

Charnock Richard Milepost

The sun came out today to greet the return of our historical village milepost, which was stolen 15 years ago from the highway verge near Yew Tree Villas on the A49.

This milepost was one of only 6 forged at Haigh Foundry back in 1837. The 2 remaining are ours and one in Standish (Langtree). Our sources are not aware of where 3 of the others were located in the region, but it is known that there was one in Wigan Lane, Duxbury which was, sadly, also stolen.

Our Chairman, John Taylor, discovered that the Wigan-Preston road (A49) was one of the first roads in Lancashire to be "Turnpiked" in 1725.



The reason for this "Turnpiking" was to raise funds to repair the roads which were the only mode of transport for manufacturers to move their goods by horse and cart from town to town and for people in carriages to travel back in the early 1700's. Some of the potholes on these roads had reached depths of 4 feet and so were often impassable. Points along the Turnpike roads were gated therefore and a charge was made to allow the travellers/merchants to move on to their destinations.

Under an Act of Parliament, all of the Turnpike Trusts in Great Britain were required to provide markers at intervals along the roads showing the mileage to the nearest towns. Of the thousands of milestones/mileposts erected throughout the country, the six cast iron

ones manufactured at Haigh Foundry are probably the most attractive and ornate of them all.

I suppose that is a bit like the Toll roads of today!! As the canals and the railways had still to be created the fees had to be paid in order to keep trade routes open.

Well that is enough of the history lesson!

So how did we recover the Milepost ??



We need to thank a very observant and public spirited gentleman, who, whilst at the preview of an agricultural auction in Cheshire, back in May, spotted it for sale. As he had connections with this area, he realised that it should not be there!! He contacted our Chairman who in turn contacted the police and thanks to the enthusiastic assistance of DC Andy Woodward at Chorley CID the sale was stopped and arrangements made for the collection of it by Harold Heaton (Borough Councillor) and our Chairman, John Taylor.

Thanks to the generosity of Superior Powder Coatings of Leyland, who carried out the major refurbishment of it free of charge, it has now been returned to its former glory.

The stone is now VERY firmly fixed into the verge with concrete and bolts, compliments of Councillor Jim Hill and his workforce ably assisted by our Chairman on the day of the

unveiling. The final touches have made it extremely difficult to remove, should any thieves try in the future!!



The new site is on the grass verge at the junction of Church Lane, Brook Lane and Preston Road. The unveiling took place today, 21st July 2012 at 11.30 am with the Chorley Guardian in attendance.

We hope that you are happy with its return and where we decided to place it, as, due to highway regulations we were not allowed to return it to its original spot! It does look very impressive I must say and it is wonderful to have something of such historical value returned to the village.

Ann Bishop (Parish Councillor)