Bleasdale POST OFFICE during the Great War

The Post Office played a vital part during the First World War. Delivering letters and parcels, paying allowances to soldiers' wives and handling savings accounts were but a few of its duties.

A sub-post office at Bleasdale was first established in 1858 following a request by the then Vicar, Rev. Shilleto, to the Postmaster-General. It was established within 20 years of the introduction of the pre-paid penny-postage stamps which led to the setting up of a network of post offices in the UK. Letters arrived at Bleasdale School from Garstang in the early morning and were collected in the late afternoon.

A mid-20th century photo of Bleasda;e School

Barretts Directory of Preston 1901

PARISH COUNCIL.—Alfred King (chairman), Harold Jackson, J.P., Thos. Hutchinson, Anthony Sanderson, and Arthur Gardner.

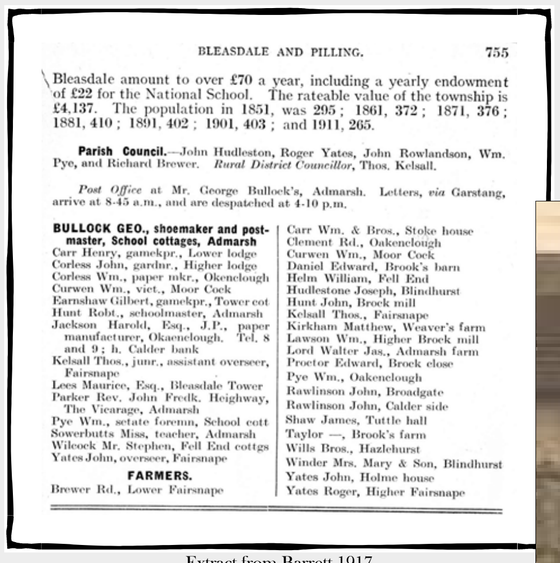
Post Office, School house, H. N. Hesmondhalgh, postmaster. Letters, *via* Garstang, arrive at 9-0 a.m., and are despatched at 4-0 p.m.

Ball John, carter, Oakenclough
Bullock George, shoemaker, Admarsh
Cookson John, tailor, Admarsh
Corless Wm., paper maker (j.), Oakenclough
Curwen William, vict., Moor Cock
Earnshaw Gilbert, gamekeeper, Higher lodge
Hesmondhalgh Herbert Nelson, schoolmaster, Admarsh
Hutchinson Thos., bkkpr., Oakenclough
Jackson Harold, Esq., J.P., paper manufacturer, Oakenclough
King Alfred, governor, North Lancashire Reformatory
Marshall James, gamekeeper, Bleasdale lower
Parker Rev. John Frederick Heighway, The Vicarage
Simpson James, fitter, Oakenclough
Smith Miss Elizabeth, Lower lodge
Toone Thomas, foreman, Oakenclough

Farmers.

Barron John, Moss side
Corless James, Broadgate
Curwen William, Moor Cock
Dodgson Brothers, Stake house
Gardner Arthur, Fell end
Heyes George Wm., Lower Fairsnape
Kelsall Thomas (and rate collector), Fairsnape
Kirkham Matthew, Weaver farm
Lord Walter James, Admarsh farm
Proctor Edward, Brock close
Raby James, Oakenclough
Rhodes Eliza, Blindhurst
Sanderson Anthony, Brooks farm
Shaw James, New house
Thompson Robert, Calder side
Wills James, Hazlehurst
Winder Mrs. Ellen, Blindhurst
Winder Thomas, Oakenclough
Yates John, Holme house
Yates Roger, Higher Fairsnape

Until 1904, the role of sub-postmaster was taken on by the Schoolmaster.



BLEASDALE AND PILLING. 755

Bleasdale amount to over £70 a year, including a yearly endowment of £22 for the National School. The rateable value of the township is £4,137. The population in 1851, was 295; 1861, 372; 1871, 376; 1881, 410; 1891, 402; 1901, 403; and 1911, 265.

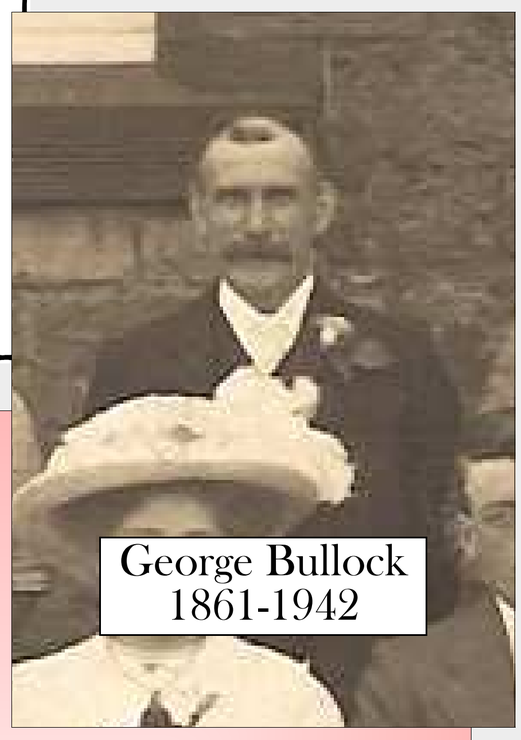
Parish Council.—John Hudleston, Roger Yates, John Rowlandson, Wm. Pye, and Richard Brewer. *Rural District Councillor*, Thos. Kelsall.

Post Office at Mr. George Bullock's, Admarsh. Letters, *via* Garstang, arrive at 8-45 a.m., and are despatched at 4-10 p.m.

BULLOCK GEO., shoemaker and postmaster, School cottages, Admarsh
Carr Henry, gamekpr., Lower lodge
Corless John, gardnr., Higher lodge
Corless Wm., paper mkr., Okenclough
Curwen Wm., vict., Moor Cock
Earnshaw Gilbert, gamekpr., Tower cot
Hunt Robt., schoolmaster, Admarsh
Jackson Harold, Esq., J.P., paper manufacturer, Okenclough. Tel. 8 and 9; h. Calder bank
Kelsall Thos., junr., assistant overseer, Fairsnape
Lees Maurice, Esq., Bleasdale Tower
Parker Rev. John Fredk. Heighway, The Vicarage, Admarsh
Pye Wm., setate foremn, School cott
Sowerbutts Miss, teacher, Admarsh
Wilcock Mr. Stephen, Fell End cottgs
Yates John, overseer, Fairsnape

FARMERS.
Brewer Rd., Lower Fairsnape
Carr Wm. & Bros., Stoke house
Clement Rd., Oakenclough
Curwen Wm., Moor Cock
Daniel Edward, Brook's barn
Helm William, Fell End
Hudlestone Joseph, Blindhurst
Hunt John, Brock mill
Kelsall Thos., Fairsnape
Kirkham Matthew, Weaver's farm
Lawson Wm., Higher Brock mill
Lord Walter Jas., Admarsh farm
Proctor Edward, Brock close
Pye Wm., Oakenclough
Rawlinson John, Broadgate
Rawlinson John, Calder side
Shaw James, Tuttle hall
Taylor —, Brook's farm
Wills Bros., Hazlehurst
Winder Mrs. Mary & Son, Blindhurst
Yates John, Holme house
Yates Roger, Higher Fairsnape

Extract from Barrett 1917



George Bullock
1861-1942

Extracts from George Bullock's obituary: Preston Guardian, 1942

'Owd George' as he was familiarly known...was engaged with his postal returns when he had a fatal seizure and ironically enough he left a pair of shoes unfinished...had tramped thousands of miles of fell country and...gave up his postal round a few years ago with the advent of motor cycle delivery...carried on his postal and cobblering duties at a cottage over two miles away from his home, walking there and back daily...he was cobbling instructor at the Old Reformatory and at one time made the footwear for the Lancaster Police Force...in his younger days he gained repute as an all-round athlete...funeral, on Friday last at Admarsh Church, Bleasdale where he had been a member of the choir for half a century.'

The position was then taken over by George Bullock, the cobbler who lived at School Cottages, and later by his daughter and son-in-law, Agnes and Peter Lord.

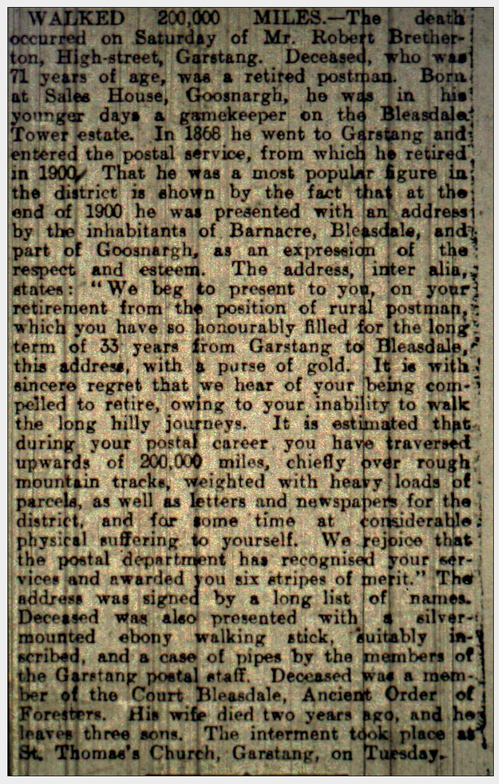
George then moved to Hazelhurst Cottage, from where he continued to carry out postal duties until his death in 1942. The Post Office remained at School Cottages until after the Second World War when it moved to Brock Mill.

Peter & Agnes Lord 1957

School Cottages early 20th century

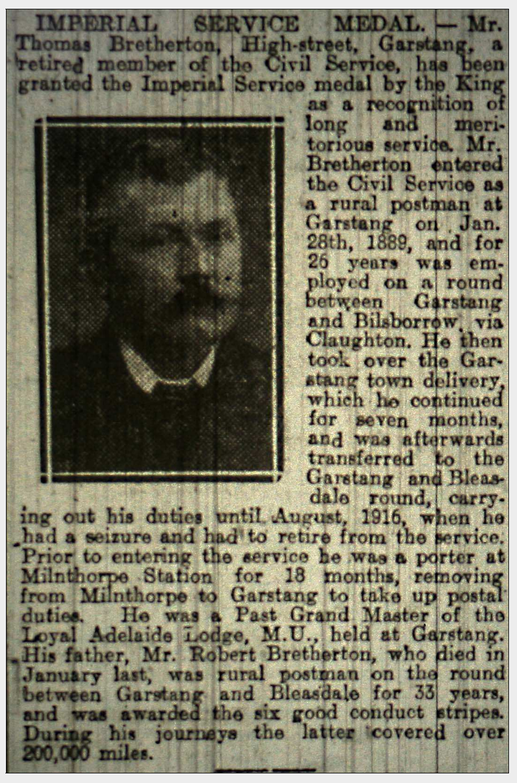
Bringing the Post to Bleasdale: The Rural Postmen

Robert Bretherton brought the post from Garstang to Bleasdale for 33 years, from 1867 to 1900 - the rural postman who 'walked 200,000 miles' in the course of his duties. On his retirement in 1900 he was presented with a congratulatory address by the inhabitants of Bleasdale, Barnacre and Goosnargh. His son, Thomas Bretherton, then took over the duties and ultimately received the Imperial Service Medal for his services to the Post Office. After his retirement in August 1915, Thomas Armstrong took over the round until his enlistment in March 1916. He was killed in France in April 1917. George Bullock then delivered the mail within the Parish.



WALKED 200,000 MILES.—The death occurred on Saturday of Mr. Robert Bretherton, High-street, Garstang. Deceased, who was 71 years of age, was a retired postman. Born at Sales House, Goosnargh, he was in his younger days a gamekeeper on the Bleasdale Tower estate. In 1868 he went to Garstang and entered the postal service, from which he retired in 1900. That he was a most popular figure in the district is shown by the fact that at the end of 1900 he was presented with an address by the inhabitants of Barnacre, Bleasdale, and part of Goosnargh, as an expression of the respect and esteem. The address, inter alia, states: "We beg to present to you, on your retirement from the position of rural postman, which you have so honourably filled for the long term of 33 years from Garstang to Bleasdale, this address, with a purse of gold. It is with sincere regret that we hear of your being compelled to retire, owing to your inability to walk the long hilly journeys. It is estimated that during your postal career you have traversed upwards of 200,000 miles, chiefly over rough mountain tracks, weighted with heavy loads of parcels, as well as letters and newspapers for the district, and for some time at considerable physical suffering to yourself. We rejoice that the postal department has recognised your services and awarded you six stripes of merit." The address was signed by a long list of names. Deceased was also presented with a silver-mounted ebony walking stick, suitably inscribed, and a case of pipes by the members of the Garstang postal staff. Deceased was a member of the Court Bleasdale, Ancient Order of Foresters. His wife died two years ago, and he leaves three sons. The interment took place at St. Thomas's Church, Garstang, on Tuesday.

Preston Guardian 20th January 1917



IMPERIAL SERVICE MEDAL.—Mr. Thomas Bretherton, High-street, Garstang, a retired member of the Civil Service, has been granted the Imperial Service medal by the King as a recognition of long and meritorious service. Mr. Bretherton entered the Civil Service as a rural postman at Garstang on Jan. 28th, 1889, and for 26 years was employed on a round between Garstang and Bilsborrow, via Claughton. He then took over the Garstang town delivery, which he continued for seven months, and was afterwards transferred to the Garstang and Bleasdale round, carrying out his duties until August, 1916, when he had a seizure and had to retire from the service. Prior to entering the service he was a porter at Milnthorpe Station for 18 months, removing from Milnthorpe to Garstang to take up postal duties. He was a Past Grand Master of the Loyal Adelaide Lodge, M.U., held at Garstang. His father, Mr. Robert Bretherton, who died in January last, was rural postman on the round between Garstang and Bleasdale for 33 years, and was awarded the six good conduct stripes. During his journeys the latter covered over 200,000 miles.

Preston Guardian 14th April 1917

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