



# PRESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PROMOTING LOCAL HISTORY ACROSS NINE DECADES

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## Resistance to the Second Vatican Council:

### The unauthorised mass centres of Lancashire in the 1970s

By Brandon Reece Taylorian

On the evening of 8th October 1975, journalists, Darryl Freedman and David Graham, tentatively drove their car down a dark and winding driveway of a large house on Longmeanygate on the outskirts of Leyland. As they pulled up to the house, Derrick Taylor appeared to greet them, alongside his wife Irene, several of their children and a charismatic priest named Peter Morgan. That night, Freedman and Graham witnessed Father Morgan celebrate Mass in the Tridentine Rite in the makeshift chapel that Mr. and Mrs. Taylor had constructed in their kitchen. Several families attended the Mass who shared the view that the change to celebrate Mass in the vernacular, rather than in Latin, decreed by the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), was wrong. The following day, details of Mr. and Mrs. Taylor's house chapel and the comments made during their interviews were featured on the front page of the Lancashire Evening Post, with the couple labelled as 'rebels'.

At the time the article was published, Mr. and Mrs. Taylor's house was the only Mass centre affiliated with the St Pius V Association in the North of England. They had first opened their home for Masses in April 1974, although, some temporary or one-offs and others more stable and consistent were established across England, but concentrated in the south, with a few in Scotland and one in Ireland. Some Mass centres also appeared in Lancashire, although their history is often forgotten. At this time, the St Pius V Association was the British branch of the Society of St Pius X (SSPX), founded by Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre in Switzerland in 1970.



The movement of traditionalist Catholics and priests continuing to celebrate Masses in the Tridentine Rite received greater media coverage following the refusal of parish priest Oswald Baker of Downham Market to celebrate the *Novus Ordo*, the form of the Mass first promulgated by Pope Paul VI in 1970. The front-page article featuring the Taylor family

*Continued on page 2*

## About PHS

Since 1948 the aim of the Society has been to promote the study of local history in Preston and Lancashire. Talks are held in the Central Methodist Church, Lune Street. The annual member subscription is £20. Visitors pay £5 per talk. There are eight talks in each season.

## Contact PHS

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brought attention to the movement in Lancashire, leading to more Mass centres appearing across the county: St Anne's (December 1975), Oldham (February 1976), from March 1976, the Friendship Social Club on Lord's Walk in Preston and, from August 1976, St Wilfrid's House, Bury. In December 1976, the Preston congregation moved to the former Unitarian chapel on Percy Street, consecrated to Our Lady and St John the Baptist. In the years they ran their Mass centre, Mr. and Mrs. Taylor offered lodgings to priests, but, by June 1978, the priests were housed at Charlton Beaches in Walton-le-Dale, travelling from there to the larger Mass centres in Liverpool and Manchester. In October 1976, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales responded by publishing its 'Statement on Unauthorised Mass Centres', asking those running the centres:

*“Are you in union with your bishop, the bishops of the whole Church and the Pope or are you not?”*

Although Father Morgan relied on lay members offering their homes as chapels, his successor in 1978, the priest Edward Black, was less tolerant of Mass centres in private residences. Father Black sought to bring directly under his purview the various congregations established across Britain by closing the Mass centres and establishing *bona fide* SSPX churches. For example, in Preston, in July 1985, the SSPX purchased the chapel of the former Holy Child Convent on Winckley Square, consecrated the following year to Our Lady of Victories by Archbishop Lefebvre.

In 1988, following growing tensions with the Vatican, Archbishop Lefebvre, with Bishop Antônio de Castro Mayer, consecrated four priests of the SSPX as bishops in Écône, Switzerland, without papal approval. The next day, Lefebvre, Mayer and the four bishops incurred automatic excommunication as a result of their 'schismatic act.' The chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Victories still operates under the SSPX today, quietly tucked away behind a cluster of terraced houses and student accommodation on East Cliff. The church has become a symbol of the presence of a traditionalist Catholic community in Lancashire ever since Mr. and Mrs. Taylor first opened their home to host Tridentine Masses fifty years ago.

*An extended version of this article can be found on the website of the Preston Historical Society. It focuses on the personal story of Mr. and Mrs. Taylor and why they became traditionalist Catholics, including Mr. Taylor's claim that he experienced an interior locution in St Wilfrid's Church in Preston in 1971 that motivated him to offer his home at Leyland as a Mass centre.*

# Preston Historical Society & Lancashire Archives

## Summer Workshops

Join us to explore and delve into the 900 years of amazing collections held at Bow Lane in Preston. You do not need any prior knowledge of using an archive service or Lancashire Archives & Local History, as you will be guided by experienced members of staff, who will introduce you to the collections and facilitate engaging and interactive workshops.

The workshops are:

### Tues 3 June

Diaries and journals with particular reference to John Dalton, esq of Preston and Thurnham Hall.

### Wed 11 June

Researching the Built Environment with Preston Building Plans.

### Tues 8 July

Once in Every Guild: Exploring Preston Guild Records.

### Wed 16 July

The Road to the Workhouse: Preston Poor Law Guardians' records.

### Tues 5 August

County Mental Asylum records with particular reference to Whittingham Asylum.

All the above workshops take place at Lancashire Archives & Local History on Bow Lane, from

6.30pm - 8pm

To book a FREE place as a PHS member contact: [patricia@prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk](mailto:patricia@prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk)

You need to book by 17 May after that time the workshops will be open to non-members at £5 each workshop. Non-members can book any remaining spaces after 17 May directly with Lancashire Archives on 01772 533039

# Society Information and Events

## Cubs' Walk 2.0

After the success of the first cubs' walk with the 1st Goosnargh cub pack (see issue 30), committee members, Stewart Turner and Judi Castley, with help from society member Nicholas Serpa, repeated this walk for Ribbleton Scout Group. The aim of the walk, as before, was to give the cubs an understanding of the importance of cotton manufacture to the history of Preston, and of the importance of coal and transport to the cotton industry, whilst at the same time explaining what it might have been like to be a child in Victorian Preston. Imagine was the watchword of the day because most of the buildings and structures talked about have long since disappeared.

The walk followed the tram road and its route beyond the old tram bridge over the Ribble up to the site of the canal basin and railway coal yards where Ringway now crosses Corporation Street, with diversions up Mount Street, Winckley Square, and Fishergate.

*Preston Historical Society would like to thank the cubs and the adults who accompanied them for making the experience so enjoyable.*



A group photograph at the start of the walk (with thanks to Julia Worden for this great image)

## PHS Programme Of Talks 2025/26

The new season of eight talks has an exciting programme included in the membership fee of £20. Visitors pay £5 each talk. Talks take place on the 2nd Monday of the month between September to May (excluding January).

<b>8 September 2025</b>	<i>The 'Paupers' Rebellion' of 1858: Poor relief, industrial distress and the labour test in mid C19th Preston</i>	<b>Dr. Lewis Darwen</b>
<b>13 October 2025</b>	<i>The 'Battle of Bamber Bridge' 1943</i>	<b>Prof. Alan Rice</b>
<b>10 November 2025</b>	<i>Cornelia Connelly: Blissful Bride to Notorious Nun</i>	<b>Judy Beeston</b>
<b>8 December 2025</b>	<i>Strawberries and Villas – the development of a freehold land society estate in mid-Victorian Ashton-on-Ribble</i>	<b>Sue Latimer</b>
<b>9 February 2026</b>	<i>Plague and hunger: mortality in the Preston area 1590-1650</i>	<b>Dr. Alan Crosby</b>
<b>9 March 2026</b>	<i>Beatrice Blackhurst's Scrapbook – leisure, voluntary action and social change in Preston in the early C20th</i>	<b>Helen Howell</b>
<b>13 April 2026</b>	<i>Preston and its region in the Domesday Book and beyond</i>	<b>Prof. Fiona Edmonds</b>
<b>11 May 2026</b>	<i>That's entertainment! The rise and fall of Preston's Guild Hall</i>	<b>Michael Akers</b>

Talks start at **7.15pm** and end at **8.30pm**. Doors open from **6.30pm** so members and visitors can meet friends in the **Olive Grove Coffee Shop, Central Methodist Church, Lune Street Preston PR1 2NL**.

*New members and visitors are very welcome*

Membership enquiries: [patricia@prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk](mailto:patricia@prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk)

# The Birth of Lancashire

## Part 3 – Death and Taxes in Preston and Penwortham - The Conqueror's audit

By Stewart Turner

In Part 1 we saw how King Ecgrith of Northumbria made colonising forays into what is now Lancashire north of the Ribble, and that, at the time, Bishop Wilfrid's biographer recorded no place names. Four hundred years later, after a succession of invasions, in 1086-87, William the Conqueror ordered an audit of his possessions, popularly known as the Domesday Book\*, and we see a totally different picture. The spellings opposite may have been different (they are in their modern form for ease of recognition) but the 'vills'\*\* around Preston have hardly changed in nearly a thousand years.

The most obvious thing to note is that Lancashire did not yet officially exist. North of the Ribble was in Yorkshire (Northumbria), and to the south was Cheshire (Mercia) echoing the situation in Wilfrid's time.

We can also see that the Manor of Preston was, by far, the largest possession, spreading over virtually all of Amounderness. In comparison, Lancaster (not shown) had only 4 vills with 12 carucates of productive land in total.

The key to this transformation was the inclusion of Amounderness in the nascent English kingdom by Aethelstan in 926 (see Part 2 'The Vikings are Coming'). In the intervening 140 years the land between the Mersey and the Ribble had become colonised by settlers from Mercia, and from north and east of the Ribble by Northumbrians. This is why, until 1066, Preston was owned by Earl Tostig, Earl of Northumbria, and Penwortham, according to the Domesday Book, was owned by King Edward (the Confessor) #. What this land audit does show is a Lancashire as far north as the river Wyre which is recognisable today. Lancaster's days of pre-eminence were yet to come.

\* **Domesday** – the day of judgement, because there are two things certain in this world – death and taxes.

\*\* 'vill' is the term generally used by historians for an early medieval settlement.

#William the Conqueror refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of Harold Godwinson as king

The following is taken from '*DOMESDAY, A Complete Translation*', by Professor G. H. Martin, 2002. Text in [square brackets] is modern clarification. The endings of placenames give us a clue to the origin of settlements :those ending in 'ham', 'ing', and 'ton' being Anglo-Saxon in origin, whilst those ending in 'by' are Norse.

## YORKSHIRE [Northumbria]

### AMOUNDERNESS

In **PRESTUNE** [PRESTON], Earl Tostig, 6 carucates to the geld. These lands belong there:

**Ashton**, 2 carucates\*; **Lea Town**, 1; **Salwick**, 1; **Clifton**, 2; **Newton** [in Kirkham], 2; **Freckleton**, 4; **Ribby**, 6; Kirkham, 4; **Treales**, 2; Westby, 2; [Great and Little] **Plumpton**, 2; **Weeton**, 3; **Preese**, 2, **Warton** [in Kirkham], 4; **Lytham**, 2; [Great & Little] **Marston** [in Poulton-Le-Fylde], 6; **Layton** [Layton & Little Drayton], 6; **Staining**, 6; **Carleton** [Carlton & Little Carlton], 4; **Bispham**, 8; **Rossall**, 2; **Burn**, 2; **Thornton** [Little Thornton], 6; **Poulton** [Le-Fylde & Little Poulton], 2; **Singleton** [Little Singleton] 6, **Greenhalgh**, 3; **Great Eccleston**, 4; **Little Eccleston**, 2; **Elswick**, 3; Inskip, 2; Sowerby [in St Michaels on Wyre], 1; "Aschebi", 1; St Michaels on Wyre, 2; Ribchester, 1; **Catterall**, 2; **Claughton** [in Garstang], 2; **Newsham**, 1; **Woodplumpton**, 5; **Broughton**, 1; **Whittingham**, 2 **Barton** [in Preston], 3; Goosnargh, 1; **Haighton**, 1; 'Threlfall' [in Kirkham], 1; **Wheatley**, 1; **Chipping**, 3; 'Aighton' [in Mitton], 1; Fishwick, 1; Grimsargh, 2; Ribchester, 2; Dilworth, 2; **Swainshead** [Lower Swainshead], 1; **Forton**, 1; [Great & Little] **Crimbles**, 1; **Garstang**, 6; 'Upper Rawcliffe' [in St Michaels on Wyre], 2; another Rawcliffe, 2; a third Rawcliffe [Out Rawcliffe], 3; **Hambleton**, 2; **Stalmine**, 4; **Preesall**, 6; **Mythop**, 1.

All these vills and 3 churches belong to Preston. Of these vills, 16 are inhabited by a few people, but it is not known how many the inhabitants are. The rest are waste. Roger de Poitou had them. [...]

\*Carucate – (from Latin *caruca*, a plough) a ploughland: notionally the area which could be ploughed with an eight-ox team. Used in the North and East as a unit of assessment to tax. The numbers following each name is the number of carucates of productive/taxable land recorded for that vill.

## CHESHIRE [Mercia]

### IN LAILAND [LEYLAND] HUNDRED

King Edward held **PENEUERDANT** [PENWORTHAM]. There are 2 carucates of land and they rendered 10d. Now there is a castle, and there are 2 ploughs in demesne^; and 6 burgesses and 3 radmen@ and 8 villans and 4 oxmen. Among them all they have 4 ploughs. There is half a fishery. [There is] woodland, and eyries of hawks as **TRE** (The reign of Edward). It is worth £3.

^Demesne (Latin dominium; Old French adj. *demeigne*, owned). Landin Lordship whose produce is devoted to the Lord rather than his tenants.

@ Radman (Old English *radcniht*, riding servant. From Old English *rad*, road). A retainer who performed specific services, including that of riding escort to his Lord.