

THE GATEACRE SOCIETY

Founded 1974. Registered Charity No.508024.
A member of the British Association for Local History
and the Merseyside Civic Society

Website: www.gatsoc.org.uk **Instagram:** @TheGatSoc
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Annual Membership Subscriptions

Household £5 Single pensioner £4 Company, etc. £10

The Society's membership year runs from 1 Nov-31 Oct.

If you are already a member, your address label indicates the date when your next subscription payment is due.

New members joining the Society after 1 July are regarded as 'paid up' until 31 Oct the following year.

If you wish to join the Society, or to renew, please send the appropriate subscription to the Membership Secretary, David Phythian, 26 Primrose Road, Liverpool L18 2HE: cheques payable to The Gateacre Society.

Subscriptions may also be paid by bank transfer.

Please email us for our NEW account details.

DO YOU HAVE AN EMAIL ADDRESS?

If so, and if you would like to receive your Newsletters by email instead of by post, please let us know by sending a message to **membership@gatsoc.org.uk** quoting your name and postcode.

If you are a member of the Society and you have notified us of your email address, you will be sent details of our Zoom talks and invited to participate.

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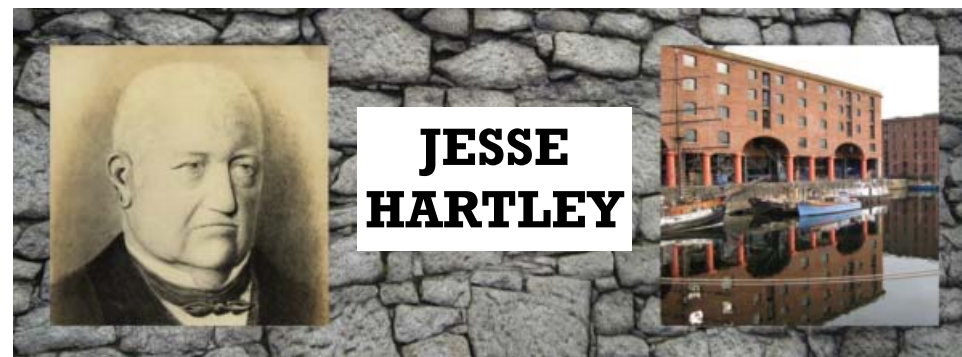
A VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION

Guarding the Past - Safeguarding the Future

NEWSLETTER - May 2022

Our next meeting:

An illustrated talk by David Hearn on Monday 23rd May, 7.30pm in Gateacre Unitarian Chapel, Gateacre Brow, Liverpool L25 3PB



Jesse Hartley was the first full-time, salaried dock engineer in the world, despite having had no previous dock-building experience when he came to Liverpool in 1824. Hartley expanded the dock system fivefold, yet he remains relatively unknown – even in Liverpool. Without a doubt he was one of the great engineers of the 19th Century. Hartley worked until 3 months before he died, at almost 80 years old, and did so with the energy of a man many years younger.

David Hearn, who has spoken to us twice before, retired from a career in banking and finance and went to university for the first time at the age of 55. He obtained a BA(Hons) from LJMU before studying for an MA in International Slavery Studies at the University of Liverpool. He runs a publishing company called The Devil's Nest, and will be bringing some books for sale, including *The Slave Streets of Liverpool*, Enfield's *History of Liverpool 1773* (facsimile reprint) and W G Herdman's *Views of Modern Liverpool 1864* (only the second edition of this book ever produced). The prices range from £15-20, and David can accept payment by cash or card.

ADVANCE NOTICE: FUTURE MEETINGS IN THE CHAPEL

Mon 11th July, 7.30pm. A talk on the Walker Art Gallery by Christina Clarke

Mon 26th September, 7.30pm. A talk on Shakespeare by Coral Greenwood

Sun 23rd October, 2.30pm. The Gateacre Society's Annual General Meeting

All subject to confirmation in future Newsletters and on our website

LOST MANORS

Our March 2022 talk – reviewed by Mike Chitty

Stuart Rimmer came to Gateacre Chapel on 13th March to talk about his book *Lost Manors: A history of the townships and alehouses of Gateacre and Childwall*. He explained that it was originally intended as a companion volume to his previous book on the pubs of Woolton, but once he started to look at the source material – in particular the manorial court records, written in an archaic script that he had to teach himself to decipher – he realised that there was a lot more to be written about than just the pubs.

The title refers to the fact that the manor and township of 'Little Woolton' was made up of three separate pre-17th century manors: Little Woolton, The Holt and The Lee. Stuart explained how Holt Hall, built by William Brettargh, and Lee Hall, once occupied by John Hays Wilson, were at one time important local buildings, but both are now demolished and commemorated only by road names.

By 1659 the three manors had been amalgamated, and a Manor Court House serving not just this enlarged Little Woolton area, but also Childwall, was established by the new Lord of the Manor, Peter Legay. It stood where part of the Black Bull pub is today, at the heart of Gateacre Village. The manor court had a number of important roles, and appointed local residents to carry them out. Its tasks had fascinating names such as 'privy search', 'hue and cry', 'hill looking' and 'ale tasting', and also included the inspection and maintenance of ditches, hedges and highways.

It is the records of this manor court which enable the identification of local alehouses – and Stuart has managed to research the history of more than 20 of them. He also described how he has been able to identify 'the Gate Acre' – the piece of land that, he believes, gave its name to the village – as reported in our last Newsletter. Stuart led us through the history of some of the pubs within the areas now known as Gateacre, Childwall, Belle Vale and Netherley. Some are familiar to us because they still exist, others are identifiable as buildings now in use as private dwellings, but the majority have vanished without trace. Those that survive as pubs are the Black Bull, the Bear & Staff, the Brown Cow and the Childwall Abbey. All of these were originally much smaller than they are today.

(To be continued)

A COACH TRIP TO BURNLEY

After a two-year enforced break, the Wavertree Society's series of annual outings resumes this summer with a visit to the Weavers' Triangle and Queen Street Mill in Burnley, Lancashire. Once again members of the Gateacre Society are invited to take part, and there will be a pickup point outside the Black Bull. The date is Wednesday 13th July, the cost is £20 per person.

For further details of the itinerary and the booking arrangements, please see our website nearer the time, or contact Mike Chitty on 0151 428 7801.

JUBILEE DAYS REMEMBERED

This year, for the first time, a British monarch celebrates her Platinum Jubilee: 70 years on the throne. But both Queen Elizabeth II and Queen Victoria had Golden and Diamond Jubilees which are still remembered in Gateacre. Of course, Victoria's 50 years on the throne in 1887, and 60 years in 1897, are only remembered because of the monuments that were created to commemorate the event.

For the Golden Jubilee of 1887, the wealthy brewer Sir Andrew Barclay Walker, of Gateacre Grange, presented the Little Woolton Local Board with a village green – the triangular area on the corner of Grange Lane and Gateacre Bow – and a bronze bust of the Queen sculpted by her nephew Count Gleichen. The unveiling of this monument was accompanied by great public rejoicing, and a garden party in the grounds of Gateacre Grange.

For the Diamond Jubilee, Sir Andrew's son William Hall Walker – who had inherited the Grange on his father's death in 1893 – presented the Local Board with a 'promenade' and a commemorative signpost. The promenade, complete with chestnut trees, still exists today as the footway on the north-west side of Belle Vale Road. Created out of Col. Hall Walker's farmland, it provided a pleasant and convenient route for the villagers of Gateacre to walk to the Parish Church of St Stephen.

The signpost, opposite No.66 Belle Vale Road, was severely damaged in 2012 but has since been expertly restored. The original wooden panels have been re-gilded to reveal the inscription referring to the gift of the promenade in commemoration of "the sixtieth year of the reign of her most gracious Majesty Queen Victoria". On the other side, facing the roadway, they indicate the distances to "Liverpool 6¼ miles" and "Huyton 2½ miles", among other places. Sadly the bronze weather-vane on top, which incorporated the number 1897, has since been lost.

Our present Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 2012 was marked by celebrations on and around the village green, organised by the Friends of Gateacre. Ten years earlier, for the Golden Jubilee, we in the Gateacre Society had held our own fair on the Green, and published a reprint of the press report of the 1887 festivities. Does any reader have any particular memories of those two days?

