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THE GATEACRE SOCIETY  
Registered with the North West Civic Trust

CHAIRMAN: G. Anthony McCann, O.L.A. School  
Hedgefield Road. Tel: 487-9301  
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SPRING NEWSLETTER 1986.

Next meeting -

TOXTETH PARK

by

PAUL BOOTH M. A.

Paul Booth is a Senior Lecturer in Local History at Liverpool University and a great enthusiast on his subject. He has made a special study of the growth of Toxteth - a fascinating place and full of interest, in the past having close links with Gateacre.

TUESDAY, 29th APRIL 1986. Chapel Hall, Sandfield Road.  
at 8 p.m.

Visitors most welcome. Tea & biscuits 10p.

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ADVANCE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY -

- Tuesday, May 20th a talk on Water Power by Mr. A.J. Crone
- Tuesday June 24th visit by coach to Rufford Old Hall.

VILLAGES IN THE CITY - On the 11th March Mr. Jack Cooper of the West Derby Society came to tell us about some of the former villages which have now become part of Liverpool, and he brought with him a selection of excellent slides. He started by defining a 'village' as being larger than a hamlet, which is a group of scattered houses or farms having no nucleus, but smaller than a town.

First we went to Bootle, whose origins appear to be Anglo Saxon and in Domesday was worth 64d. 150 years ago it was a seaside resort, and we saw the hunting lodge of the Earls of Derby - still there to be seen today. In Walton we saw the remains of the Town Hall, Walton Church, nearby cottages and the old Grammar School of 1613. We were shown the old Lock-up in Everton, the Toffee Shop, Prince Rupert's cottage and the Mere pub, also some fine buildings of the C.19 including the Library of 1895 by Thomas Shelmerdine, St. George's Church 1812-14 architect Thos. Rickman and two buildings of 1856 built as the original R.C. Cathedral, but never used as such.

In Edge Hill we saw St. Mary's Church where nearby in Mason St. lived Joseph Williamson the 'mole' who created jobs for the unemployed tunneling in the sandstone under this area. One of the largest villages was Wavertree which had its own Town Hall, old Lock-up and the Monks Well with a date of 1414 as well as 'the smallest house in England'.

Old Swan was next on our journey and from here Liverpool was at one time supplied with water from local wells. It had its own manor house and coat of arms. St. Oswald's Church spire is said to be the highest in Liverpool. When a school was being built quite recently large numbers of bodies were found, thought to be cholera victims of the C.19 (removal of the remains was kept very quiet, residents were not informed)

Much Woolton appears in Domesday as Uvetone. Names of the Lords of the Manor include Queen Elizabeth I, Isaac Greene & the Marquess of Salisbury. We saw pictures of the old school where the schoolmaster was Robert Quick in 1620 and Woolton Hall - the only 'Adam' building in Lancs. (listed Grade I).



Here we also saw Camp Hill where there was an Ironage fort, Quarry Street with its cottages built of local stone and, of course, the quarry.

Gateacre - the name, Mr. Cooper said, came from the Norse Gata meaning path (to a field). He told us of the cattle trail along Halewood Rd. through Childwall and Thomas Lane. We saw photographs of the stables, Paradise Row cottages - thought to be the oldest in the village, Gateacre Chapel, the Brewery, Black Bull and The Nook where Dr. Shepherd lived (minister at the Chapel from 1791-1847).

In Hale we saw the Manor House, some of the old cottages and the grave of the 'Childe of Hale', a cast of whose enormous hand is kept in Brasenose College, Oxford. The cattle trail started here with the ford across the Mersey into Cheshire - also providing a convenient escape route in times of strife. We ended this interesting journey with a look at Mr. Cooper's own village West Derby seeing the Court House, the Yeoman's house and St. Mary's Church. J.B.

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT WEEK - This is from the 3rd - 11th May when the following events will take place -

SATURDAY 3rd MAY - a combined Gateacre/Woolton Societies WALK down Beaconsfield Road having the architecture of the houses described to us, hearing the history of their building and of some of the interesting people who owned or occupied them in the past. Numbers will be limited (15 from each Society) so if you would like to accompany us let the Secretary know soon. We will meet at the top of Woolton Hill Road at 2 p.m. (outside Knolle Park) and have as our guides John Dewsnap B.A. of the Victorian Society and Janet Gnosselius B.Arch. whose knowledge of the subject is second to none. Notes will be provided free to members present and it is hoped to arrange for a cup of tea at some stage during the afternoon. The walk will go on wet or fine !

TUESDAY 6th MAY - A Liverpool History Quiz will be held at 8 p.m. in the Chapel Hall when the Gateacre Society will challenge the Woolton Society. Four members from each Society will take part and we are one short for our team

can we have a volunteer please ? We are not taking this too seriously and it should be fun, please come and cheer on your side. The Quizmaster will be Michael Chitty, former Secretary of the Wavertree Society and a Merseyguide. Ring Mrs. Lewis 428-3671 if you would like to take part.

FRIDAY 9th MAY - There will be a general clean-up of the Village Green by the Cubs attached to Our Lady's School. Last year we picked up 12 bin bags of rubbish - how many will we get this year ?

SATURDAY 3rd - SUNDAY 11th MAY - An Exhibition, arranged by Mrs. E. Scarland of the North West Civic Trust, will be held in the Anglican Cathedral. The theme will be the role of the amenity societies in promoting conservation, and your Society has been invited to take part. The Exhibition will be open to all and free - come and see it. Very good food is now available in the Refectory - an excellent place to visit or take your visitors.

SATURDAY 10<sup>th</sup> MAY - After all the other excitements of Environment Week we come to our main fund raising event of the year, the Jumble Sale. This will be held in the Chapel Hall at 2 p.m. Many thanks to those who have already sent contributions for sale but more is needed - we seem to have a lot of clothes and would welcome more 'things' - books, furniture and household goods of any description. As usual we need plenty of helpers on the day - PLEASE, if you can, spare just one hour (from 2p.m. to 3 p.m.) and get in touch with Mrs. McKenzie at 7 Grange Weint 428-2938 and let her know - she will be delighted.

We also understand that during Environment Week the Mersey side Civic Society will be announcing their awards for the conservation/rehabilitation of buildings of importance. We hope that, at last, the work of Barry Kelley at Druids Cross will receive public recognition.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS - There is an application pending to demolish Salisbury House, the former orphanage on Woolton Road. This is outside our area but if anyone feels



strongly about the demolition of this fine building, and losing more of our open space to satisfy greedy developers, who seem to believe that they have a God given right to build houses on every bit of grassland they can find, please write to the City Planning Officer, Wilberforce House, 25 The Strand, Liverpool 2 and make a fuss. We don't hold much hope of saving this one, but while the building and grass remain maybe we have a chance.

LAND AT YORK COTTAGES - we have not dared mention this before, but have you noticed the work going on here? At last, after 8 years of correspondence with Merseyside Improved Houses, they are finally getting on with the work.

SECRETARY'S JOB - How much is the Gateacre Society worth to you? Do you think we are doing a useful and worthwhile service? Does the environment in which you live matter to you? Do you care whether or not we lose our listed houses or if they are altered out of all recognition?

I have been Secretary for 12 years. That is quite long enough (too long some might say) and I am resigning at the A.G.M. in October in order to concentrate on local history. If the Society is to continue there must be someone to type the letters and do the general secretarial work - the job is as big as you make it, with proper delegation it need not be onerous. PLEASE think about this seriously and get in touch with me soon if you would like to have a go.

Sylvia Lewis.

RUFFORD OLD HALL - On Tuesday evening 24th JUNE a visit by coach has been arranged to Rufford. There will be a guided tour of the house and tea & biscuits will be available. This most interesting building, built by the Heskeths in the late 15th century, is a place we all ought to know better. Tickets price £2.85 will be available from the Secretary or from Mrs. J. Cohen, 41 South Station Road, telephone 428-5442.

S.M.L. 12.4.86.

