



IN TIME

Ely U3A History Group Members'
Newsletter



Edition 20

13 August 2020

Welcome to edition 20 of IN TIME and can I first say a huge thank you to all the readers who responded to my request for articles last week and sent in a wonderful variety of great articles. I now have quite a good little store and you will see all your articles appear in IN TIME over the next few weeks. But please don't stop sending them we always need copy for the newsletter.

This week we take a look at the poor chimney sweep boys as well as reading about Irish echos from the past. We find out what a Rulley is and how to be 'best dressed' in 1930s.

Send your articles to Maggie Haverson (email address supplied in the email containing this newsletter).

[Spare a thought for the chimney sweep boys. – Heather Carruth](#)

In 1666, following the Great Fire of London, the practice of using small boys, sometime as young as four, as chimney sweeps began. The City was gutted in the fire; and afterwards, new building regulations designed to keep the city safer were introduced. Fireplaces had to adhere to these codes, which included narrower chimneys and it became paramount that these were kept obstruction free.

A boy would be purchased from his poverty-stricken parents to become an "apprentice" by a master sweep, who would feed him, but not a lot, (the new chimneys were only a maximum 18 inches wide), work him for up to 18 hours a day and "encourage" him by lighting a fire behind him, thus ensuring he would clean the chimney as quickly as possible. The boys would work unpaid usually for 364 days a year and make a bed each night on empty soot sacks. May Day was the only day off for these pitiful little slaves.



Bleeding hands, elbows, knees and feet, a hacking cough, blistered eyelids and broken bones or worse if the child fell off the roof or down the chimney were the norm; life was invariably short. On rare occasions, a fire door near the top of the stack would enable the child to escape to fresh air. In grand old houses with multiple connecting chimneys a boy might get lost and be overcome by smoke or simply get stuck and never emerge.



In February of 1875, a boy sweep named George Brewster, was the last child to die in a chimney, he became stuck in Fulbourn Hospital's chimney. A wall was demolished in an unsuccessful attempt to rescue him, his master sweep was later found guilty of manslaughter. A Parliament bill in September 1875, finally put an end to the practice of using child chimney sweeps in England.

The pictures show a group of boy sweeps looking very clean, possibly just after their weekly bath and a rare chimney door. Sometimes, in country farms, hams were hung to cure on racks behind these door.

Echoes from the Past - Roger Orr

The 1798 Rebellion in Ireland was undertaken by the United Irishmen when the political attempt for a totally independent Irish government was halted by the Westminster government, threatened by a possible invasion by France directed through Ireland.

The first martyr for the United Irishmen was William Orr of Farranshane in County Antrim, who was executed by hanging at Carrickfergus in 1797, accused of illegally signing up members of the militia to the United Irishmen. Much could be said about this William Orr, but in this article I want to look at a few links I discovered a few years ago between my ancestors and a cousin of martyr William Orr, named John Orr.



*Pike probably made in the
John Orr forge*

John was a farmer, living near the town of Antrim in County Antrim, and an active member of the United Irishmen. In 1796 and 1797 the government authorities took very active steps to find and remove firearms from suspected insurgents. To make up for this loss, the insurgents' weapon of choice became the pike, a long metal spike fixed to a wooden pole. John Orr owned a forge and arranged for the blacksmith to make pikes for the planned insurrection. John Orr's political sympathies came to the attention of the authorities, who decided to search the forge for evidence of pike manufacture.



*Forge believed to have been used by
John Orr*

Apparently John Orr was known in later years to recount the story of the day a group of militia men were spotted approaching his forge whilst he was directing the production of pike heads. Fearing for his life, the employed blacksmith made a quick exit leaving John Orr to face the music. Acting quickly, John used the bellows to raise the fire to a high temperature before throwing the pike heads into the fire. There was just time for the pike heads to become molten before the militia arrived.



Creavery House

John and his family were not so fortunate a short while after the incident at the forge when soldiers came to his farm looking for hidden firearms just a few days before the United Irishmen rose in County Antrim. Although they did not find any firearms they were sufficiently convinced of his associations that they burnt down the farmhouse, Creavery House. John had to go onto the run and ended up, like many of the insurgents, fleeing to America for a number of years. So, what are my family links to these events? As well as the line of Orr's on my father's side, I can trace the ancestry on my mother's side back to a William Orr who was born around 1790 and was a farmer in

the townland of Creavery and therefore a near neighbour of John Orr. This farm has been passed down the generations and includes a forge which is believed to be the one used by John Orr for the production of pike heads. It's not known how or when the change in control might have taken place. Family descendants still possess a very old pike (see insert photo) which was probably made in the forge and may have been carried by an insurgent in the Battle of Antrim during the 1798 rising.

The John Orr family rebuilt Creavery House after the unsuccessful rebellion and in the 1930s came into the ownership of the Millar family, closed related to my paternal grandmother. Totally ignorant of its history, my family used to make regular family visits to Creavery House, including longer summer holiday breaks when I was young. Little did we know we were walking in the footsteps of figures closely linked to the Rebellion.

Whilst researching some of the descendants of my ancestor William Orr of Creavery, I was very surprised to find newspaper reports which included claims by two of his children that they were grandchildren of martyr William Orr. Unfortunately available records do not appear to include a William Orr, son of martyr Orr, who could be identified with my ancestor so the claim remains unproven at present.

From Rulley to Royals - Ray Tinker

Wikipedia says a Rulley is a four-wheeled horse-drawn wagon, usually with low or non-existent sides, used extensively by the railway companies to carry goods and, on occasion, people. The Rulley was 'crewed' by a driver and a lad.



My great grandfather George Bartle was born in Belton, Lincolnshire, on 28th September 1844. I know very little about his early life and education, except that by 1851 the family had moved to Ousefleet in East Yorkshire, until, I believe, at the age of 12 he became a RULLEY LAD, being responsible for the care of the horse whilst the driver was attending to the goods being delivered or collected by the North Eastern Railway, which along with several other railway companies formed the LNER in 1922. By 1861 he was still living in Ousefleet and would most likely have progressed to be a Rulley Driver

On 8th June 1868 he married Mary Jane Elmer, the Holy Trinity Church, now Hull Minster and had moved up the ladder once again to be a Goods Guard, probably working the freight trains to and from the extensive Hull Docks. On 25th June 1877 my grandmother, Ada, was born.

The 1881 Census shows George as a Railway Guard, by this time working primarily passenger trains, a highly responsible job covering trains from as far afield as Sheffield, Leeds and York and the coastal services along the East Coast as far as Whitby.

The next 30 years saw George's responsibilities rise until he was appointed as the District Head Guard for the area, with responsibility for rostering all train guards, which would have numbered several hundred men covering both freight and passenger traffic. George would be required to travel on any 'special' train carrying important people and directors of the railway.

George's penultimate task before his retirement was to roster the guards for the 15 special trains bringing dignitaries from all over the country to the opening by King George V of the deep water docks which bears his name on 26th June 1914. Not only were there guards to be available to bring the trains from the outer points of the district but also to provide guards for their return. His final task was to guard the Royal Train bringing King George, Queen Mary and the Royal Party to the event and their safe return. It is certain

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HULL JOINT DOCK COMMITTEE.

OPENING OF NEW DOCK AT HULL BY HIS MAJESTY THE KING,
on the 26th JUNE, 1914.

For the convenience of guests, special trains will be run on the opening day from the undermentioned places to a temporary station at the New Dock at Hull, viz.:

Station.	Approx. time of departure.	Station.	Approx. time of arrival.
*BIRMINGHAM	6 40	*MANCHESTER (VICTORIA)	7 45
*BOLTON (L. & Y.)	7 20	MEPPLE	8 55
BRADFORD	9 20	NEWARK	9 30
*BRETTON-ON-TRENT	7 15	*NEWCASTLE	7 15
*CHESTERFIELD	8 15	*NOTTINGHAM	8 30
CUDWORTH	9 25	†ROCHDALE	6 10
†DARLINGTON	8 10	SELEY	10 25
†DERBY	7 40	SHEFFIELD	8 50
DONCASTER	10 40	†STOCKTON	8 10
†EAGLECLIFFE	8 20	*SONDERLAND	7 20
GOOLE	10 40	†THIRSK	8 55
GRANTHAM	9 40	WAKEFIELD	9 12
LEEDS	9 55	†WEST HARTLEPOOL	7 50
*LIVERPOOL (EXCHANGE)	6 35	YORK	9 25
*LONDON (KING'S CROSS)	7 30		

*Breakfast will be served on these trains, and dinner on the return journey.
†Breakfast will be served on these trains.

The special trains will leave Hull on the return journey from 3-45 p.m. onwards.

Full particulars of the train and other arrangements will be sent to those who intimate their desire to be present at the function, and vouchers for the special trains will be sent to those who signify their wish to travel by them.

It is requested that the attached form be used in replying to the invitation.

ALEX. WILSON,
Secretary.

that George would have been presented to their Majesties George retired at the age of 70 shortly after this event and died a few months later.

The North Eastern Railway Magazine of December 1914 has an obituary to him and the Hull History Centre provided much of the information regarding the Royal visit. The NRM Search Engine team provided considerable assistance.

Not bad for a lad from rural Lincolnshire who rose from a Rulley Lad to the Royal Guard!

[A Book of Hints and Wrinkles circa 1930s – Wendy Rolph](#)

This book is aimed at the novice housewife. It is of its time and assumes the woman will run the home with the man as breadwinner. For example, a line from the introduction:

“It is for instance stupid to choose your abode in some spot from which it is inconvenient for the man of the family to reach his work”



Great emphasis is placed throughout on careful budgeting and to this end I am concentrating first on ‘*HINTS ON THE WARDROBE.*’ (aimed at the wife)

“With a restricted dress allowance, one must learn to build up a wardrobe from small beginnings. By careful scheming in advance, self-discipline when buying and by taking care of what we have it should be possible to dress attractively on £10 a year”

The editor (unnamed) then goes on to list the minimum he or she considers necessary to constitute a basic wardrobe:

“The list is for good wearing, attractive garments purchasable at a reliable chain store.

3 sets of underclothing (knickers and slips) 3 nightdresses, 6 pairs of stockings, 2 pairs shoes, 2 elastic belts or corsets, 2 hats, 1 dressing gown, 1 pair slippers, 2 pairs gloves, 12 handkerchiefs, 1 georgette square, 3 brassieres, 1 blouse, 1 pullover, 1 two-piece spring suit, 3 house frocks, 1 flannel skirt, 1 winter coat, 2 handbags, 3 overalls, 1 silk afternoon dress”

If you wish to have an evening dress, a complete outfit, except for a cloak, would cost about £2

The editor then goes on to give advice about some of the items listed.

WARNING ABOUT LINGERIE

“Do not waste your money on cheap lace trimmings and embroidery designs on lingerie. Make sure your first set is of a hard-wearing fabric. With care, you will find very attractive and durable underwear.

Stockings should always be fully fashioned and are more durable with strong lisle tops. Choose the right length for your leg; if too long you will have to roll them and fasten the suspender into the silk; if too short you will strain them; in either case they will soon ladder”

I now ask you to compare and contrast!

“CLOTHING HINTS FOR MEN”

There is no suggestion on careful budgeting or restricted clothing allowance and the editor introduces the section thus:

“Naturally you will decide for yourself what you can afford to spend on your clothes.

Here is the suggested wardrobe:

2 lounge suits, 5 shirts, 4 sets of underwear, six pairs of socks (more if possible) a pair of black and a pair of brown shoes (2 pairs if possible) 1 dark suit and 1 light suit.

USEFUL EXTRA CLOTHING

Pair of grey flannel trousers and a sports coat. 2 coloured sports shirts, 1 light weight sweater;

1 pair white flannel trousers and 2 or 3 white tennis shirts.

Last but not least:

EVENING DRESS

Dinner Suit, dress shirt, white winged collar, black tie, black silk socks and black patent leather shoes. It is now quite fashionable to wear a white turned down collar.

As I said, the attitudes are of the time

Petty's Pick of the Week

Every day Mike Petty posts on his Facebook group ‘Fenland History on Facebook’ a number of newspaper clips from his massive archive of local events reported ‘on this day’ <https://www.facebook.com/groups//102684982076955>

‘Majestic’ cinema – Ely Past Snip August 8th 1933
Ely’s new ‘Majestic Cinema’ in New Barnes-road has an attractive front plastered in brown and cream which arrests the attention of anyone passing. Designed by F. Tucker of Lynn Road it has the latest Weston screen and Imperial sound system and will seat 370 people. Messrs Russell and Frank Wright are to be congratulated on their enterprise. The first film is Ida Lupino in ‘Her First Affair’. 33 08 04
This story appeared in a Cambridge newspaper on this date.

