8 species on the original list. There have been no new species found during this time.

There was a decline in the number of species in 1994 due to some spillage of weedkiller from a farm crop-sprayer. Some species have made a comeback since then but not all. The increased use of Bob's Lane by horse riders, dog walkers and more importantly by people parking cars down the lane has lead to erosion of the grass areas and an increased amount of litter. Some species have disappeared due to this erosion.

Comparison of the flowers in bloom on Midsummer's Day
in Bob's Lane, Antrobus in 1992 and later in 1998.

1992

angelica
birdsfoot trefoil
bittersweet
bramble
charlock
chickweed
cinquefoil
cleavers
common rush
cow parsley
creeping buttercup
dandelion
nettle
pineapple weed
pink campion
pink clover
ribwort plantain
rosebay willowherb
scentless mayweed
shepherd's purse
silverweed
sorrel

1998

angelica
absent
bittersweet
bramble
absent
chickweed
absent
cleavers
common rush
cow parsley
creeping buttercup
dandelion
nettle
pineapple weed
pink campion
absent
ribwort plantain
rosebay willowherb
scentless mayweed
shepherd's purse
silverweed
sorrel

1992

dock
dog rose
figwort
foxglove
greater plantain
hog weed
honeysuckle
knot grass
lesser stichwort
meadow buttercup
meadow sweet
mouse-ear chickweed
valarian
vetch
white clover
wood sorrel
woundwort
yellow hempnettle
yellow vetch
sowthistle
thistle x 2

1998

dock
absent
figwort
fox glove
late
hog weed
honeysuckle
knot grass
lesser stichwort
meadow buttercup
late
late
valarian
vetch
white clover
absent
woundwort
absent
yellow vetch
absent
late

The following list of wild flowers has been generated by a number of people living in the parish in 1999 :

Angelica	Daisy	Jack-by-the-hedge	Red Shank (Red Leg)
Bindweed	Dandelion	Kingcup/Marsh Marigold	Reed
Birdsfoot Trefoil	Dead Nettle, Red and White	Knapweed	Rosebay Willow-Herb
Bittercress (hairy)	Deadly Nightshade	Knot grass	Rough Hawkbit
Black Bindweed	Docks	Lesser Celandine	Scarlet Pimpernel
Bladder Campion	Dog's Tooth Violet	Lesser Stichwort	Shepherd's Purse
Bluebell	Dogs Mercury	Mayweed	Silverweed
Bugle	Euphorbia	Meadow Vetchling	Sorrel (common)
Burdock	Fat Hen	Meadowsweet	Sow Thistle
Buttercup - goldilocks	Foxglove	Moschatel	Speedwell (Common)
Buttercup - meadow, creeping	Fumitory	Mouse-ear Chickweed	St. John's Wort
Charlock	Germander Speedwell	Mugwort	Thistle
Chickweed	Gorse	Ox-eye Daisy	Tufted Vetch
Cinquefoil	Great Bindweed	Pearlwort	Valerian
Cleavers	Greater Stichwort	Pineapple Weed	Wild Oat
Clover, red and white	Ground Elder	Plantain	Wood Anemone
Coltsfoot	Ground Ivy	Purslane	Wood Sorrel
Comfrey	Groundsel	Ragged Robin	Yarrow
Common Violet	Hairy Willow-herb	Ragwort	Yellow Hemp Nettle
Corydalis	Honeysuckle	Ramsons	Yellow Vetch
Cuckoo Flower	Horsetail	Red Campion	

THE TREES OF ANTROBUS



The trees in Antrobus are typical of Cheshire and England generally.

The Silver Birch is native to the mosses. The woods on Park Moss and Whitley Reed, cut down in World War Two, have since regenerated although the latter has a large gap in the middle due to felling in the Seventies. The Birches tend to be slowly replaced by Common Oak which is the predominant tree in the parish. As Boyd points out in 'A Country Parish' the presence of them in every hedgerow indicates it was the principal native tree two or three hundred years ago, at the time of the enclosures. Elms have always been scarce in the parish and since Dutch Elm

disease are virtually non-existent. On the other hand magnificent beeches are seen frequently, their location and size generally showing that they were planted many years ago as features. Ash is indigenous according to Boyd and it certainly occurs in hedgerows but not in great numbers. Rowans often occur scattered through the woods and are probably the result of seeds from droppings of birds roosting in the other trees. Hawthorn is universal as hedging but may also be found in woods and untended hedges as large trees. They are a wonderful sight when 'the May is out'.

There are eight copses in Antrobus, as follows:

Parkmoss Wood, Crowley is an old oak wood. There are some oak trees still standing, some rotting on the ground and the wood now has many self-seeded silver birches in it.

Birchwood, Whitley Reed As the name suggests it is mainly a silver birch wood. There are a few oaks and five rowans.

Newalls Rough or, as it is more commonly known, Brocks Wood, is in Keepers Lane. It was an oak and elm wood sixty years ago. However the oaks were cut down in the 1939 to 1945 war and Dutch Elm disease in the 1960s and 1970s destroyed the elms. The wood has now filled up with self-seeded sycamore.

Keepers Lane Wood is nearly all oaks.

Deakins Yard Wood contains oak, ash and sycamore. There are also several holly trees.

The Folly was partly cut down in the late 1940s. The idea was to clear it so that it could be joined on to the field and used for agriculture. This was not allowed by the Forestry Commission, who ordered the wood to be replanted with mountain ash, beech and pine. The folly is about four acres in extent and also contains one large yew tree.

Reed Lane Copse is a small copse containing several willows and mainly self-seeded sycamores.

Cogshall Hall shelter belt is made up of beech, oak and ash.

Although many trees have been cut down over the past few

years, including the complete destruction of Cobbler's Gorse, there are a large number still in the parish. This tree population probably dates back to the time in the 17th and 18th centuries when a clause in the farmer's tenancy agreements required trees, mainly oaks, to be planted every year.

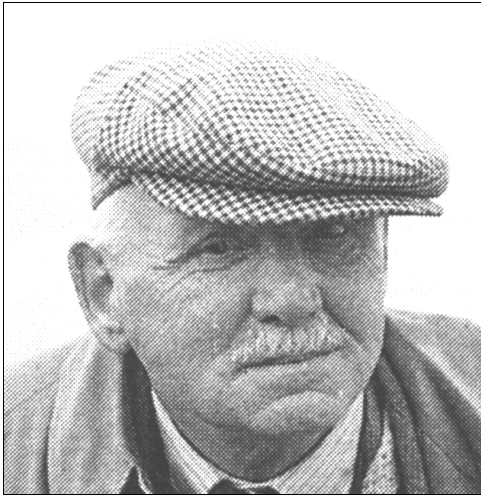
There are places, such as Hollins Lane, where trees have been planted in various schemes over the years. One such scheme, in 1973, was well publicised. The slogan was "Plant a tree in '73". The following year the slogan was "Plant one more in '74".

There have also been some later plantings in Hollins Lane in the late 1990s and also along Knutsford Road. Seven oak trees were planted along Sandiway Lane to replace the original oak trees that gave their name to the Township of Sevenoaks.

There are at least twenty-two different types of trees found in Antrobus in 1999.

Ash	Alder
Beech	Copper Beech
Cupressus	Crab apple
Elder	Guelder Rose
Hawthorn	Horse Chestnut
Holly	Laburnum
Lime	Mountain Ash
Oak	Poplar
Scots Pine	Sweet Chestnut
Sycamore	Whitebeam
Willow	Yew

A W BOYD NATURALIST



Arnold Whitworth Boyd was born in 1885, the son of a Manchester yarn merchant, James Boyd. He was sent to Rugby School and from the age of nine started his life-long hobby of keeping a diary. After leaving Oxford with an M.A. he joined the family firm, played rugby for Sale and Cheshire and developed his interest in natural history. He went into the Army in 1914 and travelled to Egypt with the 42nd East Lancs. as a transport officer of the 7th Lancs. Fusiliers. By 1915 he was a Company officer and shortly before Christmas earned a Military Cross at Cape Hellas against the Turks. He was also twice mentioned in dispatches.

After moving, in 1919, to Frandley, which was then part of the township of Seven Oaks, Captain Boyd spent all his free time studying natural history, local history, customs and dialect. In 1927 he published the Comberbach version of the soul-cakers' play in the Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society. Other contributions followed. When his friend and mentor, T.A. Coward, died he was persuaded to take over the latter's weekly countryside articles for the 'Manchester Guardian'. They continued until his death. Although not one for office or position he was, for a time, Chairman of the 'British Trust for Ornithology' and an editor of 'British Birds'. He organised national surveys of particular birds and from 1920 ringed young birds in the locality. In later years he enlisted the help of young lads, such as Ian Harrison.

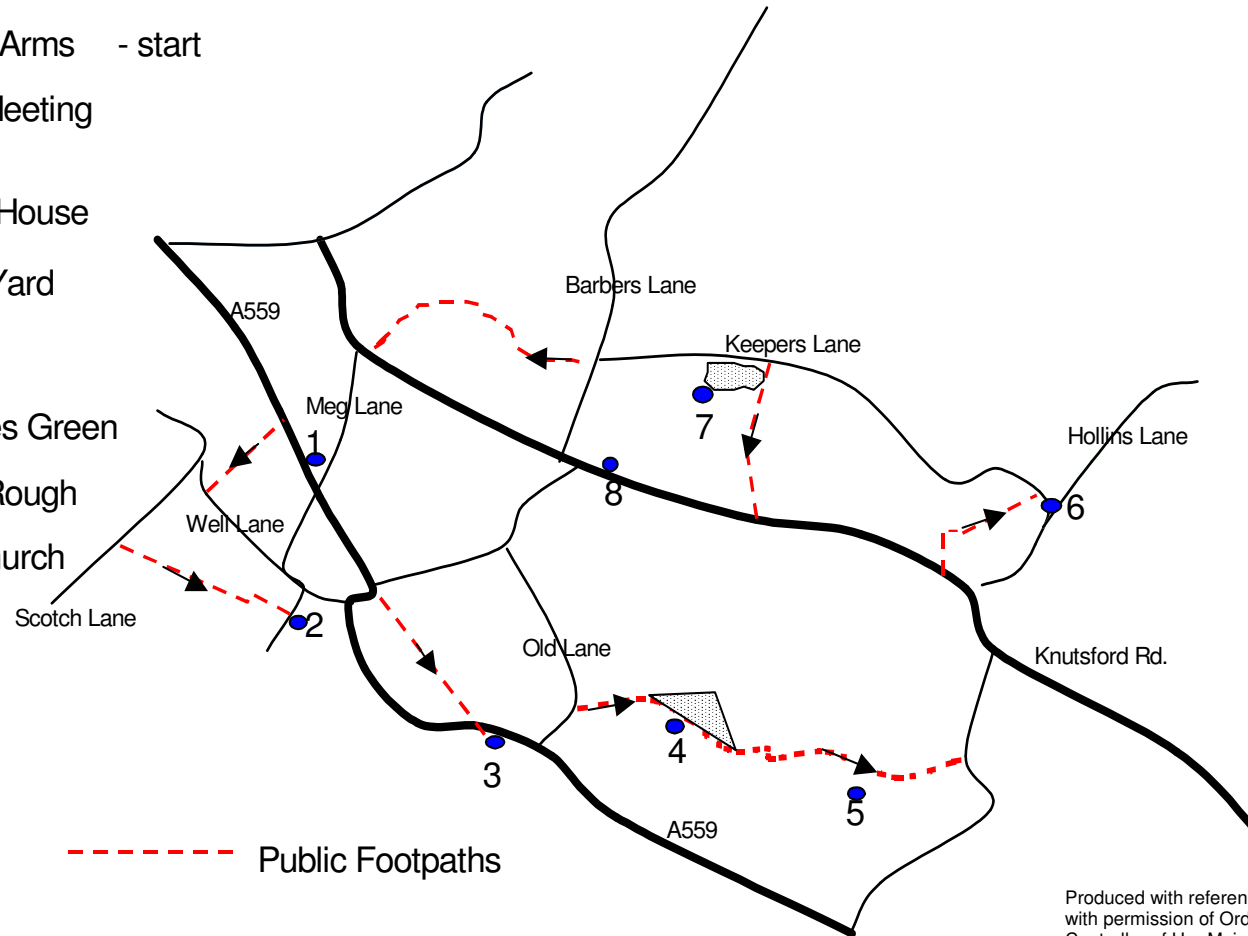
His interests were not totally parochial though and he spent

holidays abroad in Finland, Sweden, France, Spain and Morocco. In 1940 he went into the Home Guard as a Major in the Cheshire Regiment and served at Birkenhead for two and a half years. He was often out bird-watching in this area.

After the war he published his books 'A Country Parish' and 'Diary of a Country Man'. Major Boyd and his wife are generally described as 'a lovely couple' by those who knew them. The following pages describe a walk around Antrobus which commemorates his life and interest in the Antrobus area.

A.W. BOYD WALK

1. Antrobus Arms - start
2. Friends Meeting House
3. Frandley House
4. Deakins Yard
5. The Pole
6. Grandsires Green
7. Newalls Rough
8. Parish Church



--- Public Footpaths

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POINTS OF INTEREST ON A W BOYD WALK

1. Antrobus Arms

Called 'The Wheatsheaf' until the 1970s, it was often used as a meeting place before the Village Hall was built. The results of the Whitley Reed inclosure, for example, were deposited there for inspection on 1st September 1849.

2. Friends Meeting House

The Quakers church. There has been one on this site since 1676 when it was donated by a local Quaker, William Gandy.

The stump of the last of 'Seven Oaks' can be seen at the rear.

3. Frandley House

Home of A.W. Boyd. Was a small farm, bought by him in 1919 and he lived there until his death in 1959.

4. Deakin Yard

This is reputed to be named after a Mr Deakin who is thought to be buried there. It was a fox covert frequented by Major Boyd in his quests as a naturalist. In tithes assessment of 1844 it was shown as a plantation and occupation road and it belonged to Mrs Egerton. The field on south-west corner was originally part of Seven Oaks but lying in Antrobus.

5. The Pole

This belonged to the Eaton family for about four centuries. George Eaton was a large land-owner in the 17th Century. He was implicated in 1692 in the Jacobite plot to dethrone William III. The estate passed out of the family in the 1920s.



6. Grandsires Green

Described as a hamlet in Antrobus in the accounts of the Supervisor of Highways for 1754 and 1756 it was recorded as 'Gransors' and 'Gransas' Green. This reflected the dialect of the time and later. A.W. Boyd used dialect when talking with some older locals.

7. Newalls Rough (Brock's Wood)

A fox covert made by planting trees around pits. Formerly contained a small bungalow where Bob Taylor's maternal grandparents, Mr & Mrs Daniel Massey Wilkinson lived, in the 1920s.

8. Parish Church

Came into use in 1848. See the section about St. Mark's Church. The grave of A.W.B. and his wife Violet is at left rear of the building.

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

Public Rights of Way (PROWs) are often called 'footpaths' or 'Public footpaths'. In fact they also include bridlepaths, Roads Used as Public Paths (RUPPs) and Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs). They form a unique part of a parish's heritage, not only here in Antrobus but in every part of England. PROWs have served both local and wider needs for many generations. They were originally used as routes linking villages, hamlets and farmsteads. As time passed they were used for many local purposes such as going to work, church, school and market. Today the main use is recreational with walking becoming an ever more popular pastime.

The majority of paths in Antrobus are shown on the Tithe maps of the 1840s. Prior to this there are few maps which recorded paths but earlier evidence is available for the occasional path where it is an ancient highway. Examples are the Flash Lane extension which is soon to be re-opened and path No. 25 on the A559 from Fox Farm to Frandley House, which is on the course of the old Roman Road, Kind Street.

It is important that heritage such as this is protected and Parliament has provided the necessary laws. These are mainly the Highways Act 1980 and the Rights of Way Act 1990. The duty to care for PROWs is vested in the Highway Authority i.e. the County Council. By use of these and other Acts they can prosecute for obstruction of paths, ploughing of headland paths (1.5 metres width to be left), not restoring the full width (1 metre for a footpath, 2 metres for a bridleway) and the line of cross-field paths after cultivation, growing crops on paths, erection of misleading notices and damaging signposts. Members of the public can play their part by reporting offences to the Highway Authority. In order to improve footpaths, partnerships have been set up in recent years involving local

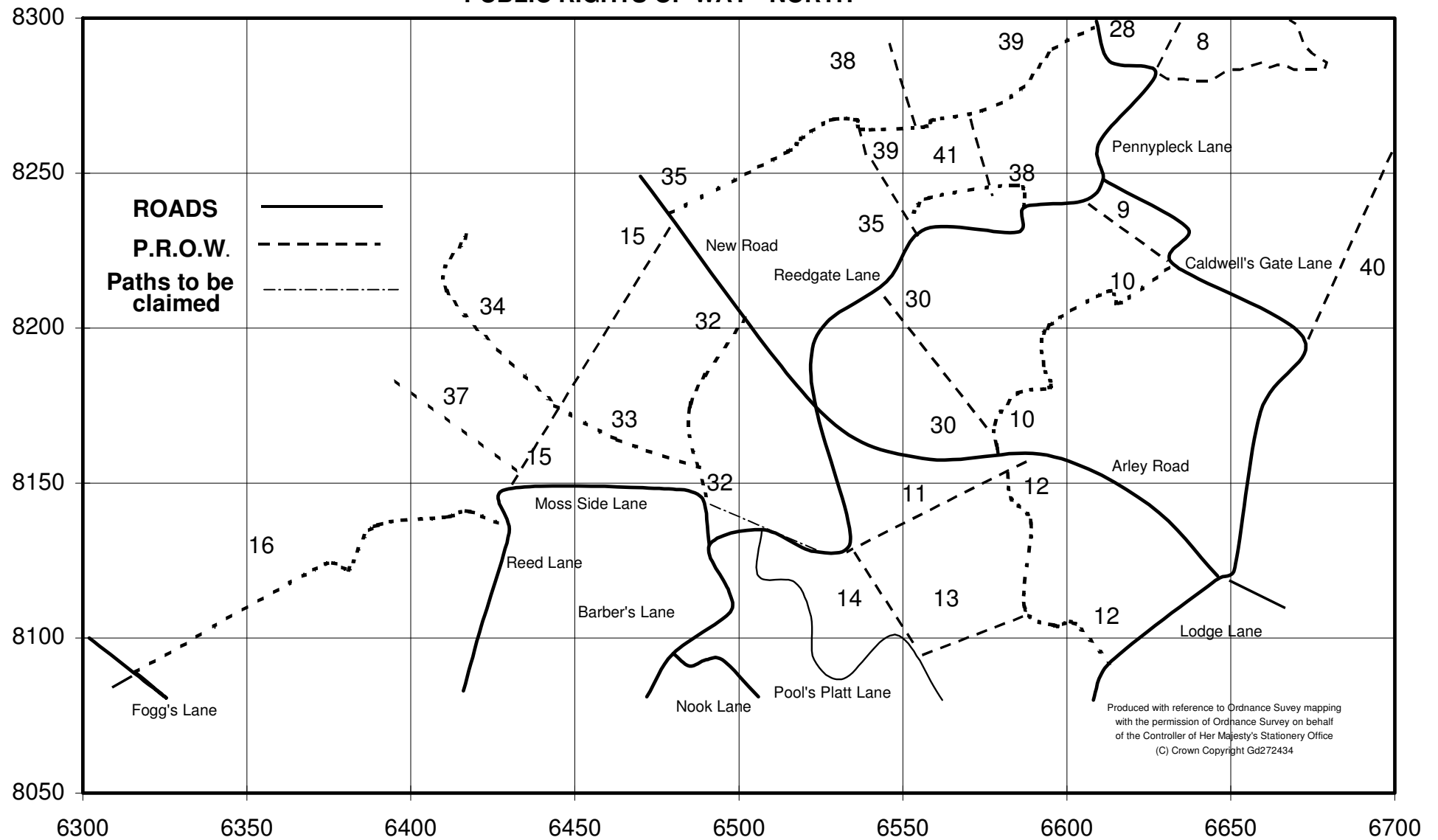
councils, individual volunteers and groups. In Antrobus various schemes such as the Adopt-a-Path Scheme and the Parish Paths Partnership, in conjunction with the co-operation of local landowners, have greatly improved accessibility. Over 35 new stiles, and several new bridges have been built, way-marking improved and new finger-posts put up. All this has enhanced the enjoyment of walking through the magnificent countryside of Antrobus.

Since the production of the "Explore Antrobus" leaflet in 1996 by local residents in conjunction with the Countryside Management Services and the Countryside Commission, many more people have walked the paths which form part of our heritage. In 1997 the Parish Council were presented with the Jack Baker Memorial Trophy for making significant improvements to the Antrobus footpaths.

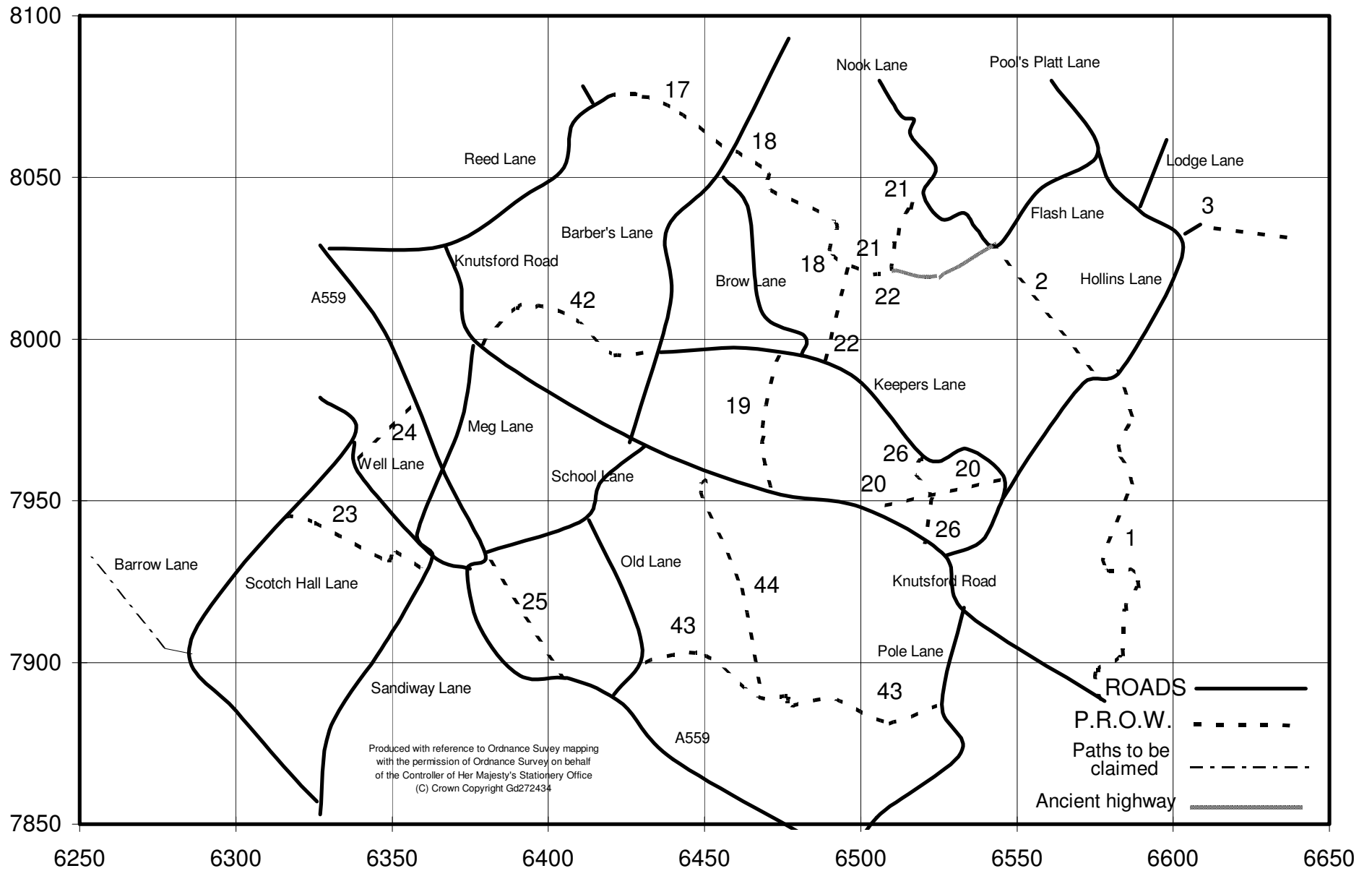
The Highways Authority has the power to make legal orders to create, divert or close PROWs. These orders must be processed in a prescribed manner. If there are objections, a public inquiry must be held and an inspector decides if the order shall be confirmed after hearing all the evidence. This is the only way a PROW can be changed, disuse does not alter its status in law. Hence the maxim 'once a highway always a highway'. The following pages of tables and maps show the location and status of the 36 Public Rights of Way in Antrobus in 1999.



PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY - NORTH



PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY - SOUTH



PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY - 1999

PATH No.	STATUS	FROM		TO		SHOWN ON MAPS	
		Grid Ref.	Location	Grid Ref.	Location	1847 Tithe	1910 O.S.
1	FP	65787888	Knutsford Road	65837989	Hollins Lane	Y	Y
2	FP	65807991	Hollins Lane	65438028	Flash Lane	Y	Y
3	RUPP	66038027	Hollins Lane	66358024	Aston-by-Budworth boundary	N	Y
8	FP	66278281	Pennypleck Lane	66718307	High Legh boundary	N	Y
9	FP	66048240	Reedgate Lane	66398222	Caldwell's Gate Lane	Y	Y
10	FP	65768169	Footpath 30	65768169	Caldwell's Gate Lane	N	Y
11	FP	65338132	Barbers Lane	65928158	Arley Road	Y	Y
12	FP	66118093	Lodge Lane	65808151	Footpath 11	Y	Y
13	FP	65518097	Pools Platt Lane	65848110	Footpath 12	Y	Y
14	FP	65508100	Pools Platt Lane	65348131	Barbers Lane	Y	Y
15	FP	64298150	Reed Lane	64798234	New Road	Y	Y
16	FP	63178090	Fogg's Lane	64268137	Reed Lane	Y	Y
17	BP	64208075	Reed Lane	64598059	Barbers Lane	As Road	Y
18	FP	64618058	Barbers Lane	65048020	BP 22 / FP 21	Y	Y
19	FP	64727953	Knutsford Road	64767995	Keepers Lane	Y	Y
20	FP	65047946	Knutsford Road	65437957	Grandsires Green	Y	Y
21	FP	65118022	Bridlepath 22	65208044	Nook lane	Y	Y
22	BP	65028009	Bob's Lane	65118022	Footpath 21	Y	Y
23	FP	63167946	Scotch Hall Lane	63617928	Sandiway Lane	N	Y
24	FP	63407963	Well Lane	63577981	A559	N	Y
25	FP	64067897	School Lane	63827933	A559	N	Y
26	FP	65217938	Knutsford Road	65197963	Keepers Lane	Y	Y
28	FP	66278281	Pennypleck Lane	66358297	High Legh boundary	N	Y
29	FP	65128073	Nook Lane	65278089	Pools Platt Lane	Y	Y
30	FP	65788160	Arley Road	65468216	Reedgate Lane	Y	Y

32	FP	64898145	Moss Side Lane	65018203	New Road	Y	Y
33	FP	64448174	Footpath 15	64868155	Footpath 32	N	Y
34	FP	64448474	Footpath 15	64178233	Stretton boundary	N	Y
35	FP	64798237	New Road	65568233	Reedgate Lane	Y	Y
37	RUPP	63938185	Stretton boundary	64338156	Footpath 15	N	Y
38	FP	65868240	Reedgate Lane	65568295	Appleton boundary	Y	Y
39	FP	65268265	Sandy Lane FP 35	66088296	Pennypieck Lane	N	Y
40	FP	66718197	Caldwells Gate Lane	67008248	Crowley Hall track	As Road	Y
41	FP	65528238	Sandy Lane FP 35	65778245	Footpath 38	N	Y
42	FP	63797998	Knutsford Road	64377997	Barbers Lane	Y	Y
43	FP	64317901	Old Lane	65257887	Pole Lane	Y	Y
44	FP	64597890	Footpath 43	64527957	Knutsford Road	Y	Y

Number of Paths -36

FP - Footpath

BP - Bridle path

Total length - approx.20 kms

(12mls) RUPP- Road used as Public Path

**Former paths/roads to be claimed
as rights of way**

Flash La.*	BP	65118020	Bob's Lane	65438029	Nook Lane	y	y
Barrow La	BP	62597920	Oldmill Lane	62857903	Scotch Hall Lane	Y	Y
Track/FP	FP	64898144	Moss-Side Lane	65288128	Barbers Lane	N	Y

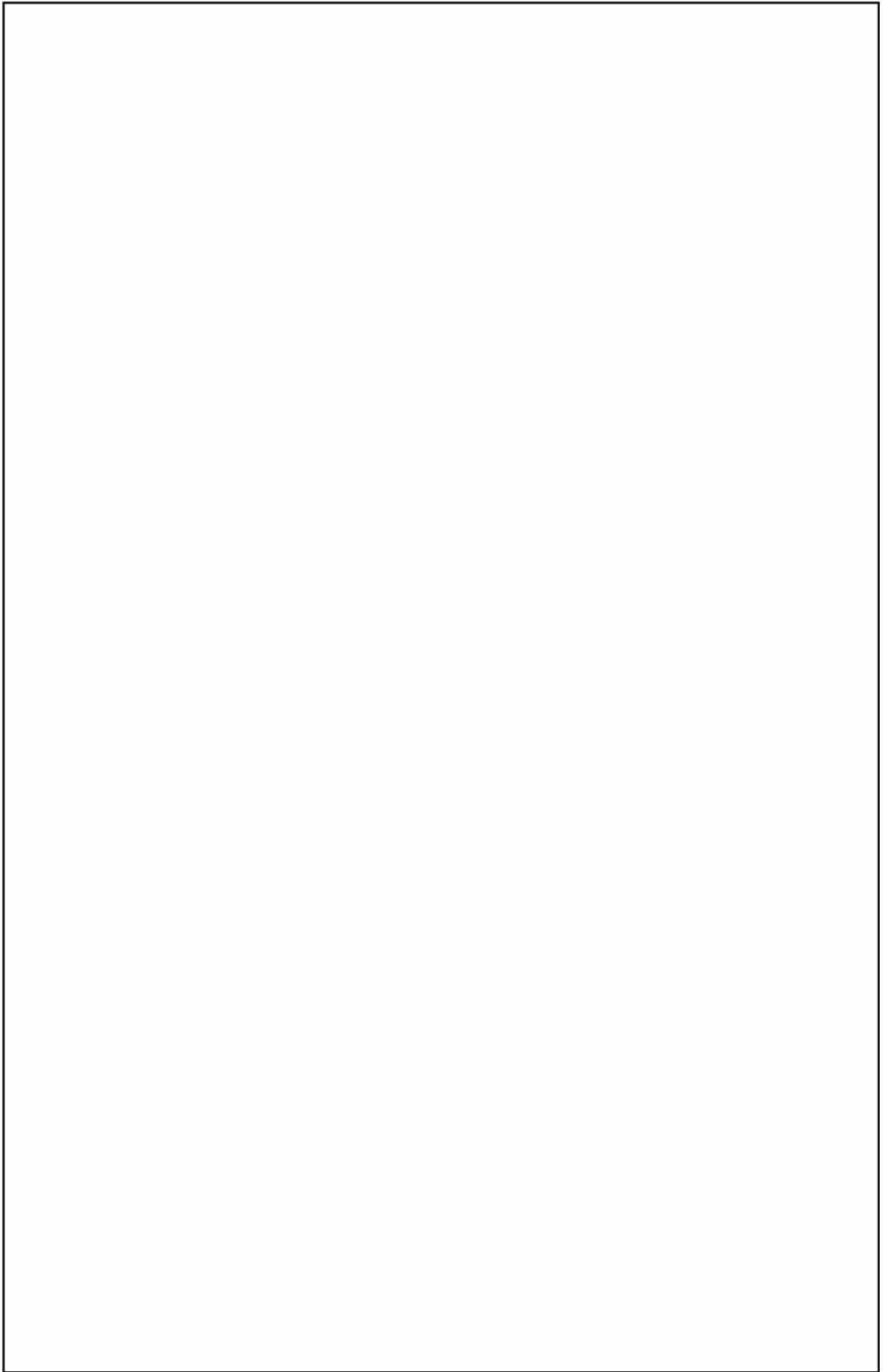
* Now confirmed as Ancient Highway

Former paths not being claimed

		65288265	FP 35	65238278	Stretton boundary	N	Y
		63828184	RUPP 37	64108212	FP 34	N	Y
			Reed House		Hollins Farm	Y	
			Paynes Farm		Barbers Lane	Y	Part
			Reed Lane		Greenfield Farm	Y	



The Future



THE SCHOOLCHILDREN'S VIEW OF THE FUTURE

The children in years 4, 5 and 6 at St. Mark's School have written their ideas about how people in Antrobus might be living in the future.

Naturally the most important place for them is the school. Most of them think this will no longer exist as children will be taught at home on computers and will use electric pens which will spell unaided - so no need to learn spellings!

They think that all shopping will be done on the Internet. Instead of telephones, people will talk to each other using computers, faxes or e-mail. Most people will work at home so there will be no driving to work. This will mean that traffic will be a lot less with mono-rails, wind-powered cars and solar trains causing less pollution.

Electricity will be from solar panels and people will not need to walk anywhere as there will be electric pathways. Houses will be built from a strong material which will retain the heat from the sun. Robots will do most of the work and there will be automatic doors, press-button opening windows, lights which go on as you enter a room and go off when there is nobody in the room and toilets which flush as you walk away. The children think there will be many more houses in Antrobus and therefore fewer fields. All farm machinery will be electrical and therefore much quieter.

People will have more leisure time and will take holidays on the moon. There will be no need for airports as everyone will own an aeroplane or helicopter. Food will be from flavoured blocks.

Every house will have a food machine and you programme in the food you want —no cooking will be required.

Antrobus will be a busy, bustling place with lots of people talking to friends and playing games. The Village Hall will have become a sports centre with roof top swimming pool, computer rooms, radio-controlled bowls and other games. A large dome will cover several fields so that football, cricket and other games can be played all through the year.

The children hope Antrobus will be a litter free, pollution free place to live in, with everybody enjoying life.

THE ORIGIN OF SOME LOCAL NAMES

Abbreviations (Origin) **OE** Saxon, Old English **ON, OD**, Viking as Old Norse or Old Danish **ME** Middle English

(Attribution) **SB** Antrobus Scrap book, **EPS** English Place-Name Society, **O** Ormerod, **L** Local, **P** Presumed

Antrobus	ON/OE SB +EPS	Andridi+ buskr, person + a bush or tree (ME spellings include Anderbusk & Andrebusk)
Arley	OE EPS	Either Har+ Leah, a grey clearing, or Earn Leah, eagle clearing
Barber's Lane	L	Formerly Clay Lane, renamed, it is believed, after William Barber
Barrow Lane	OE EPS	A copse
Bob's Lane	L	A gamekeeper called Bob is said to have lived in a hut in a field off Keeper's Lane
Brow lane	P	Perhaps named after Brow farm on a slight rise
Cogshall	OE EPS	Cogg's Hill
Crowley	OE	Crawe+ Leah, a clearing where crows were
Flash Lane	EPS	Lane prone to flooding
Frandle	ME	Franni+Leah, clearing or field belonging to Franni
Gale Brook	OE EPS	Brook where bog myrtle (sweet gale) grows
Gibb Hill	L	A place of execution, once a gibbet stood there
Goosebrook Lane	P	A brook where geese were
Hollins Lane		Alternative to Hollies
Lowe Crescent		Named after Councillor Albert Lowe
Manley Farm	EPS	1443 Menehegh, heath, common land. Once owned by a family called Manley
Meg Lane		A meg was a wench
Occupation Lane	L	Lane set on the drained moss for the use of the occupiers
Penny Pleck Lane	EPS	A piece of land worth one penny
The Pole, Pole Lane, Pole End	O	From de la Pole family
Pools Platt Lane	EPS	A plank bridge over a pool
Reed Lane	P	Lane at Whitley Reed
Sandy Lane	P	Lighter land above the moss
Seven Oaks	EPS	1353 known as Seuen Okes, seven oak trees
Shawbrook	OE EPS	Sceaga broc, stream in a copse
Stockley Lane	EPS	Clearing with tree stumps
Wheatsheaf Lane		After the pub at Four Lane Ends, now the Antrobus Arms

ELECTORS OF THE PARISH OF ANTROBUS IN 1999

Amery C B
Amery E M R
Amery K G
Amery N J D
Arnold J D
Ashall C M
Ashall D P
Ashall L R
Ashall P L
Astles J M
Atkins M N
Atkins S L
Axford C G
Axford C R
Axford J A
Backhouse J E
Backhouse S E
Bain L
Bane A G
Bane B L
Barber D M
Barber J
Barber J H
Barber S J
Barker I M
Barker M J
Barlow J A
Barlow J A
Barlow J R
Barr G
Barrington C
Barrington S R
Bashford-Malkie H K
Bates D J
Bates R A
Baxter J M
Baxter P L
Begbie A
Begbie M M
Bell P T
Bell S
Bellinger A
Bennett A J
Bennett G J D
Bennett J

Bennett J I
Bennett S R
Benson J W
Benson W
Bentham E A
Bentham H L
Bentley A M
Bentley S J
Bett C E
Bett G R
Bett R
Betts C
Betts R
Birkbeck E A
Birkbeck S J
Birkenhead P
Boisen H
Bolshaw A
Bolshaw A H
Bolshaw E
Bolshaw E
Bolshaw E M
Bolshaw J
Bolshaw K
Bolshaw R B
Bolshaw S A
Bracegirdle J M
Bracegirdle P M
Brazendale S G
Bridewood M
Bridgewood G
Bridgewood P A
Brocklehurst P
Brookes B G
Brookes P
Brown C K
Brown S L
Brzeczek E J
Brzeczek J
Buckley H L
Bulmer D C
Bulmer N J
Bulmer P J
Bunn A L
Burgess J
Burgess S

Butterworth D C
Butterworth J L
Bygraves M B
Carr F E
Carr H
Chehire A D
Cheshire E
Chohan S
Clarke W G
Clayton-Jones A J
Cliffe J
Cliffe N
Cole M J
Collins C J
Collins D D
Collins G A
Collins J R
Collins P J
Collins R J
Collins S A
Collins T
Cooke A J
Cooke B B
Corlett J A
Corlett J E
Cosgrove I
Cosgrove P
Coveney A H
Coveney H C R
Cranley J A T
Cranley J J
Cranston B J
Cranston R J
Cross B C E
Cross G E
Cross J
Cross S
Croucher A L
Croucher D C
Crow J R
Crow J S
Cumming M E R
Cumming R A
Cutler D M
Cutler M
Davies C

Davies M S
Deakin R
Deprez H J
Derbyshire D J
Derbyshire F J
Derbyshire S
Dickinson D A S
Dickinson G W
Diggins L C
Dobson D
Dobson D M
Dodgshon A
Dodgshon P R
Donoghue A S
Dugdale A I
Dunkley A T
Dunkley N R
Duxfield P W
Duxfield S F
Dyson G
Dyson R
Eadie C L
Eadie P J M
Edgerley D A
Edgerley L
Edgerley R J
Edwards J A
Edwards J U A
Elliot V A
Ellis E J
Ellis J M
Enfield D A
Enfield S M
Farrell A J
Farrell E
Farrell J
Farrell O R
Farrell V
Farrington J
Farrington L M
Farrington W T
Fearnley G
Featonby J
Featonby J M
Featonby L
Fewins A M C

Fewins H E
Finn E
Fitzgerald J M
Flannery M T
Flannery S C
Ford J
Forshaw Z A
Foster G F
Foster J
Foster J G
Foster J K
Foxley P g
Gallagher N T
Galvin P T
Gartside C A
Gartside P A
Gerrard D M
Gerrard E P
Gerrard J
Gerrard S L
Gibbons J
Gibbons J
Gibson E L
Gillett M P
Glaves B H
Glover D
Goodberry D R
Goodberry P-A
Gore D
Gratrix G
Gratrix N A
Graveney S M
Greenhalgh E E
Greenhalgh S M
Greenhough D J
Greenhough G H
Greenhough J C
Greenhough J W
Gregory E A
Gregory G P
Gregory S A
Grensinger J M
Griffiths D B
Griffiths E B
Griffiths J H
Grindrod S M

Grindrod T J
 Hack M A
 Hack R L
 Hackett K
 Hackett P G
 Hamman F
 Hamman G E
 Hamman K J
 Hancock C J
 Hancock D
 Hancock H J
 Hancock M P
 Hancock P W
 Hankey A
 Hankey D
 Hankey E M
 Hankey H
 Hankey K e
 Hankey M
 Hankey M P
 Hankey P H
 Hankey R
 Hankey S D
 Hargreaves C M
 Harrison D C
 Harrison I F
 Harrison J E
 Harrison J M
 Harrison J P
 Harrison R M
 Harrison R R
 Harrison S L
 Harrison T E
 Hatcher J A
 Hatcher M A
 Hawkins Y
 Haworth E A
 Haworth J A
 Hayter C L
 Hayter E J M
 Hazelton S
 Hazlehurst D L
 Hazlehurst M
 Hember J E
 Hemming A J
 Hemming R J

Hendley J
 Hendley M B
 Hewitt D
 Hewitt F
 Higgins M A
 Hill J S
 Hill L L
 Hirst E C
 Hodd D A
 Hodgkinson E
 Hodgkinson N H
 Hodgkinson R M
 Hodgkinson B
 Hodgkinson B E
 Hodnett E G
 Hodnett K E A
 Holmes M M
 Holmes W J
 Homfray-Jones A
 Homfray-Jones G
 Honey C
 Honey G M
 Honeybone C M
 Honeybone G M
 Horner G J
 Horner M R
 Houseman J
 Howard J L
 Howard N
 Howard P M
 Howard R D
 Howard R M
 Howman M H M
 Howman R
 Hubbard A M
 Hubbard S
 Hughes D A
 Hughes D K
 Hughes D P
 Hughes J I
 Hughes L
 Hughes P A
 Hughes S D
 Hughes T
 Hurst C A
 Hurst C W

Hyde C J W
 Hyde G M
 Ilott K A
 Jackson G M
 Jackson J E
 Jackson L W
 Jackson M
 James P
 James S
 Janion C P
 Jelley K A
 Jerams R M
 Jerams W G E
 John D A
 John S M
 Johnson B M
 Johnson H
 Johnson M E
 Johnson N D
 Johnson P J
 Johnson S C
 Jones A
 Jones J
 Jones J M
 Jones J S
 Jones J T
 Jones L J
 Jones R A
 Jones R A
 Jones S A
 Jones T G J
 Jordan P
 Jordan R
 Joynson PC
 Justin E
 Justin R
 Kelly J R
 Kinsey C J
 Knowles D
 Kukla B
 Kukla P
 Lagoe S D
 Lagoe S J
 Lang A F
 Lang D H
 Lang F

Lawless R E
 Lawless S
 Lawless S E
 Lawton M R
 Lawton R J
 Leahy S F
 Letsche D J
 Ley H D
 Liittler N
 Linglly I M
 Linglly L
 Linton D
 Littler G
 Littler I W
 Littler J I
 Littler K A
 Littler M L
 Littler P C
 Littler T E
 Lowe A V
 Lowe C J
 Lowe D A E
 Lowe P
 Maddock B T
 Maddock D
 Maddock J E
 Malkie V A
 Mallett A J
 Manley B
 Manley K R
 Marriott J
 Marriott P A
 Marshall I
 Martin D C
 Martin E
 Martin L
 Martin R F
 Martin V
 Massey B L
 Massey E J
 Mayne T M
 McAllister I S
 Mccue J
 Mccue T
 Miller C
 Miller E K

Miller P R
 Miller S N
 Moan F
 Moan K A
 Monton H
 Monton J
 Morgan C F
 Morgan J A
 Moss E F
 Mounfield P F
 Myers A M
 Naylor M
 Newton L A
 Newton M J
 Normington G H
 Normington H M
 Norris E C
 Norris L
 Old M J
 Old P
 Olver F J
 Olver M I
 Ormond C S
 Ormond E E H G
 Owen R
 Owen S C
 Parsonage E
 Parsonage S
 Paxton B J
 Paxton J
 Paxton J
 Paxton S
 Penny C
 Penny P M
 Peploe C S
 Peploe K
 Percival D A
 Percival K W
 Percival P
 Phillips A W
 Phillips M
 Plant W
 Potter A
 Powell A M
 Powell G W
 Pownall A G

Pownall D M	Sherry A M	Tickle D	Yeoman P S
Quine M	Sherry P G	Tickle L	Yeoman T J
Quine R J R	Silver M	Turner H	
Read C C	Silver N	Turner J D	
Read C C	Simm M C	Twist E	
Read D A	Simm P M	Twist R A S	
Read D S	Singleton N P	Vaughan J E	
Read G	Singleton S	Vaughan K J	
Read J	Smith A	Waddington K	
Read W R	Smith D A	Walker J	
Reynolds A J	Smith J R	Walsh C	
Reynolds D L	Smith M J I	Walsh M	
Reynolds J J	Smith M W	Webster M A	
Reynolds K B	Smith R	Webster O A	
Reynolds M E	Smith R C	Wells J G	
Reynolds M L	Smithers K Y	Wells J G	
Reynolds S	Smithers L	Whittaker J L	
Reynolds S C	Smithers T A	Wilkinson I	
Richards S E	Spratt Q R	Wilkinson J M	
Richardson C L	Stanners A	Wilkinson K M	
Richardson P G	Storey J	Wilkinson M R	
Riley M	Stowell J S	Wilkinson P	
Riley T P	Stratton I H	Wilkinson R	
Robinson L	Strickland J W	Willcocks A R	
Robinson N W	Strickland P	Willcocks H J	
Roughsedge D A	Sturtivant I M	Willcocks M R	
Roughsedge M B	Sturtivant J A	Williams C M	
Rowe P A	Sutcliffe D J	Williams M G	
Rowe R L	Sutcliffe H	Wilson S	
Rowsell J E	Sutcliffe J	Wilson S L	
Rowsell M E	Sutcliffe M	Wood K J	
Rushton B T	Sutton C M	Wood L A	
Rushton H M	Sutton D V	Woodcock D H	
Samlofski E M	Sutton H C	Woodcock G R	
Schofield E J	Taylor A J	Woodcock J R	
Schofield I J	Taylor B G	Woodcock N J	
Schofield J	Taylor C L	Woodfield M M	
Schofield J A	Taylor D	Woodfield P	
Scobie R I	Taylor P	Wright B A	
Scott A	Taylor P J	Wright C J	
Seddon S D	Teare J E	Wright E E	
Shakeshaft A P	Teare S P D	Wright J	
Shakeshaft N J	Thomson C J	Wright N J	
Sharpe E	Thomson S W	Wright P A	
Sharpe F	Tickle A E	Wright T A	
Sharpe H	Tickle A W	Yeoman J C	

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

200 copies of this book were printed during August & September 1999 by a team of three parishioners using home computer equipment.

The type face was Arial 12 point for the body text and 16 point Arial Bold for headings and page numbers.

The computer was a Gateway2000 166Mhz MMX Pentium with 64Mb RAM and a 3.7 Gb hard drive running MS Windows 95. An Iomega Zip drive was used to store the publication files on six 100Mb Zip disks.

The application software was MS Publisher 97 and Word 6 & 97. The printer, bought for the project, was a Tektronix Phaser 840N using a colour thermal wax process producing at five prints/ minute at standard resolution. The cost of the colour printing on both sides was 7.62 pence per page inclusive of VAT, paper, solid inks and maintenance kits (1 per 30,000 prints).

The printer ran for 301 hours with about 160 printing hours to produce 41,000 prints (about 20 mins for 100 prints).

The paper was Viking Imperial 100gm/ sm A4 and 49 reams were used giving a cost of 1.4 pence per sheet in the completed books.

The overall cost per copy including covers and binding but excluding the purchase of the printer and team expenses was £10.18.

The front and back covers were created by Tenth Planet Design, Whitley House Farm and the green "Wirobound" spine binding was arranged by The Print Centre, Warrington.