RAWTENSTALL

Reminiscences of Rawtenstall in 1884

By

Louisa Hamer

Rawtenstall Libraries and Museum Committee 11 Mar 1968 73309 RC 942 RAW

Introduction

The author, Louisa Hamer, is better known to the older generation as Louie (sic) Warburton – a name synonymous with high fashion and Paris millinery in Rawtenstall where she was in business at No. 34 Bank St.

It was about 1930 that Mrs Hamer retired to Lytham where she has lived since, though still closely following the fortunes of her native town; and where as a very active ninety-four year old, she wrote this piece of Rossendale history which was mainly featured in the Rossendale Free Press.

This remarkable lady displays a most retentive memory in so accurately recording the main street of her younger days.

Still leading a stimulating life, she has also directed her talents towards the fine arts which has resulted in a notable collection of paintings, period furniture, ceramics and objets d’arts.

These reminiscences may not aspire to the scholarly expertise of a history text book but they are invaluable sources of fringe information on the social history of a community now often sought by research students but so often neglected by standard historians. For history is about people – all kinds of people.

For this reason it is the policy of the Rawtenstall Library to preserve and make available in the Rossendale Collection, any miscellaneous material which makes a special contribution to local history.

Mrs Hamer’s Reminiscences do just this, not only for their topographical detail, but also for the delicate insight into the way of life, mannerisms, food, clothing etc. of the Rossendale Victorians.

It is interesting to note how the pattern of trade in the shops varied so little for over seventy years.

As Mrs Hamer points out however, today, 1967, is the moment of decision for Bank Street and Rawtenstall as, on one side, the new shopping centre nears completion and on the other, the bulldozer is raising the lower half of the street to the ground, revealing David Whitehead’s Lower Mill in front of which the new main road will pass.

Jon Elliott

Borough Librarian and Curator.

I have chosen 1884 for two reasons which seem important – one that at that time Rawtenstall was really Rawtenstall, served in every way by people born and bred in the Valley, where everybody knew everybody else, where friendliness and good nature abounded and before the tentacles of big multiple firms had forced their way into it, with a population big enough to support them. Except for the smallish shop of Althama no shop was launched except by persons living in the district.

Secondly; near where we lived was a milestone, the next was built in the wall surrounding the schoolyard of Longholme; so that was exactly a mile; and I walked that mile four times a day, every day of the year, holidays excepted for I attended Longholme School.

I was I think an observant child and blessed with a good memory – but that I will leave the readers to judge.

I was eleven years of age; and to those who know the district, they can be forgiven for wondering why, when Constablee was so much nearer, I did not attend there.

I did once but I had a grievance, entirely personal. I could not see then, nor can I yet at 90 years of age see the decency of punishing a good-natured act. I think I am one of many thousands of school-children – especially lads who wished they could, when grown up, have before them a schoolmaster at whose bad temper they had suffered unjustly. At Constablee there were lads whose schooldays were made a misery by a devilish breed that picked out boys for punishment for smiling or nodding at one another; and for myself, it was unfortunate that we were passing slates, (when I had done sums for a lad whose black spot was arithmetic) when the schoolmaster returned to the room.

It was my first and only punishment, but enough, for the following morning, with my right hand still sore and showing the weal marks, I announced to Mother that I was not going to Constablee any more but to Longholme, and my two sisters went off as usual one way and I marched off to Longholme.

I went into the big schoolroom with all the boys and girls, all strangers to me for we lived a mile away, and when in classes I picked what I thought was my own age group and placed myself down in an empty seat.

Mr Dunkin, the Schoolmaster, sat at a raised desk before us. It was dictation and he began, “The trunk of the elephant.”

After the lesson Mr Dunkin called me – “who are you?” – “Louisa Warburton” – “why are you here?” – “I’m coming to this school,” – “where have you been?” – “Constablee.” – “and what have you left for?” – “NOTHING” – “How old are you?” – “Eleven” – “What have you done wrong?” – “NOTHING.”

My contempories (sic) of those days were, Betty Dunkin, Lucy Woodcock, Viva Halstead, Cissy Coupe, Cissy Parkinson, Annie Wild, a nice gentle girl named Tattersall; and a whole lot more. In the lads there were Enoch Taylor, Arthur Horne, Willie Grimshaw, Willie Jefferson, Maden Disley and again a whole lot more, and the first question I ask of readers – is there anyone of these names alive today; if so, I would be happy to hear from them.

And now to Rawtenstall and shopkeepers of that day. We will begin with the Cemetery; where Andrew Clarke was the Superintendent and a very capable and responsible ruler – for even yet his rules still stand. Who can remember the great round bed of pansies, near the big front gates which he told me with pride were “set” to exactly half an inch apart. Often and often my friend Alic Collinge and I, went in to have a chat with him, in that great bow-window. Yes, Andrew Clarke was the right man in the right place. He had a family of fair haired children, all of whom went to Constablee, both school and church.

The Fire-Station was not built in 1884 so we passed on to the little herb shop kept by Alice-Ann Mawdsley where you could get herbs to cure all the ailments of humankind and the tiny counter where I often had a penny glass of sarsaparilla.

Oh! those days when a shilling was worth a ten shilling note today.

Next door to Alice Ann’s was a vetinary (sic) surgeon, then farther down the row was Dr Green occupying two houses with his stable and carriage-house next door where we stepped over hose pipes almost every day when his coachman was washing down.

Then came a little sweet shop next door to the ginnel and after that Bobby Warburton’s shaving, hairdressing and umbrella repairing shop with a barber’s pole over the door, - and most inconvenient stone stairs which went up from the stone pavement to all upper rooms (who remembers it?)

Just round the corner from Bobby’s shop was the excellent photographer Mr Phillipson where, on a triangle of grass, stood his studio. All this was railed off, and next we come to George Cunliffe’s little shop of happy memories. George had a sweet shop and I think tobacco, but the great thing was that he made penny and twopenny pies, and such pies! For his nice young wife made a crust using boiled fat. Today I [buy] pies from various confectioners and invariably say “they are not as good as George Cunliffe’s”. I pay 7d and 8d and get a pie three-quarters of which I leave on my plate. They do not boil their lard to mx with the flour – therefore they are not good enough.

At Christmas what a lovely little window they had, sugar pigs and snowmen leaning against the glass window down which the steam from the frost had run.

George, incidentally, at a later date opened the first chip potato shop in the place but he fried them in their skins – it was some time before we got chip potatoes that were peeled.

Tup bridge then, spanning the dirty river Limmy had low rounded walls so low it is a wonder no one fell over them into the river. But on we go!

The next shop was Sudell and Furness the clothiers, Mrs. Whittaker’s confectionary shop and then an open yard. Jimmy Shannon’s white-tiled shop didn’t come until a later date. Then came the wooden hut where George Cunliffe made his chips. After that one of the jolliest shops anywhere, never tidy, never very clean, all sorts of stuff higgledy-piggledy, but warm, smelly and a happy place to go to, for they made real oat cakes – big oval things for 1d each and 7 for sixpence. Dried on the clothes rack; then with a lump of butter and a nice helping of Cheshire cheese, well! there you were!

The president of this place of business was Billy Shaw, he always wore his hat, it wouldn’t have pleased Ward of Liverpool, but it was just part of Billy. Home made potted mead 7d a pound, and York Ham, also home boiled at 6d a quarter, and lots of other nice things.

Next door there was a grocer, then Willlie Bay’s chemist shop, the Market Place, later used by the Salvation Army, and the nd (sic) shop an off-licence, the proprietor called Walkden. Then came back lane, the first shop being a second furniture shop, then Tom Woodcock with drapery; and beyond (I’m not certain of the order) Mrs. Bailey had a milliners shop. There was also Althams, Berry the port-butcher, Pilkington the grocer and the last shop was a printers and stationers.

By one of the middle shops a Mr. Casson a photographer, had a showcase. He lived and had his studio at the top of the building and you went up Buckfield, up a wooden staircase to an upper landing if you wanted to be photographed. I still have a few of his photographs and very excellent they are.

After the Buckfield, a milliners shop run by Hannah and Sheila Cunliffe and the last shop belonged to two sisters names Swindells and a very nice shop it was. Then came the Bury Waterboard office, (vacated 1967) and following that a monstrous building which could only be excused as being very old and with no anticipation of Rawtenstall becoming even a glorified village.

Cottages built up from the road, and back-to-back with a paved front which was open with their coal houses on the main street. Five stone steps led to the front door. No town surveyors of any age would have allowed this. Some forty years ago these were taken down and a few shops put up, amongst them Mr. Bradshaw’s a well known newsagent.

A clogger’s shop followed another pork shop owned by another Mr. Berry, then comes a coal merchant’s and lastly a milliners shop owned by a Miss. Hindle.

The fine gates leading to Alder Grange (once the home of one of the Whitehead’s) came next and then a nice shop of groceries and farm produce, with a stone bench for loading and uploading.

Next to this was a little wooden hut where Mr. Chadwick made the first chip potatoes that were peeled; and very good they were. At the corner, where now Barclay’s Bank stands, a Mrs. Hoyle (a sister of John Taylor who had the post office) had a millinery business. She had a window for mourning and displayed with black hats were bibles and prayer books – the bible always open. She was a formidable person. The Union Bank bought these premises and installed a Mr. Bott as its Manager.

Kay Street next and the first shop on this side was a hairdressing business run by a Mr. Hollinrake; then a private house owned by a veterinary surgeon who displayed an oval glass globe under which was a golden horse. King’s printers and newsagents came next, then a gentleman’s outfitting business; Lord’s a chemist (vacated by a grandson in 1967) following, Charlie Fenton’s a grocery and confectionary store.

The end shop standing at the corner of Lord Street and Bank Street was a builder’s suppliers. About 1888 this shop was taken by Feeman Hardy & Willis a footwear firm and was the first of the multiple firms in invade Rawtenstall. A Mr. Ewbank was its manager.

The next shop was what I have always considered the best built property in the district a baby linen and children’s outfitting business called Walkden’s. Markland a saddler followed and then Birtwells with a very good-class confectionery business. The post office was next door with half the shop a chemists business kept by John Taylor and his five sons, or was it six? I think six and one daughter.

After that Mr. Heyworth a bespoke tailor who had two sons and was well-known in the Valley. Then came Dick Holt’s ironmongers with an excellent workshop in Ormerod Street, where the work of the Whitehead’s factories was taken in hand, Lower Mill, Higher Mill and New Hall Hey. Frying pans and tins of all descriptions were made here and the great milk pails for farmers. Next a double fronted shop half clog half millinery owned by Hoyle’s; then a boot and shoe shop run by Isaac Hoyle; a drapery shop next door for household linens etc. by Mr. Sutcliffe and last of all the Liberal Club. This last shop was taken by Boot’s the chemists who were the second of the multiple firms to alter Rawtenstall.

Set back from the road came Longholme weekday and Sunday School with the milestone built in the wall; followed by a newspaper shop, again a pie shop and a greengrocers, thought most people will remember this best as Mrs Tregidga’s shop, and last of all Charlie Farrer with tobacco, dickies and ties.

Off Bank Street is Longholme Chapel with three iron posts in the old road to keep it private. The Limy Brook which we pronounced “Bruck” ran down this passage as it came from under the main road after leaving the back of Fold Mill. This was long before Mrs. Fairbourne had the business energy to build her shop and cover the water.

In the premises owned by the Queen’s Hotel stood a little cottage with a barbers pole above the door, a Mrs. Abbot lived there. There the Queen’s Hotel had a handsome pavement, twice the width it is today. Now we are on the corner of Bacup Road and the last shops facing the Wesleyan Chapel parsonage, there were two shops occupied by Mr. Oddie and Mr. Wrigley – then the road to Longholme and the Limy rushing out by Mr Grimshaw’s shop from under the main road, for the last time for at Longholme mill it joined the Irwell and so went on, and on, and became with other waters the Manchester Ship Canal.

Mr Grimshaw’s tailoring business was followed by Tattersall’s piano and musical instruments shop – violins and music scores.

Mr Peter Moore’s private house was followed by a baby linen shop run by the Misses Williams and following that a nice shop run by Mr Peters. I cannot recall the owner of the corner ship, but Mr. Horne sold hardware just around the corner. Then a men’s outfitters and barber’s shop. Next to this shop was the Conservative Club and round the corner we come to Queen’s Terrace, the best of any residential houses in Rawtenstall. They face a plot of grass land that reached to a Pointsman’s Box at the Railway Station.

No Co-op shop, no cinema not anything opposite those few nice houses known as Queen’s Terrace.

By the railway station was Mr. Schofield’s house with its grand glass houses and from his garden a triangle of land to Haslingden Road corner. This with Haslingden Road was surrounded by a low wall and the first house was Greystone (so long occupied by Dr. Finlay), a Dr. Whitehead was there then.

Opposite was Haslingden Road Chapel and I wish I know the rift that must have occurred between the powers that be of Longhome and David Whitehead to make him copy Longhome as near as he could with the land available and spend thousands of pounds to put up a chapel that was neither needed or served any useful purpose.

After the Chapel came St. Mary’s Vicarage and following that Harlings stone mason’s yard at the bottom of Schofield Road.

The plot of land opposite St. Mary’s Terrace was common land and lads played on it.

Later a circus came and stayed for two years with “Jack-a-way” jumping on a bare backed horse and a fairly – only fairly - witty clown.

I would like to mention here the good looking wall that surrounds St. Mary’s churchyard. In 1884 a very common poor looking wall was in use and Mr. Neild, who married a Miss Brown from the Ram’s Head Hotel designed the present one.

After St. Mary’s came the good looking building known as the lodge for Holly Mount later taken over by the Burnley Building Society. I keep going over the life of David Whitehead and his brothers. Money must have rained on them when you look at Lower Mill, Higher Mill and the great towering Ilex which they built, and three fine houses known as Holly Mount, Ashday Lea and Greystones: Haslingden Road Chapel, remembering how the three brothers slaved at the little Balladen Mill working night and day, and all day Sunday to put in order an engine that was needed to run the mill. And what of the brother who walked twice a week to Manchester to the Exchange to sell their cotton when it was ready for the market?

David Whitehead later married a Miss Mary Wood a farmer’s daughter, and they had a large family.

He made time to write and keep a diary of which I have a copy. In their day and generation the Whitehead brothers were the making of Rawtenstall, and of all the people I would like to meet in the next life David Whitehead and Mary Wood are amongst them.

After Holly Mount came Holly Mount School. I never knew this in use but a very nice man named Box was the last schoolmaster. Then the passage to the Fold (a topic of so much speculation in those days) where at the corner, Tom Gornall had a grocer’s shop, next came Miss Jefferson’s lock up shop used as a milliners. Next to the milliner’s was a select bespoke tailor’s shop with Mr. Wilkinson as proprietor; next some nice old fashioned people named Bridge with an elderly unmarried daughter, they sold greengrocery and they also made splendid big teacakes the size of which could not have shown a profit.

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Â son in law Mr. Shadlock, sold meat pies some evenings in the week; and I remember well the little red curtain drawn across the back. The pies were excellent.

The next shop was that of Tommy Coupe, watchmaker and jeweller; then Wardleworth’s with books and stationery; a well-read and informed man who sold Dickens, Thackeray, Trollope and Lytton and many besides. In the Valley he was a noted man.

Then Harry Riley had his Ironmongery business; and a noted man in a different way was Harry. A butcher’s shop came next under the name of Ramsbottom and I remember them well because they had a daughter who taught me how to make a rich plum cake.

Following Harry Riley’s was Mark Whittaker another jeweller; and I was greatly surprised to see at St John’s Vicarage here a fine grandfather clock with Mark Whittaker’s, Rawtenstall on the front. Next door was Halstead’s Chemist shop with the Standard Boot Company on the corner. Then we had Lord Street West, and the Manchester and County Bank with Benjamin Gregory as bank manager. It might interest a few to know they are all buried here at Lytham in St. Cuthbert’s churchyard – Ben Gregory, his wife and Gertie.

But what a business the bank did. They had no competition and sovereigns were piled up like golden towers on the counter. The Bank still stands but has another name (District) and there is much competition for accounts.

In the year 1884 an eating house came next and then Ed Riley with a Hardware shop. My family and I occupied this shop eventually for forty-two years.

Set back of the street came the Unitarian Chapel and adjoining the entrance, Dr. Edward’s house and surgery. A busy little shop of general drapery owned by Mr and Mrs Ashworth followed, then Jackson’s butchers with a slaughter house behind.

A piano and music shop came next this was run by Mr. Ashworth who was organist at the Church services at Constablee later taking Holy Orders and being appointed vicar of the Chapel-on-le-Firth. I will speak of him later.

Alex Cordingley followed with his plumbing business and following him Mr. Thomson with tailoring. Of the next few shops I am hazy, I know the one next to the steps leading up to what was then Mr Stocks, the dentist’s house, the next one was a clogger’s shop but, either they failed to interest me or they were always changing.

Then came another milliner’s shop and next door a hardware shop. We are now on the site of Jubliee Buildings, built by Brown’s of the Rams Head Hotel, commencing in 1887 the year of Queen Victoria’s first jubilee.

At this time a great hoarding stretched from the hardware shop to Barnes the greengrocers; and what were the advertisements of those days? There was Colman’s mustard with the head of an enormous bull, Epps cocoa, Hornimans tea, Singer sewing machings, Fry’s chocolate, Hudson’s dry soap and sundry farm sales etc.

We had no theatre no picture house, no dance hall no public library, no trams, no taxis.

Barnes’ shop came next and then Mrs. Schofield’s household drapery store stood at the end of Ormerod Street. Killingbecks confectioners were on the other corner with Edwin Smith in his grocery shop next. Then came a pork butchers and Faber’s little sweets and pie shop. Next we had a stocking shop on the corner and Lawrence Woodcock’s saddlery shop. A way led down to the Fold and the big Co-operative building stood by itself. Quite a bit of entertainment was given in the Co-op Hall.

The first shop sold ladies and gent’s clothing; then Tom Hidders drapery shop, followed by a trip shop and at the corner of Barlow Street a grocery business owned by Mr. Scales, a very superior business man.

After Barlow Street Mrs. L. Metcalf had a picture framing and gift shop and I well remember going there one Saturday morning with my youngest sister to buy a birthday present for Walter Mitchell. Our joint resources were twelve pennies and we selected a pretty money box with a pink rose on the top and a key to lock it. The price was a shilling and I have never forgotten that Mr. Metcalf gave us each a penny back.

We felt rich.

After Mr. Metcalf’s shop came a glass and china ship run by a Mrs Shepherd, with piles of yellow mugs of all sizes with bread mugs to hold six or twelve loafs (sic) at the door. Then came the smithy the front of which was used by Burnley Butchers on Friday’s and Saturday’s: adjoining this was the White Horse.

Here is a little tale of Teddy the odd job man of the White Horse. One Sunday morning he was really upset, “They’ve had our cowheels that’s cod they’ve had, and stuffed up fire grat we’um – they’ve don id to plague me,”. And poor Teddy had to go back to the midden to gather up the cow heel bones for they were asbestos pieces for a gas fire newly installed.

Two iron stoops stood in the pathway to the Fold and no wooden hut was there then. Next we came to the shop so long occupied by Mr. Stansfield; an awning was erected from the shop door to the pavement.

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Next was Thorn Hill and the old Bishop Blaize at the road side; and next to that the loveliest little shop in Rawtenstall – Mr. Hargeraves’s shop glittering like a new penny, the window full of penny cakes – Eccles cakes, school buns, coconut buns, jam puffin (real puff paste) and penny pies followed by lovely tea cakes, with or without currants, seven for sixpence. Shelves facing the counter were filled with sweets. There were sticks of colsfoot rook, jujubes, Spanish cakes, cough toffees, humbugs and peppermints. The other windows had bread and oat cakes in it and Keiller’s marmalade and pickled onions on the shelves.

The last time I went to this lovely small shop Mrs. Hargreaves was behind the counter wearing a gown of black silk and a black apron trimmed with York lace and a small white lace cap on her head.

After Mr. Hargreaves shop there was a great opening to the stables and busses of Mr. Roberts who ran two to Haslingden, Crawshawbooth and Bacup a day.

Beyond there was nothing of note. The old cornmill stood back from the road and opposite the Cemetery Mr. Kenyon kept a really good and prosperous grocer’s shop.

That completes the shops and the shopkeepers at that time. We were well catered for. Milk was 1½ d a pint, 2½d a quart: eggs a penny each, sirloin 8d or 9d a lb.: brisket 4d or 5d and potted meat was 2d a quarter. A household today earning £30 is not as well of as we were with £5.

For entertainment well the Sunday Schools were “Tops” – bazaars, sales of work, bring and buy’s, American Teas, At home and amateur operatic societies.

Rawtenstall Fair was held at the end of June and here let me tell you of my last visit there.

I was eleven years old and I was happy and enthralled. I was alone. I liked to be alone, but I had a rasping time; once on the dry land sailors and once on the swings, twice on the hobby horse; with a quarter of a pound of snaps and half a pound of nuts, and I still had fourpence out of the bright shining shilling my Mother had given me.

I stood before the ‘great show’ where a fine buxom lass was singing. An orchestra of two blared away on big brass instruments, some old band had thrown away. Today I would love to stand by Fred Tomlinson of the Male Voice Choir and hear him say in his quiet voice, “what is it they are playing”. For it certainly was not an accompaniment, but they blared away and the girl kept on singing:-

“Oh! Harry, Yes Harry,

There you are then Harry,

Oh! I say Harry by jove you are a bon,

Oh! Harry yes Harry,

There you are Harry,

There you are the Harry

Oh! Where you’re going on Sunday Harry now

You’ve got ‘EM’ on.”

She wore white silk tights, beautiful high shoes with little golden tassles; a black velvet bodice, a beautiful Duchess of Devonshire hat with three white feathers, lots of spangles on her bodice and grand looking white kid gloves with deep gauntlets. She kept on singing in spite of the orchestra, and slapped her leg with a fancy came on now and again.

A great board of scarlet and gold was at the top of the splendid front with ‘Baileys’ on it, and the people were thronging up the wooden steps to go to the show. I looked at the fourpence that I had left but I said “No” to myself. I had other notions for that money, so I stepped off passed (sic) all the stall of coconuts, and snaps and different kinds of nuts; I passed the blown up balloons and got outside Tup-Meadow; now passed the horse trough opposite the Rams Head Hotel and up the white stone steps of George Cunliffe’s. I passed the little counter at the door, sat down on a well scrubbed form and gave my order with pride, “a twopenny pie and a bottle of pop.”

Dear readers, in a long lifetime I have given many orders to waiters of many nationalities but never have I felt so proud as I did that day. A twopenny pie was a proper order, you weren’t bothered thinking (as you did with a penny one) that you were giving a lot of trouble – dirty saucer, dirty spoon! No, a twopenny pie and a bottle of pop was a right and proper order!

I looked at the fireplace as bright and shiny as silver with the topping fire and I felt glad I had not paid 4d to go into the show.

I still had a penny left, and I asked at the little counter for a pennyworth of Fry’s chocolate cream. There were four bars, and I stepped out to walk the mile home, I felt happy and free, for I had no more money to bother about or what to get for it.

There is a quiet sort of happiness when contentment is yours in what you possess, and no money is left – it just doesn’t matter. As my Mother so often said, “Be content with what you have.” So I age my share of the chocolate, and left the remaining three for my Mother and my two sisters who always went to the Fair together.

Life for me was changing, my twelfth birthday was here. A new school-master came to Constablee, a Mr. J. S. Ashworth mentioned before.

As at Longholme I was unannounced, and quiet Mr. Ashworth looked puzzled when I said it was my own school. However, even in those days not much notice was taken of a child of twelve in those days.

Looking back over the years I see myself as a very ordinary child, standing alone in the fairground looking with delight at the colour, the singing girl, the sense of company and holiday.

I was born in Rawtenstall as were my three sisters and my brother, and if I were to give my opinion of the chief characteristic of Rossendalians, I would say it was self-reliance.

In the years that followed I needed all I could muster, but as nobody ever whined or retold their troubles I followed suit.

This record is primarily for the older people near my age, who remember our Rawtenstall a place to be proud of. For wherever I go, whatever sort of company I find myself in, I am proud to say, “I come from the Rossendale Valley – a small place named Rawtenstall.” Some look perplexed and will say, “O thought you came from Leicester or Gloucester,” and again I pipe up with “Oh! nothing so ordinary.”

Of all the counties of England I prefer Lancashire. And now reading Arthur Bryant’s splendid book on “The story of England” it is wonderful to read of Lancashire’s rightful place.

And now about the changes in Rawtenstall to meet the demands of the colossus motor transport which knocks everything aside. Old houses, old shops, all with very primitive hygiene ought to come down, in the natural way of change – increasing populations demand this and if you could see Plymouth in the south, you would with everybody else approve and admire. It is splendid – the sacrifices made individually are not indicated, but, along with these changes the new roads for motoring are really grand.

What a lot we elderly people have to endure during these last 60 years. There has been no rest. And the future will be worse; and let me state here that the one man shop even if out of the main upheaval will be punished, for the future is for the great multiple firms when30 shops are rolled into one big store. They are the only ones who can stand up to staggering rents; and they will succeed because they will throttle the little man by reducing prices to such an extent that the little man cannot compete.

It isn’t one man’s money that supports these giants of trade, it is the money of many investors; and only a few half-yearly balance sheets announcing that your directors have decided unwilling that, the profits of the last half year are to be devoted to the reserve fund. A period of this, and dozens of little one-man and an-assistant shops will quietly shut down. That’s how it works – it is murder that no law can deal with this along with youngsters swaying like primitive dancers in Africa to this awful noise. We who are old and on the break of another world can be grateful.

Will religion die out? No, I don’t think so, like the few early Britons who were punished into the Welsh Hills, that Arthur Bryant writes of; and who had heard of a loving God, it will survive. The cruel future will be handled by humans who will get all they can out of the fight, and things will adjust themselves. But religion will survive because humankind cannot live without it.

So now I come to the end of my talk, many will remember me and say, “I just remember Killinbecks’s or….”

But we all can exclaim with Charles Lamb

“All, all, are gone the old familiar faces.”

or to put it to our present needs “All, all are gone the old familiar places.”

And again to those nearing 90 years the beautiful sad words of Tom Moore, the Irish poet.

“And such is the fate of our Life’s early promise

So fleeting the day-dreams of joys we have known,

Each wave that we danced on at morning ebbs from us,

And leaves us at Eve on the bleak shore alone.”

Louisa Hamer

16 Beech Street

Lytham

St Annes