



PRESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

September 2026 | Issue 35

PROMOTING LOCAL HISTORY ACROSS NINE DECADES

A Word from the Chair

Welcome to all our members, longstanding and new, as we begin an exciting new season with a programme we hope will interest, surprise and inspire you.

The summer provided a wonderful reminder of just how much enthusiasm there is for Preston's history. **At Home in Preston: Heritage Day** was a tremendous success, jointly organised by FoWS and PHS in collaboration with The Harris and Lancashire Archives. It brought together people from across the region to explore and celebrate the remarkable history on our doorstep.

Our summer workshops, another collaboration with **Lancashire Archives and Local History**, were equally popular, with every session full. Our thanks go to Gill Coward (PHS organiser) Alex Miller and his staff Vicci McCann, Kate Newman and Lee Sanderson for their excellent presentations, which inspired members to explore local and family history further.

In this issue, Janet Rigby continues her series on Preston's colourful eccentrics with **Old Betty Redhead: The Terror of Mount Street**. Drawing on James Myers' 1881 reminiscences and the Preston Herald and Preston Chronicle, Janet brings this extraordinary and notorious character vividly back to life.

Filling the Void: The Harris Giant Plaster Casts by Michael Akers takes us back to the opening years of The Harris, when its vast galleries presented a rather unusual problem: how could they fill such an enormous space? It is a fascinating story of civic ambition, Victorian ingenuity and Preston's desire to share in the cultural sophistication of Renaissance Florence.

An article I received in the spring introduced me to **The Hunt Brothers who made Sporting History**. Thanks to Phil Hill, and his extensive research for *The Lives of England's Rugby Players 1871–1899*, we can now share their fascinating story with you.

I hope you enjoy another year of discovering the people, places and stories that make Preston's history so endlessly fascinating.

Patricia Harrison

Chair of Preston Historical Society Committee

Remembering two Long Standing Members and Dear Friends

It is with great sadness we learned about the recent deaths of Andrew and Sue. We extend our sincere condolences to both families and loved ones. They will be remembered by the Society with great affection.

Andrew Mather (1938 - 2026)

PHS Past President and Champion of Preston's History died on 30 July. Although Andrew had been unwell for some time, his death still came as a great shock. He had been part of PHS for many years and made an important and lasting contribution to the Society and its work.

Andrew brought to PHS a wealth of knowledge and experience, particularly in printing, publishing and the visual arts. He gave his time and expertise generously, always willing to advise, contribute ideas and help ensure that the Society presented Preston's history to the highest possible standard. His knowledge, creativity and attention to detail were greatly valued, as were his friendship, encouragement and support for fellow members.

Andrew shared our passion for preserving and promoting Preston's history. Perhaps his most significant heritage achievement was the 1916–2016 Preston Pals War Memorial project, of which he was the driving force. The project was Andrew's brainchild and, when the charity was established in March 2010, he became its first President and one of seven founding Trustees. His vision and determination helped create a lasting memorial to the Preston Pals and ensured their sacrifice would continue to be remembered.

Mary Susan Turner née Parson (1950 - 2026)

Sue died on 16 July surrounded by her family. She was born in Dublin, the eldest of six children, before her family moved to Lancashire, first to Penwortham and later Longton. After boarding school, she followed her father into dentistry.

In 1973, Sue married Mike Turner and settled in Fulwood, later giving up dentistry to raise their four children, Sam, Amy, Tom and Lucy. She subsequently trained as a counsellor and spent over twenty years supporting women at Women's Centres in Chorley and Preston.

Sue and Mike loved travelling, exploring Europe and countries including India, Australia, Vietnam and Burma, where her father had grown up.

Creative and practical, Sue was an accomplished artist and keen sewer, equally at home restoring furniture or tackling DIY. She loved her beautiful garden, which provided the setting for many memorable gatherings. She was also musical, playing the clarinet, singing in a choir and enjoying regular visits to theatres and concerts.

Sue embraced Preston's cultural and heritage life. She was a PHS member and served on the committee of the Friends of the Harris.

A caring friend and much-loved wife, mother, grandmother and sister, Sue will be remembered with great affection and greatly missed.



Andrew with his beloved Mr D'Arcy
Peter Wilkinson



FILLING THE VOID: THE HARRIS GIANT PLASTER CASTS

by Michael Akers

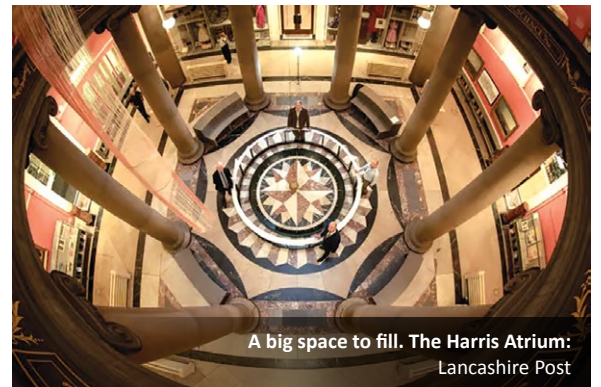
The first stone of what became The Harris Museum, Art Gallery and Library was laid in 1882, the ceremony forming part of the Guild celebrations of that year. A decade later and, thanks to the generosity of wealthy local lawyer Edmund Harris, Preston had a huge landmark building. Then, as now, a spectacular atrium rose through the building's heart with spacious galleries accessed via sweeping grand staircases. The Harris was undoubtedly a prestigious cultural showpiece, designed to proclaim Preston's growing status as a centre of industry, prosperity and human endeavour. But once this magnificent building had been created, there remained one rather important question: **what should they put in it?**

As a start, the directors of The Harris acquired the artefacts and books including Dr Shepherd's Library held by the Literary and Philosophical Institution in Winckley Square. The considerable bequests of books and paintings made by some of Preston's cultured elite also helped, but this still left the challenge of filling the enormous void in the central core of the new building. The directors needed to think big and bold, so they turned to full-sized replicas of giant sculptures from 15th-century Florence.

WHY PRESTON LOOKED TO RENAISSANCE FLORENCE

From this distance in time, the choice of copies of five-hundred-year-old treasures from Renaissance Italy may seem a little random. When 'The Harris' re-opened last year, the big draw was a new display of Nick Park's Wallace and Gromit creations, unarguably a perfect fit and unqualified success. In late Victorian Preston however, a tangible link with distant Florence also made perfect sense as the town's civic luminaries saw clear parallels with their own thriving industrial metropolis. Florence had grown rich through a powerful textile industry, which manufactured high-quality cloth from imported raw wool. The comparison with Preston's own textile trade was obvious.

Florentine merchants and bankers grew rich from exporting the finished product across Europe. Immensely proud of their success, they had decorated their city with groundbreaking architecture and inspirational artwork; the western world had seen nothing like it. This unprecedented patronage of the arts sparked the Renaissance, the movement of ideas, science and art which ultimately transformed Europe. For Preston's prosperous 19th-century merchants, factory owners and civic leaders, Florence wasn't just a commercial role model, they wanted some of that city's cultural sophistication. Preston was looking forward, not backwards.



A big space to fill. The Harris Atrium:
Lancashire Post

BORROWING PRESTIGE THROUGH ART AND ARCHITECTURE

Preston's municipal leaders certainly weren't alone in trying to acquire validation and prestige through a veneer of culture. Victorians looking to enhance civic pride through building projects often referenced the Italian Renaissance. A vogue for ornamenting everything from town halls, banks, grand houses and even factory chimneys in an 'Italianate style' flourished. And, just as the upper echelons of Florentine commercial society had commissioned public art to demonstrate status, so too the Victorians. Patronage of the arts, and an appreciation of the great art of the past was a means to announce a town's wealth, sophistication, and progress. That said, bringing world famous Renaissance treasures to Preston was clearly out of the question. Or was it? Where there's a will, technology will find a way.

THE RISE OF THE REPLICAS

In 1873, London's South Kensington Museum (now the Victoria and Albert Museum) opened their new 'Cast Courts'. These housed an astonishing collection of full-sized casts of original art works. Under one London roof visitors could now fully appreciate previously inaccessible architectural and sculptural masterpieces from across the world and time.

From Trajan's Column in Rome, to the pulpit of Pisa Cathedral, these replicas were accurate in every detail and an immediate hit with an awe struck public. Such high-quality life-sized reproductions had until recently been unthinkable, but some rapid advances in the complicated process of plaster casting had created a mini museum revolution. Huge demand, industrial scale output and the development of a railway network saw replicas begin to take centre stage in Europe's premier museums. That these were 'just' copies mattered not to the Victorians. For academics, artists and the public, this was the first time many could get close-up access to the greatest art from past civilisations without the need for expensive foreign travel.



The Western Cast Court (Room 46b) part of the collection of plaster cast replicas at the V&A Museum, London: Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

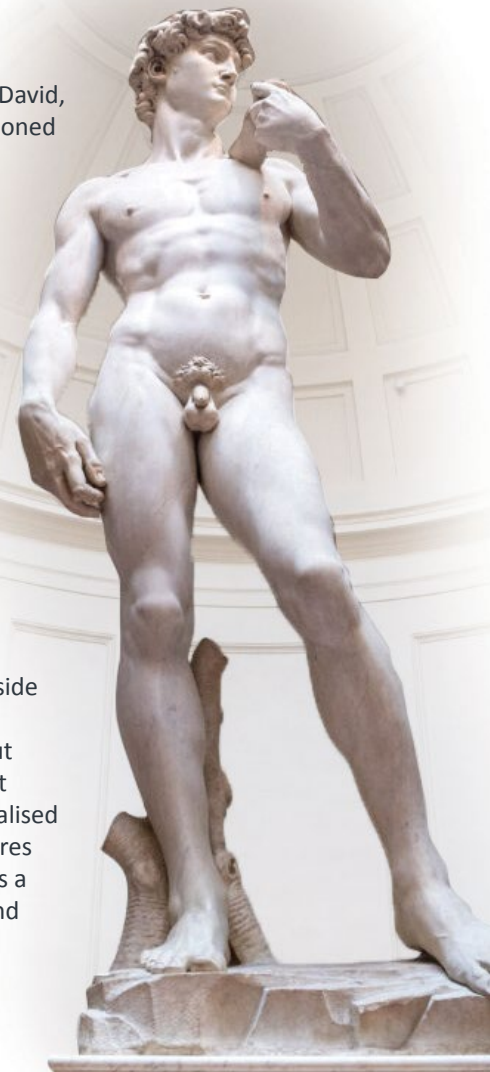
A GIANT STATUE FOR PRESTON'S GRAND ATRIUM

Michelangelo's colossal statue of David, completed in 1504, was commissioned by the Guild of Wool to stand on the roof of Florence Cathedral, hence the oversized head and hands. Instead, the finished David was erected in the Palazzo della Signoria where everyone could see it. As the conqueror of the giant warrior Goliath in the Old Testament, Biblical David might well be the archetypal underdog, but his statue is top dog.

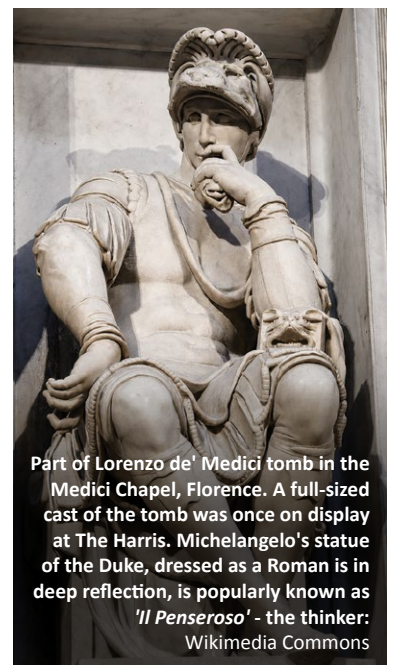
David was a popular symbol in Renaissance Florence because he, like they, had triumphed against the odds. Prior to battling with Goliath, David had thrown aside his armour. There's no suggestion in the Bible that he was naked, but Renaissance artists copied ancient Greek and Roman artists who idealised the human body. At over five metres tall, Michelangelo's masterpiece is a marble giant - perfect for the grand central rotunda at The Harris.

By the time The Harris opened, Preston's very own David was in position. Placed in the central rotunda, he loomed God-like over visitors. Necks craned upwards to study his stoney but expressive face - all deep in thought with furrowed brows. Framed by the architect James Hibbert's magnificent interior, the impact of such a giant athletic naked figure on visitors to the gallery is not hard to imagine but our replica David is long gone.

The cast of David, undoubtedly the most impressive, was one of several reproductions of Florentine masterpieces purchased from the V&A to fill the new galleries. Two of Michelangelo's monumental sized tombs, commemorating powerful Medici dukes, also found their way from Florence to Lancashire. The long dead Medicis are depicted, like David, in thoughtful contemplation, burdened but not overwhelmed by duty and leadership. All fine role models for ambitious and hardworking Prestonians.



Michelangelo's David is in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence to protect it from weather and damage. George Groutas: Flickr



Part of Lorenzo de' Medici tomb in the Medici Chapel, Florence. A full-sized cast of the tomb was once on display at The Harris. Michelangelo's statue of the Duke, dressed as a Roman is in deep reflection, is popularly known as 'Il Penseroso' - the thinker: Wikimedia Commons

THE GATES OF PARADISE:

A FIXTURE OF PRESTON'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

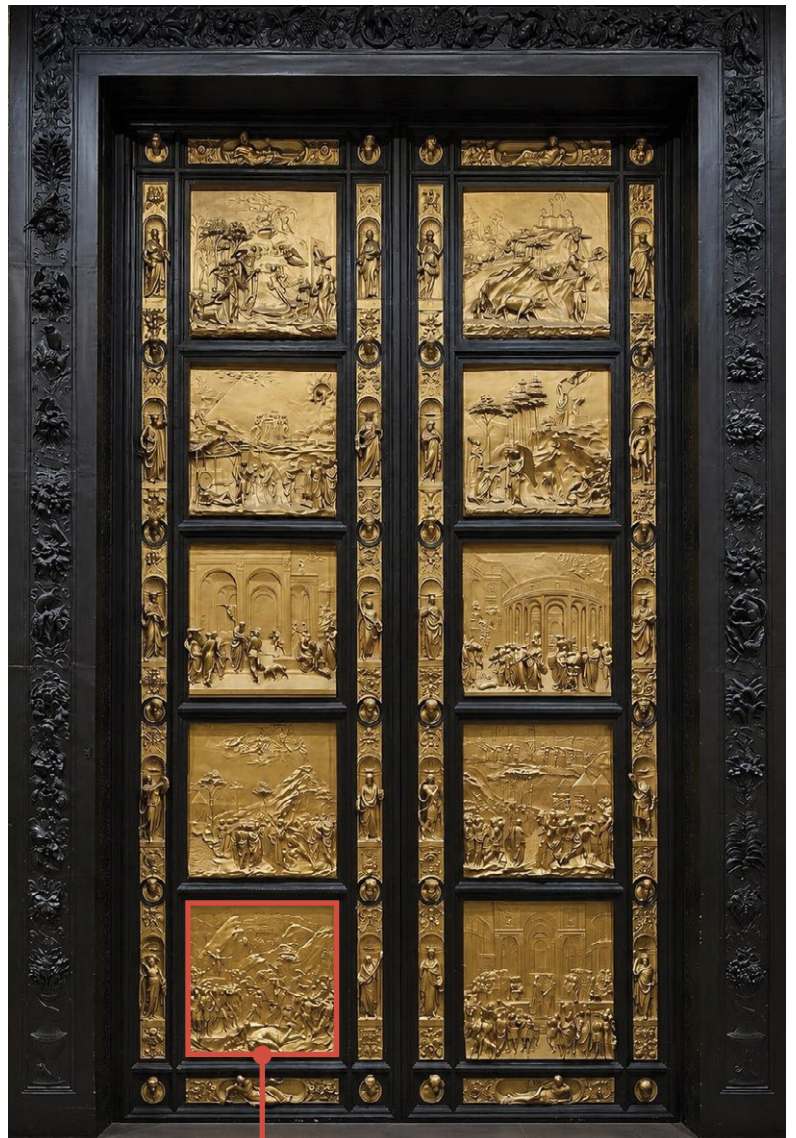
There was one final blockbuster replica purchased long ago from the V&As cast collection; a pair of the giant doors originally sculptured by Lorenzo Ghiberti. They were considered so breathtaking that Michelangelo himself said they were surely like *'The Gates of Paradise'*. They are of course from Renaissance Florence.



Tourists continue to flock to see Ghiberti's famous doors on the Baptistry Chapel next to Florence Cathedral:

Michael Akers

Ghiberti's giant replica remains in place at The Harris, a tangible reminder of when the treasures, sophistication and creative energy of the Renaissance arrived here in the shape of plaster casts and of a time when Preston wanted to be Florence.



The *'Gates of Paradise'* in the Harris is a stunning, high-quality replica of Lorenzo Ghiberti's famous bronze doors, located on the ground floor.



This panel depicts the shepherd David slaying the mighty warrior Goliath. Ghiberti, unlike Michelangelo, has the hero dressed:

Michael Akers

WHAT'S ON

heritage open days

Friday 11th September to Sunday 20th September

For a full list of Preston properties and events visits:
www.heritageopendays.org.uk/whats-on/printable-area-lists/preston.html

**FoWS Annual Christmas Talk:
Mrs Godfrey's Regency Winckley Christmas**

3 & 10 December | 2pm – 4pm

Venue: Central Methodist Church, Lune Street, PR1 2NL

Enjoy another cosy Christmassy afternoon with seasonal music, mince pies, alcohol-free mulled wine and hot chocolate, seated in chairs from the Gaumont Cinema. Following a Regency Christmas slideshow, Susan Douglass will bring the 1814 Winckley Square Quarter to life, based on real people and real events imagining how Mrs Godfrey and her four guests might have celebrated a Regency Christmas together.

This event is so popular it runs on two days, so book early:
www.trybooking.com/uk/GWES

Tickets can also be bought in the Olive Grove Coffee Shop.

FREE

FRIENDS OF WINCKLEY SQUARE

Christmas Concert 2026

SUNDAY 13th DECEMBER
3pm – 5.30pm

Enjoy mulled wine and a mince pie, hot chocolate, Peter's Perfect Parched Peas, soft drinks and ales, plus delicious Hot food supplied by 'Queen of Tarts'.

Pop up licensed bar

To find out more visit:
www.winckleysquarepreston.org

A Gift of Membership

Looking for a gift that lasts beyond the day itself?

A Preston Historical Society Gift of Membership offers a whole year of discovery, with a fascinating programme of talks and special summer events included. Perfect for anyone with a curiosity about Preston and its past - and something to look forward to throughout the year.

PRESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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A Gift for you

One year membership from the first month you attend

To: _____ Date from: _____
 From: _____ Date to: _____

For details of forthcoming talks visit: www.prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk
 Cheques payable to: prestonhistoricalsociety@prestonhistoricalsociety.org.uk

VOUCHER CODE

PHS Programme of Talks 2026

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).

14 September 2026

Chaplin, Cowboys and Cotton:

Preston Film Service and Early Lancashire Cinema.

Speaker: Emma Heslewood

Emma reveals the story of Preston Film Service Limited, based at Kinema House on Corporation Street. It became a major distributor of American and international silent films and pioneered British topical filmmaking. She traces its theatrical origins and founders Will Onda and James Atroy, an acrobat and juggler.

12 October 2026

The Black British Experience in Britain:

focusing on Preston in the 1950s to the Present Day.

Speaker: Adrian Murrell

Adrian explores representations of Black people in British media and society. Using archival television, images and context, he examines how racism was expressed and challenged within white and black communities, encouraging reflection on language, policing, media stereotypes and their impact.

9 November 2026

Creating a County:

the Emergence of Lancashire 700-1200.

Speaker: Dr. Alan Crosby

Lancashire was the penultimate of England's 39 historic counties to be created, and its emergence as an area was largely accidental. Alan traces how, before and after the Norman Conquest, disparate territories stretching from the Mersey to Wrynose Pass were united by kings, princes and bishops over five centuries.

14 December 2026

A Window to the Universe: the Past, Present, and Future of the Preston Observatory.

Speaker: Graham McLoughlin

Preston Observatory, believed to be the UK's oldest public observatory, has revealed the wonders of the sky since 1881. Graham explores its origins and founders, alongside the opening of the Jeremiah Horrocks Observatory in 1927, marking a total solar eclipse, and celebrates Preston's astronomical legacy ahead of its centenary.

Central Methodist Church, Lune Street, PR1 2NL

Talks start at **7.15pm** and end at **8.30pm**.

Doors open at **6.30pm** for refreshments and registration. Members FOC / Visitors £5.

THE HUNT BROTHERS: PRESTON'S FORGOTTEN RUGBY LEGENDS

A Preston Family That Achieved the Impossible

by Philip Hill

“ Every city has its sporting heroes, but few can boast a family quite like the Hunts of Preston. ”

During the pioneering years of rugby, when the sport was still finding its feet, four brothers from one Preston household became some of the finest players in Lancashire. Between 1876 and 1882, three of them pulled on the England jersey—an extraordinary achievement that has only been matched once in the history of English rugby.

Together they helped establish Preston Grasshoppers as one of the leading clubs in the North, thrilling Victorian crowds with their athleticism, strength and determination. So often did they appear together that spectators were said to joke, "Which Hunt?" whenever one of the brothers burst into action.

Yet their achievements stretched far beyond the rugby field.

One became a distinguished military officer and champion swordsman. Another developed an outstanding career as a pioneering surgeon who helped establish ambulance services in Lancashire. A third emigrated to Australia to build a successful life managing vast sheep stations, while the fourth, although never selected for England, represented Lancashire in both rugby and cricket.

Their remarkable story is one of sporting excellence, public service and adventure, a forgotten chapter in Preston's history that deserves to be remembered.

THE HUNT FAMILY

Robert Snr. and his wife, Elizabeth, had four sons and a daughter by 1861. Robert was prospering as a wine and spirit merchant, and the family's comfortable circumstances were reflected in their household, which included two servants and a governess for the children.

Tragedy struck in 1865 when Robert died, leaving Elizabeth with six children. The eldest was just eleven, while the youngest, a son, was only a few months old. Elizabeth took over as head of the household and continued the family business, describing her occupation in the 1871 Census as 'wine merchant and maltster'. The family lived at No. 1 Westcliff, where Elizabeth employed a cook and a servant. Elizabeth must have been a remarkable woman, not only raising six children following her husband's death, but ensuring that each had the opportunity to fulfil their potential.



1882 Robert and James played for England against Ireland

WILLIAM HUNT

1854 - 1904:

The Giant Who Led the Way

The eldest brother, **William Henry Hunt**, became the first member of the family to win England honours when he made his international debut in 1876. Standing an imposing 6ft 3in, he was one of the most formidable forwards of his generation. Contemporary writers praised his immense strength in the scrum and his uncanny ability to dominate the line-out, while local newspapers admired his tireless work rate and determination.



William Henry Hunt.
The first of the talented
Hunt Brothers to win
the England Cap

Away from rugby, William enjoyed an equally distinguished military career, commanding the 5th Lancashire Artillery Volunteers and winning military swordsmanship competitions at the prestigious Royal Military Tournament. His reputation was such that he was even immortalised as a military commander in William Le Queux's popular invasion novel *The Great War in England*.

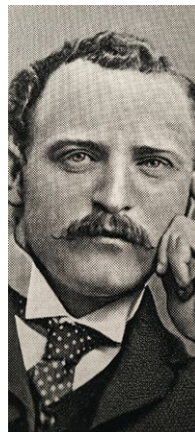
Despite his achievements, those who knew him best remembered not his physical strength but his kindness. At his funeral in 1904, he was described as combining 'the courage of a lion with the gentleness of a child'—a fitting tribute to one of Preston's earliest sporting heroes.

ROBERT HUNT

1856 - 1913:

The International Who Saved Lives

If William excelled through strength, his younger brother **Robert "Bob" Hunt** became renowned for speed, skill and intelligence. Winning four England caps from 1880, he quickly established himself as one of the country's finest three-quarters, scoring tries on the international stage and earning a reputation as one of rugby's finest tacklers and drop-kickers. His greatest contribution, however, came away from the pitch.



Robert Hunt

After studying medicine, Bob became a highly respected surgeon in Blackburn, specialising in plastic surgery at a time when the discipline was still developing. He also devoted countless hours to public service, helping establish a local branch of St John Ambulance and promoting first aid throughout Lancashire.

Tragically, he also witnessed one of rugby's darkest moments when a young player suffered a fatal injury during a match. As a surgeon, Bob rushed to help, but despite every effort, the player died the following day. It was a stark reminder of the dangers of early rugby and the compassion that defined Bob's professional life.

Those who worked with him remembered a gifted surgeon who never boasted about either his sporting achievements or his medical successes.

JAMES HUNT

1858 - 1924:

England to the Australian Outback

The youngest England international, **James Thomas Hunt**, completed the remarkable family achievement when he won his first cap in 1882.

An outstanding all-round athlete, James represented Lancashire at both rugby and cricket and was regarded as one of the finest sportsmen of his era. Yet, like many adventurous Victorians, he looked beyond England for new opportunities.

After leaving rugby behind, James emigrated to Australia, where he spent more than forty years managing huge sheep stations across Victoria, Queensland and South Australia. There he built a new life, raised a family and earned enormous respect for his integrity and hard work.

Although invited to enter public life, James preferred the quieter satisfaction of farming. His obituary remembered him as a modest man whose "sterling qualities" earned him admiration throughout the community.



James Thomas Hunt
headed for a life in
Australia after his final
England appearance

A LEGACY WORTH REMEMBERING

More than 150 years after William Hunt first represented England, the Hunt brothers remain one of Preston's greatest sporting families.

Their story is about far more than rugby. It is a story of service, courage, professional excellence and adventure. Together they helped shape the early history of English rugby while leaving lasting contributions to medicine, the military and agriculture.

They deserve to stand alongside Preston's best-known historical figure, not simply as sporting pioneers, but as four remarkable brothers whose achievements reached far beyond the playing field.

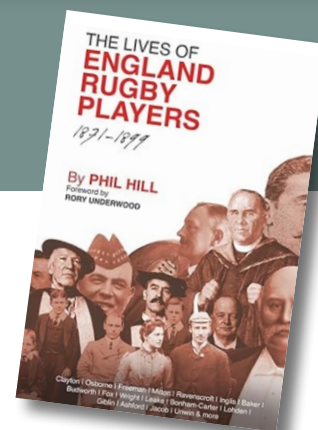
ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This article is based on research undertaken by Phil Hill for his book *The Lives of England Rugby Players 1871-1899*, which explores the lives of every England international during rugby's formative years.

THOMAS HUNT

The Forgotten Fourth Brother

While **Thomas Hunt** never achieved England honours, his sporting career would have been exceptional in almost any other family. He represented Lancashire at both rugby and cricket, completing one of the most remarkable collections of sporting talent ever produced by a single Preston household.



Old Betty Redhead: The Terror of Mount Street

by Janet Rigby

When the Preston Herald announced *'The Death of a Remarkable Character'* in 1866, few readers could have wondered who it meant. Elizabeth 'Betty' Redhead had been a Preston institution for decades. Described as *'one of the most noted and eccentric characters in Preston'*, she died just weeks short of her 92nd birthday.

Known universally as 'Old Betty Redhead', she was Preston's second-oldest inhabitant and its oldest shopkeeper and ratepayer. Her little shop on the corner of Mount Street sold parched peas and sweets. However, her merchandise did not make her famous. Betty possessed a ferocious temper, extremely decided political opinions and a tongue capable of terrifying almost anyone unfortunate enough to provoke it.



Elizabeth 'Betty' Redhead

His verdict was brief: *'That woman is mad.'*

Entering her shop could be extremely hazardous. *The Preston Chronicle* reported a fracas after James Walmsley went inside and began teasing Betty's parrot. Richard Haggart seized him and threw him down the steps, leaving him with a badly bruised head. The dispute eventually reached the magistrates. Betty did not always need the brush handle, her customers sometimes maintained order for her.

True Blue Betty and the 'Mushroom Nobility'

For a woman who couldn't read or write, and lived long before women had the parliamentary vote, Betty took a remarkable interest in politics.

She was a *'red hot politician'*, a fiercely loyal Tory of the old 'True Blue' school and an enthusiastic admirer of the aristocracy. Curiously, despite her own humble origins, she despised people who had risen in society and then gave themselves airs. They *'stank in her nostrils'*, and she dismissed them contemptuously as *'mushroom nobility'*.

Her particular heroes were the Stanley family, the Earls of Derby, which occasionally made her an irresistible target for practical jokes. A mischievous neighbour once persuaded Betty that two gaudily dressed women walking along Fishergate were ladies of the House of Stanley. Betty hurried from her shop, made a deep curtsy and respectfully enquired after the health of Lord Derby. The women, who had no idea what she was talking about, assumed she was mocking them.

'Get out of the way, you silly old lunatic,' snapped one. It was a serious tactical error. Betty immediately unleashed such a torrent of abuse that the terrified pair fled down Fishergate.

Arm in Arm with the 'Cuerden Cock'

Betty's greatest political moment came during the 1852 election, when the Hon. Frederick Arthur Stanley visited Preston. As his carriage travelled along Fishergate, Betty stood at her shop calling for cheers. Among the Conservative Party was R. T. Parker of Cuerden Hall, popularly known as *'The Cuerden Cock'*. Deciding that Betty ought to meet Stanley, he collected her and escorted her to the Conservative headquarters at the Bull Hotel.

What an extraordinary pair. Betty wore her enormous mob cap and print gown, grinning with delight, while Parker was 'spruce as a young beau' in blue frock coat, white hat, white trousers and canary waistcoat – the conventional outfit of the staunch True Blue. At the Bull Hotel an ecstatic Betty was formally introduced to Stanley, then driven home in a cab. For several days, a bespangled banner, covered with Tory mottoes, flew proudly from her shop window.

Betty's Epitaph

When Betty died in 1866, Preston lost a woman who had entertained and terrified three generations of townspeople. The press admitted that *'to relate all Betty Redhead's sayings and doings would require a complete volume.'*

Perhaps that was the perfect epitaph for Preston's formidable parched-pea seller: property owner, True Blue Tory, scourge of badly produced toffee and possessor of one of the sharpest tongues in town.

Betty Saw Preston Transformed

According to an entry in her prayer book, Betty was born on 21 March 1774, one of four children of John Redhead, a labourer, and his wife Mary Richardson.

The Preston of Betty's youth differed sharply from the industrial town of her old age. A population of around 6,000, only one cotton mill, its principal churches were St John's Church (Parish Church), St George's and St Mary's Roman Catholic Church in Friargate. She witnessed the growth of the cotton industry, the arrival of gas lighting, the canal and the great strike of 1842.

Betty, however, remained reassuringly — or perhaps alarmingly — unchanged. She never married, saying she had never *'bothered her head'* about it. Unusually, she became a woman of property, paying ground rent to Lady Shelley (Frances Winckley's married name) and owning three freehold houses in Mount Street. How she found the money is unclear, though her reputation as a *'scraping, parsimonious woman'* offers a clue.

Whatever You Do, Don't Ask for 'Trakle' Toffee

Betty never learned to read or write but could express herself most coherently. One description declared that *'Billingsgate itself could not produce a more unruly tongue.'*

Preston children knew this well. One man remembered going into her shop and deliberately asking for a pennyworth of **'trakle' toffee**. Betty apparently considered this pronunciation intolerable.

'I'll 'trakle' toffee thee if thar not off!' came the reply.

It was no idle threat. Betty kept a long brush handle behind the counter and persistent tormentors risked a whack before they could escape. The same boy later discovered that if he politely asked for **Everton toffee**, Betty handed over the packet with a smile.

Another man sent an unsuspecting visiting college friend into the shop to ask for 'trakle' toffee without warning him about Betty. The visitor emerged considerably faster than he had entered.

Contact PHS

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