

Flintshire Memories



The edited extracts below give a flavour of the recordings which were made for the oral history collection of Clwyd Library & Information Service in the 1980s. The project involved interviewers visiting people who had retired from working lives spent in various local industries and occupations. The stories are lively and often amusing, and give a fascinating insight into Flintshire's recent past.

'We used to take some people sometimes when they'd died on this side, over, and that was their last trip over on the ferry. Cross there and they'd be buried at Broughton.....The old (ferryman's) house was donkey's years old...the big tide used to come in and you couldn't do nothing about it either. You could fish while you ate your supper – it was that deep in the kitchen!'

Mr Robert Manifold – Ferryman at Saltney

(Up at 7.00 am.) 'I used to clean the grates in the morning....and then the front door had to be done.....I'd go up the back stairs and do all the chambers, wash the basins and empty the slops... (dust, put out clean towels, collect the laundry, clean the brass and silver.....then in the afternoons) gather sticks or something, come in around four to get the tea....go five o'clock regular to take the trays out.....get more coal in....' (In the evening she laid the table for dinner, waited at table, cleared away, served drinks, put hot water bottles in the beds.) 'About half past nine to ten you were glad of your bed, I can assure you!'

Miss Alice Hardy – Parlourmaid at Leeswood Hall from 1930s

'Oh yes, we've all got our own secrets. I've got my own secrets; I won't tell you, I won't tell anybody....One taxidermist sells a formula for tanning, but he doesn't tell you what it's made of. I tried to get it analysed, a friend of mine took it to the college, but we weren't very successful with it.I think you'll find most taxidermists won't tell you, we've all got our own little secrets. It's part of the art...'

Mr Sidney Keown – Taxidermist 1935 – 1981

'The most dangerous thing was getting burnt, I had some awful burns. I fell on iron once and burnt all my arms, hands, legs and knee. One time a parson came through, and he looked round and said "This is the nearest to Hell I hope I see".....We wore clogs, with steel tips on, and as a rule you'd wear what they call 'flaps', extra leather along the top save burning your feet, because you'd have one foot under the iron while you were rolling out.'

Mr Len Allen – Hand-rolling mills Shotton Steelworks

'We usually kept about thirty odd (horses) at a time.....I would prefer to drive the horses than drive a tractor – it was less tiring on us - more peaceful driving a horse. My father had the highest price paid for a champion gelding, the whole auction was pleased, it was Liverpool and London bidding against each other till we finally got to 104 guineas.....Oh I remember the military came (in World War I).....they always took the best. They paid a good price for them though. We couldn't complain.'

Mr Fred Moore – Moore Farm and Rake Farm 1892 to 1962

The @nswers centre at Mold Library is currently undertaking a project to transfer the original cassette recordings to CD and digital formats for preservation. A set of recordings on CD is available for loan. If you would like to borrow any of these recordings please contact the [@nswers centre](#).

Flintshire Memories CD recordings available for loan – more are being added – please ask for an up-dated list.

CD No.	Interviewee	Subject
1	Mr Robert Manifold	Ferryman at Saltney 1930 - 1972
10	Mr Glyn Jones	Jones Balers and Farming 1939 - 1970s
15	Mr Thomas Charles Jones	Rhydymwyn Brickworks 1921 - 1936
21	Mr Sidney Keown	Taxidermy Secrets
24	Mr Frederick Leach McLeod	The Blast Furnaces 1953 - 1980
29	Mrs Dudek	The Holywell Textile Mills
31	Mr Thomas Jones	The Coal Industry of Clwyd from 1922
32	Mrs E Ellison	History of Shotton
37	Mr Len Allen	The Hand-rolling Mills, Shotton Steel
42	Mr E Jones	A Gentleman's Outfitters in Shotton
50	Mr Alan Ingman	Farming in the Treuddyn area from 1920
67	Mr James Bloor	Bagillt from 1888
91	Mr Albert Frank Watkins	Hawarden from 1926
95	Mr Fred Moore	Moore Farm & Rake Farm, Hawarden 1892 - 1962
178	Mr Cyril Roberts	His life as a shoemaker, Ewloe Green
182	Mr Albert Edwards	The Last of the Coopers 1927 - 1939
195	Miss Alice Hardy	Parlour-maid at Leeswood Hall 1930s

Flintshire Memories transcripts

A number of the Flintshire Memories recordings have been transcribed and can be seen at the @nswers centre at Mold Library. The full transcripts are in English, the language in which the interviews were recorded. These selected full transcripts are presented with grateful thanks to all who contributed their reminiscences:

The photograph which illustrates this page is of Thomas H Parry MP at Mold, celebrating his election to Parliament, probably in 1918. (Flintshire Record Office image number ph-40-039)