



# THE WYLAM GLOBE

Newsletter of Wylam Parish Council

Number 9

Quarterly

July, 1975

## MARCH HOUSE

It's a safe bet that few local people will be able to identify this cottage although many will pass within a few yards of it each day.

March House stands on the northern edge of the Parish, and backs onto the A69 Hexham to Newcastle road, about 50 yards to the west of the Holeyn Hall cross-roads.

We're featuring it in this issue for two reasons; firstly, planning permission has recently been given for it to be modernised and substantially extended to provide what should be a desirable "gentleman's residence."

The new alterations will be in stone, and designed to harmonise with the existing cottage, which will form part of the new dwelling.

The second reason for drawing attention to it is because of an interesting old newspaper cutting and documents found in the County Record Office which deal with the sale of the cottage and farm nearly 120 years ago. The following advertisement appeared in the Newcastle Journal of July 14th, 1855.

### SALE OF VALUABLE FREEHOLD PROPERTY SITUATED IN THE PARISHES OF CORBRIDGE AND OVINGHAM.

**MR. THOMAS BLANDFORD** having received Instructions from the Representatives of Mr. John Charlton, late of Welton Hall, deceased, to offer the Whole of the following Valuable FREEHOLD PROPERTY for SALE BY AUCTION, has fixed the same for Wednesday the 18th Day of July, 1855, at the George Inn, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, at Two for Three o'Clock in the Afternoon:—

Lot 1.—All that FREEHOLD FARM, called *Moorcock*, situated near WHITTINGTON, in the Parish of Corbridge, containing 28 Acres 2 Roods and 6 Perches, now in the Occupation of William Renwick, as Tenant.

Lot 2, comprises the FARM HOUSE, with Stables and Byers, Stack Yard, and GARDEN, together with a Cottage, situated in the Village of WHITTINGTON, now in the Occupation of the said William Renwick.

Lot 3, consists of an excellent BUILDING SITE, with Two Acres of very superior OLD GRASS LAND, situate at the East End of the Village of WHITTINGTON.

Lot 4, is a convenient COTTAGE, with Out-offices, and an excellent GARDEN, situated on the South Side of the Village of WHITTINGTON, now in the Occupation of Thomas Dunn, as Tenant.

Lot 5.—All those THREE FIELDS of prime OLD GRASS LAND, within a Ring Fence, situated on the South Side of WHITTINGTON, containing 15 Acres 1 Rood and 33 Perches, in the Occupation of William Renwick, who will, on Application, show the Whole of the above Five Lots.

Lot 6.—HOLLING HALL FARM, in the Parish of OVINGHAM, situated within a Mile of the Wylam Station, on the Newcastle and Carlisle Railway, Nine Miles from Newcastle. This Lot would afford a beautiful Site for a Villa, commanding a most extensive View of the Picturesque Vale of Tyne. It is excellent Roads from Wylam, and the Newcastle and Carlisle Turnpike Road passes through the Land, on the North Side. The Farm contains Eighteen Acres or thereabouts, with a good Cottage, Byre, and other Conveniences, and a GARDEN. The Land is in Old Grass, of excellent Quality. The Tenant on the Premises will show this Lot.

Further Particulars may be obtained on Application to Messrs. M. & J. L. FORSTER, Solicitors, 6, Grey Street, Newcastle; or to Mr. THOMAS HUMBLE, of Eltringham; Mr. BYERLEY, of Welton Hall; or Mr. THOS. BLANDFORD, Corbridge.

*Newcastle Journal, July 14th 1855*

## "Lot 6 — Holling Hill Farm"

The "good cottage" described in Lot 6 is March Cottage which with 18 acres of land comprised Holling Hill Farm.



The cottage is described (in separate particulars) as having "two rooms, a dairy and byre for three cows and another byre for four cows." Together with a small grass garth and two small gardens, it was valued at £72.

Although the cottage stands south of the Hexham road, the fields belonging to this small farm lay on the opposite side of the road. It seems likely that when the Newcastle — Carlisle Turnpike road was constructed earlier in the 19th century, the cottage was severed from the remainder of the farm.

At the auction on 18th July, 1855, this 18 acre farm and cottage were purchased by a Mr. George Armstrong at £1550. Armstrong was apparently buying on behalf of Edward James, a wealthy Newcastle lead merchant, who had just finished building a new house — Holeyn Hall — nearby, and who was presumably anxious to extend his estate. Prior to building Holeyn Hall, James had rented Wylam Hall from the Blacketts.

The documents in the Record Office show that the farm had been valued at £1100, and that James had been offered it prior to auction for £1400 but refused and he finished up having to pay £1550 for it!

Previous occupants of March House during the mid 19th century included William March (perhaps this is how the cottage got its name) and the census tells us that William Laws, a 52 year old colliery engine driver, lived there in 1851 and 1861.

## VILLAGE BOUNDARY SIGNS

The new village boundary signs should be erected early next month. The design depicts the historic Wylam locomotive "Puffing Billy", symbolic of the village's importance in railway history, and the signs will be placed on the three main approach roads into the village, Holeyn Hall Road, Ovingham Road and Station Road. One will also be fixed at the railway station.



## COUNCIL HOUSES — WHERE?

In the last "Globe" the need for a limited number of local authority dwellings (houses or bungalows) was referred to, and the suggestion made that the land next to the former Primary School was the most suitable site at present, available on which to build.

As a result of this suggestion, a petition was sent in by a number of residents in the Dene, the Dene Estate and the Council estate, opposing the idea, mainly on the grounds that the site would be better used as an open space.

Whilst appreciating this point of view, the Parish Council still feel that if a small number of council dwellings are required in the next year or two, then this site is about the only one likely to be both suitable and available, and that with the acquisition of other land in this vicinity as open spaces there should be a reasonable provision. The Tynedale District Council will be responsible for applying for planning permission, but a firm decision is still awaited from the County Council as to whether they are willing to sell the site.

If the County Council agree to sell, then the District Council will make an outline planning application and undertake site investigations.

Although the District Council have not made any decision as to whether houses or bungalows might be built, it has been suggested that if bungalows suitable for aged persons were constructed, this might enable some of the existing three-bedroom family houses which are at present occupied by a single elderly person or an aged couple, to be made available for families. But this will depend on a site being available on which to build the bungalows.

## SUMMER PLAY SCHEME, 1975

The following details of this year's programme have been provided by Jean McCallum.

The Play Scheme this year will be from July 28th—August 21st, and we hope it will be even more enjoyable than last year. Activities will be mainly for the 7 - 11 age group but older brothers and sisters up to 13 will be welcome; there will be a new innovation for younger schoolchildren in the form of sessions on Wednesday mornings to coincide with all day trips for the older children. This year there will be two trips to Whitley Bay Ice Rink and the Long Sands, one to Wallington Hall and one to a nature trail at Hareshaw Linn near Bellingham. A bus will go to Blaydon Baths once a week and there will be crafts, drama, football, chess, a library, and other activities in the old School. The final session will be a bonfire in Jack's field on September 2nd for those who have attended the Play Scheme. Full details will be circulated in July through the kindness of the Headmaster at Wylam School, but we would like grandmothers and others likely to have child visitors to know that everyone in the age range is most welcome to take part in the scheme. Further information may be obtained from Janet Jacobson (Wylam 3440), Pat Newham (Wylam 3328), Jean McCallum (Wylam 2210), Freda Robinson (Wylam 3585) or Janette Trotman (Wylam 2345.)

## MOTOR CYCLING ILLEGAL ON OLD TRACK

Complaints that some motor cyclists have been using the former railway track as a short-cut between Hagg Bank and Newburn, and have been a nuisance to people using the track for its intended purpose—(as a walk-way)—have been brought to the attention of the County Council who own the track.

The County Solicitor has advised that motorcycling on this track is illegal, and he has asked the Chief Constable to take appropriate action against offenders. However, it would be a waste of police time to watch the track 24 hours a day, and local residents walking along the track are asked to make a note of the registration number of any motorcyclist riding on it, and pass this information to the local police (Phone 998 32204) or contact Mrs. Fairless, who will pass the information to the police.

First time offenders are likely to receive a warning.

The possibility of providing some form of barriers across the track which might be more effective in deterring motorcyclists is also being investigated by the County Council.

## PLAYING FIELDS PROJECT

The Contractors have recently started work on levelling the Boys' Brigade Field as part of a contract to provide a new football and cricket pitch and a hard play area for children. These are the basic initial improvements, but the aim of the Community Playing Fields Association is to try and provide general recreational opportunities for everyone in Wylam, and it is hoped in due course to provide other facilities, e.g. children's play equipment, etc.

How quickly these additional attractions can be provided will depend on the amount of money which can be raised. The cost of the initial contract is approximately £11,500 and several grants have been received towards this.

Other funds have been raised by various social events such as Wylam Fair, dances, etc.

Over the last few weeks, all households in the village should have been visited by a member of the C.P.F.A. committee or a volunteer, to discuss the project and to be asked for a contribution towards the costs. We hope you've been as generous as possible in supporting the Association. (If you haven't contributed and would be willing to do so, please contact Alasdair Kemp, the Secretary, at Wylam 3274.)

Those members of the Committee and indeed everyone who has helped over the last four years, in getting the project started, deserves the thanks of the village. There have been numerous obstacles to overcome but the project is now under way.

It is impossible to mention all those who have helped, but special thanks are certainly due to Martin Orchard and Alasdair Kemp who have shed much blood, sweat, toil and tears on this scheme over the last year.

## IT'S VALUABLE—DON'T DESTROY IT

Hundreds of milk bottle tops and pieces of silver paper and foil are thrown away in Wylam every day, but these are valuable and can be sold and reused.

One of the charitable organisations which collects silver foil waste is the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association—and Pat Holt of 48 Dene Road, is asking local residents to keep their milk bottle tops and foil—no matter how large or small the amount.

If anyone is willing to help the blind by saving foil, please contact Pat Holt (Tel. Wylam 2512) who will arrange for it to be collected.

This seems an excellent idea, it helps a charity, and doesn't cost you anything.

We hope there's plenty of local support for this scheme.

---

## WHAT'S ON IN WYLAM — VILLAGE DIARY

### AUGUST

Saturday 9th	"Stephenson Day" Fete
Saturday 30th	Garden Fete—Castle Hill

### SEPTEMBER

Wednesday 3rd	Bible Classes start at Old Schools
Saturday 13th	Local History Conference and Exhibition, Institute
Saturday 20th	Conservatives "Cheese and Wine Evening," Oakwood House
Saturday 27th	Friends of Wylam Jumble Sale

### OCTOBER

Saturday 11th	Christmas Book Fair, Institute
16th, 17th, 18th	Drama Society Play
Saturday 25th	Playgroup Halloween Fair

---

*Please contact Mrs. Hurd, 138 Dene Road (Tel. 2563) before arranging events—to avoid double booking.*

---



## BOARD WITH NOTICES

The Notice Boards which the Parish Council have on Station Road, at the entrance to the Playing Field and on Dene Terrace West have recently been repaired and repainted and will shortly be re-erected. Although primarily intended for Parish Council notices or various public or statutory notices which have to be displayed from time to time, there is no objection to any local society or organisation using these boards for publicising local events (but please **NOT** private notices, commercial or party political posters.)

We don't want to make elaborate rules about the use of these boards—but please do not **stick** notices up with glue, use only drawing pins, and please **remove** notices from the boards after an event is over.

Parish and Statutory Notices must be given priority for use of space on the Boards in the event of insufficient space being available at any time.

Fortunately, the local shopkeepers are very obliging in displaying notices, and this is in most cases the best (and safest) means for local societies to publicise their activities.

## DANGEROUS ROAD AT WATERWORKS

The dangers of the short length of the Wylam to Ovingham road in the vicinity of the Waterworks are well known to the County Highways department and to all local people who have to use that road.

There have been a number of minor accidents there in the past, but no fatal accident—yet.

However, with the opening of the Throckley—Heddon—Horsley bypass later this summer, additional traffic is likely to use this road through Wylam to Ovingham. When the new Middle School at Ovingham is completed in six months time the children from Wylam will also have to travel along this road.

The narrowness of the road outside the Waterworks and the absence of any footpath on this stretch, make this a potential accident black-spot and because of its concern about this problem, the Parish Council has written to the County Council asking that early action be taken to widen this length of road, to make arrangements for a separate footpath where none exists at present, and to take whatever other action is necessary to reduce the traffic hazards.

Subsequently a joint meeting has been held with other Parish Councils directly concerned (Horsley and Ovingham) at which these problems were discussed with members of the County Highways Department, and suggestions put forward as to what could be done, at comparatively little expense, to improve the present situation.

Our local County Councillor, Mr. d'Ambrumenil, is also pressing the case for improvements.

**NOTE:** We should point out that this length of road by the Waterworks lies outside the Wylam Parish boundary, and is in the Parish of Horsley.

## ALLOTMENTS

The Parish Council have now acquired the land between the old railway and the river, which lies west of the Boys Brigade field and includes the area of allotments. Such has been the demand in the last twelve months that all the existing allotments are now let and in use. In view of this, the possibility of providing additional allotments on the adjoining land is being considered, but before doing so information is required about the local need.

Any Wylam resident who is interested in renting an allotment on the riverside (and who hasn't got one at present) is asked to write to Mrs. Fairless, the Clerk of the Parish Council, at 31 Falcon Terrace, before 31st August, 1975. This will help the Parish Council to assess future need.

No decision has been taken about future rents, but these will be "fair" and comparable with most other rents for allotments on Tyneside.

## OLD WYLAM



The photograph in our last issue produced replies from several residents, including two—one from Mrs. Thompson of Jackson Road and one from Miss Johnson, Ingham Row, which were a mine of information.

The seven people standing outside the old smithy were (from left to right) John Henderson (jnr.), Willie Lishman, John Henderson (senior), Billy Caudle, Stanley Henderson, Robert Milburn and George Wild.

You'll have to look up your last issue if you want to match names with faces! Mrs. Thompson and Miss Johnson have each been given a Stephenson Commemorative Cup for their entries.

This month's photograph was taken outside the Parish Church about 1920. The late Dr. Bishop and his sister are the two figures in the foreground—but what was the event? Probably a wedding—but whose?

Can anyone help with information please?

## ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

"Not quite as lively as last year, but well worth attending." This was the comment of one of the 72 residents who attended the Annual Parish Meeting.

A large number of issues were discussed, ranging from the problems of rubbish dumping and dogs fouling open spaces, to whether you can launch canoes from the river bank.

Various suggestions and comments made at the meeting are being considered by the Parish Council. Where items are likely to be of wide interest, these will be referred to in issues of this newsletter.

## WHO'S ON WHAT

John Stephenson has been unanimously re-elected Chairman of the Parish Council for a further year and Jim Robinson was appointed Vice-Chairman.

Ellen Jacobson and Joan Taylor are the Wylam representatives on the Joint Burial Board and Jim Robinson and Philip Brooks are the two Parish Council representatives on the Wylam School Managers.

Dr. Tom Brown was re-elected to the Blackett and Gregson Charity Trustees and Harry Helm has been nominated for the Tynedale Sports Council.

## GRANT AID TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS 1976/77

Tynedale District Council has recently issued a reminder that any local voluntary Sports, Arts and other organisations who wish to apply for Capital or Running cost grant aid during 1976/77, must send the application to Mr. Batey, Treasurer for Tynedale District Council, Hexham House, Hexham, before 31st August, 1975.

Special application forms can be obtained from Mr. Batey, to whom any enquiries should be made. (Tel. 0434 4011.)



## THAT PATH!

Occasionally local crises occur which seem to generate almost instantaneous heat—and the problem of the so-called "Doctor's Path", linking the western end of Woodcroft Road to the disused railway track, was one of these!

The initial difficulties seem to have arisen partly because of the increase in the number of people using this path but mainly because of the fact that horse-riders and even motor cyclists have apparently been using it as well!

There seem to be differing opinions locally as to whether the path should officially be shown as a public right of way, or whether it is a private path which the public have been permitted to use with the owner's consent. It is not at present shown as a public right of way on the definitive footpath map prepared by the County Council.

Since the removal of the length of new fence which blocked one end of the path and which was the cause of the protests, people have been able to use it again, and it is understood that no objections will be made to pedestrians using it (but NOT horses or motor cyclists.)

This path is clearly a very convenient one for residents of Hagg Bank coming into the village, and whatever the future of this particular path, it is accepted that an improved link between the old railway track and the centre of the village is needed.

The Parish Council have, therefore, written to the County Council asking if a new ramped footpath could be made up from the old railway track to one end of the accommodation bridge (the Bumbler Box Bridge.) This should ensure that a well surfaced path is available the full length between Hagg Bank and the centre of the village.

## SORRY — NO CONCESSIONS YET

During the past 12 months, the question of introducing concessionary bus fares for elderly or disabled persons has been discussed between the County Council and the six District Councils in Northumberland.

It was agreed that the District Councils would be responsible for financing and arranging any scheme within their own areas.

However, although Tynedale District Council had intended to try to introduce a concessionary fare scheme this year, the problems of trying to keep down rate increases, together with advice from the Government recommending local authorities NOT to start such schemes in view of the current economic situation, have meant that no concessions will be available on public transport for local residents for at least another year.

## MR. McKIE

Anyone connected with the Primary School will know by now that the Headmaster, Mr. McKie, is leaving at the end of this term to take up an appointment as Headmaster of Southlands Middle School at Cramlington.

Although this is clearly promotion, we shall be sorry to see him go, and would like to thank him for his work at the school, and wish him every success in the future.

Arrangements are being made to interview possible successors to Mr. McKie and it is hoped that an appointment can be made shortly.

## UPLIFTED?

The problems of both young and old of getting in and out of west-bound trains at Wylam Station should soon be solved, thanks to the help of British Rail. They have recently notified the Parish Council that money has now been found to carry out work on raising the level of the platform in front of the Station. This is welcome news and a further improvement to benefit local rail-users.

## STEPHENSON CELEBRATIONS

Everyone will know by now that 1975 is the 150th anniversary of the world's first public railway—the Stockton and Darlington—and that three famous Wylam-born engineers, George Stephenson, Timothy Hackworth and Nicholas Wood were all closely involved with that historic project.

It is fitting that the village should join in commemorating this anniversary—and as previously reported, the Parish Council are proposing to erect special village boundary signs on the main roads leading into the village and work is also in progress on producing a booklet about Wylam and its contribution to Railway history which it is hoped to publish during August.

One special event being organised by the Wylam and District Round Table is likely to prove a major attraction, and this is the Grand "Stephenson's Day" Fete to be held in the village on Saturday, 9th August.

John Matthews of the Round Table has provided the following details of the events so far organised:—

"The Fete will take place on the large field immediately next to Stephenson's Cottage and there will be numerous events throughout the day. Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother has graciously agreed to lend her replica model of Stephenson's "Locomotion." This was presented to her in 1925 to commemorate the centenary. The original Hetton Colliery locomotive built by Stephenson and Wood in 1822 will also be on display. It will be placed on the old railway track outside Stephenson's Cottage, giving railway and photographic enthusiasts a once in a lifetime opportunity to film.

An old N.C.B. Steam loco will also be there. Numerous exhibits and models from many museums and societies will also be on display in two large marquees. A link between Stephenson and the Ford Motor Company has also been discovered as Robert Stephenson's company built a replica of the "Rocket" for the original Henry Ford. The Ford Motor Company in Michigan have promised to send an exhibit.

Other events will include the ascent of the magnificent Esso Hot Air balloon, the famous Killingworth Sword dancers, a display of doghandling by the Northumbria police, the sound of the pipes of the Whitley Bay Highland Pipeband, fine marching by six juvenile jazz bands competing for the Stephenson Trophy, a display of veteran cars, and last but not least a helicopter-rides service will be available, enabling you to see the picturesque Tyne Valley from the air.

There will be numerous stalls and sideshows on the field. Any society or individual wishing to run a stall, please contact Cecil Vallally, 1 Stephenson Terrace, Wylam. (Tel. 2707.)

A specially designed first day cover and stamp is being issued and will be franked with a unique local hand stamp—for one day only. A limited number are being issued and will certainly become collectors items. Send orders and enquiries to Mr. Vallally or George Harper, 18 Woodvale Gardens. (Tel. 3363.)

All money raised is in aid of Help the Aged, The Tynedale Accident Unit and other local Charities.

The opening of the railway in 1825 was a gala occasion and we hope that the Fete on 9th August will also be an event to be remembered. Please come along and support the worthwhile charities, and enjoy yourselves."

(Note: In view of this major event, the exhibition proposed in the old school from 4th—9th August will not now be held, but many items of local railway interest will be displayed instead at this Fete.

A separate exhibition is proposed for 12th and 13th September in the Institute, to coincide with a local history conference being held on 13th September.)

*All correspondence relating to this Newsletter should be addressed to Mrs. D. Fairless, The Clerk of the Parish Council, 31, Falcon Terrace, Wylam.*