

WHAT'S IN A NAME? (Warrington Guardian 12.7.68)

23, WOOLSTON

WOOLSTON – WITH – MARTINSCROFT is a joint township on the high road from Warrington to Manchester: this high road is one of the oldest in Lancashire. Only four roads were shown in Lancashire in 1675 in Ogilby's "Britannia" and the Warrington to Manchester road was one of the four. This became a turnpike road in the 18th century when slag from the Warrington Copper Works was used in its construction. Unfortunately the course of this road appears to have been little changed since then in spite of heavy traffic, considerably increased in recent years by placing on it an access point to the M6 at the Woolston end of the Thelwall Viaduct. Clearly it would have been in the best interest of all concerned if this old road had been straightened and widened at Woolston before the recent rapid urban development there had been permitted to take place.

For centuries after the Norman Conquest, Woolston was a tiny backwater, remote even from neighbouring Warrington to which it was connected by an early and primitive road. Communication also existed between Woolston and Thelwall by means of a ferry across the River Mersey until suddenly in the 18th century, Woolston found itself connected to Warrington and Manchester not only by a turnpike road, but also by a short canal constructed as part of an early river navigation scheme designed to eliminate the long bends in the river in its course from Warrington eastwards.

New Cut

The first Woolston Cut was made about 1720 and less than a century later this was replaced by the Woolston New Cut. Even the New Cut now ends abruptly in Woolston, and has not been used for more than 30 years. Recently, proposals have been made to fill it in order to eliminate a danger to life and to create extra land for development.

The name Woolston, which first appears in a charter dated about 1180 consists of two Old English elements the first of which is a personal name, either "Wulfes" or "Wulfesiges", followed by "tun". Martinscroft similarly means a small place, or croft, belonging to someone called "Martin". In 1292 Robert de Woolston was a witness to a charter granted to the people of Warrington by William le Boteler and a family named Woolston resided there until the manor passed in the early 15th century by marriage to the family of Hawarden of Flintshire and then again by marriage from the Hawarden family in 1575 to the Standish family.

Spiritual needs

These families resided at Woolston Hall which stood in the vicinity of what is now Hall Lane. The Hall possessed a domestic chapel and here, Benedictine priests ministered to the spiritual needs of Warrington and Woolston Catholics from the latter part of the 17th century until Father Shuttleworth O.S.B. came to Warrington from Woolston in 1771. A Catholic Church dedicated to St. Peter was opened in Woolston in 1835 and a Catholic school was built in 1840 to accommodate 120 children. In 1895 there were 64 children in attendance at this school. A Wesleyan Chapel erected in Martinscroft in 1827 still exists, but the rapidly growing community now needs a new Anglican Church. The Vicar of Padgate (Rev. J.O. Colling) has recently successfully managed to achieve a start on the building of this in Woolston at the junction of Hillock Lane, Dam Lane and Warren Lane.

Many Warringtonians were grateful during a hot summer in 1934 when the first open air swimming pool which could be heated artificially was opened in Woolston on May 19 1934. Known as "The Lido" it provided a great attraction but a succession of wet summers cooled early enthusiasm and the swimming pool fell into disuse. Near to the Lido site, a shopping precinct has been developed in more recent years and in this precinct a fine branch of the Lancashire County Library is now nearing completion. Woolston now has an air of growing prosperity that would be considerably enhanced if much needed improvements to the A57 trunk road were to be given urgent attention.

PADGATE is an ecclesiastical parish, formed in 1838 from the civil parish of Warrington; it has a station on the Liverpool and Manchester railway of the Cheshire Lines Committee, 183 miles from London; it is in the Newton division of the county, hundred of West Derby, petty sessional division, union and county court district of Warrington, rural deanery of Winwick, archdeaconry of Warrington and diocese of Liverpool.

The ecclesiastical parish consists of the townships of Poulton With Fearnhead , Woolston-with-Martinscroft and Paddington.

Christ Church, Padgate, erected in 1838, is a brick building in the Early English style, consisting of chancel, nave, organ chamber and a western turret containing one bell: the east and west windows are stained : the chancel has been rebuilt: there are 350 sittings. The register dates from the year 1838. The living is a vicarage, net yearly value £306, with residence, in the gift of the rector of Warrington, and he'd since 1919 by the Rev. Richard Wilcock, of St. Aidan's.

The great tithes belong to Lord Leycester's Hospital, Warwick, and the small tithes to the rector of Warrington.

There is a Wesleyan Methodist chapel with Sunday schools attached.

The land is held by numerous freeholders. The soil in the southern part of the township is alluvial on sand and in the northern part clayey. The chief crops are oats, wheat, clover, potatoes and turnips. The area of Poulton With Fearnhead is 1,159 acres of land and 15 of water: rateable value £8,432; the population of the township in 1911 was 1,447, including 218 in Warrington Union (Padgate) Industrial Schools, and in 1921 1,650, and of the ecclesiastical parish of Padgate in 1911, 1961.

Post, M.O. & Telephone Call Office, Padgate. – Mrs. Alice Esther Burrell, sub-postmistress. Letters through Warrington. Padgate lane, Warrington, is the nearest telegraph office for dispatch, but Warrington head office is the nearest for delivery. Post Office, Paddington. – Joseph F. Bibby, subpostmaster.

Letters through Warrington. Padgate is the nearest money order & Warrington the nearest telegraph office.

Post & Telephone Call Office, Fearnhead. – Mrs. Ellen Chisnall, sub-postmistress. Letters through Warrington. Padgate is the nearest money order & Warrington the nearest telegraph office.

PADGATE

PRIVATE RESIDENTS

Antrobus John, Ash villa

Antrobus Thomas

Bennett Frank, Lyndhurst, Bruche aven

Bennett James M.R.C.S. Eng. I.R.C.P. Lond. Heath lodge. T N 192

Bennett Percy H. Bruche heath Bennett Walter, Bruche farm T N 774

Brentnall Charles Gordon M.C., M.B. Grange mount

Crossley Frank W. Northcote. T N 777

Denham Robert, Hazledene, Green Lane

Duckworth Thomas B. Westholm

4 of 5

Ferguson Donald M.A., M.B. Westlands T N 348

Fuller Rev. Arthur A., B.A. (Wesleyan) Epworth house

Hamblet Mrs. Grasendale

Hammond J.M. Beta lodge

Hampton J.H.J. Lynton grange

Hill John. Green lawn

Houghton Herbert Thomas, Daisy lawn

Houghton Mrs. Brookfield

Jackson Arthur. Paxcroft, Green Lane

Leece Arthur H. Beechwood avenue

Lunt Elijah, Spring villa

McArthur Joseph, Birchdale

Maxwell William, The Croft, Green Lane

Newton Mrs. William Ford, Lyndale

Price William, Riversdene

Royston Mrs. Laburnum villa

Tunstall Richard, Hawthorne lodge

Wakefield Mrs. Oakdene, Green Lane

Walker George J.P. 1 Springfield villas

Wilcock Rev. Richard (vicar), The Vicarage

Wright Frederick, Rosenrath

Wright Frederick J. Green lane

COMMERCIAL

Bennett Brothers, farmers, Bruche farm

Bennett James M.R.C.S. Eng., L.R.C.P. Lond., D.P.H. Lond., physician & surgeon, public vaccinator No 2 district, Warrington union & medical officer of health to the Warrington Rural district, Health lodge. T.N. 192

Bennett Leonard, farmer, Daisy House frm

Bottomley Herbert Harry, shopkeeper, Station road

Brentnall Charles Gordon M.C., M.B., Ch.B. physician, Grange mount TN 766

Burrell Alice Easter (Mrs.), shopkeeper, post office. T.N 157

Critchley Henry, dairyman

Evans Rd. & Co. Ltd. Coal mers. Railway stn

Fergusson Donald M.A., M.B. surgeon, Westlands. T N 348

Forster James, shopkeeper

Fryar Annie (Mrs), Padgate Stocks Inn

Fryer James L. farmer, Pear Tree farm

Hardwell Albert, blacksmith, Padgate Ln

COMMERCIAL (Con't)

Lee Charles William, solicitor, Bevesby, Green Lane

Lodge S.R & Sons, sheet metal workers

Padgate Tennis & Bowling Club (C.H. Hales Sec)

Potter J. & J., farmers, Harpers farm

Slater Edward, florist

Sutton Robert, boot repairer

Sutton Shadrach, coal dealer

Tickle John, boot maker

Walker William, architect, Beechwood

Warrington Union Industrial School (Mrs. Alice E. Lawrence, superintendent & matron). T N 521 Weston Joseph, coal merchant

Woodhouse Nellie (Miss)., teacher of music, Bruche villa

Worrall James, farm bailiff to the Guardians of Warrington union. T N 531

Wright Frederick, assistant overseer, Green Lane

Young Geo. Fredk., painter & decorator