

CHESHIRE UNUSUAL & QUIRKY




Above: This beautifully restored signal box is one of three that can be found at the Crewe Heritage Centre which is located in the old LMS railway yard in the centre of Crewe.

Left: The Clock Tower, Hale.

Below: The Shropshire Union Canal at Brasseley Green.



Quintessentially Quirky – Appleton Thorn

	NAME (STATUS): APPLETON THORN (Village) POPULATION: 6416 DISTRICT: Warrington EARLIEST RECORD: Appleton, 1086 (Domesday Book) MEANING: Farmstead where apples grow or apple orchard DERIVATION: From the Old English word <i>appel-tūn</i> , meaning 'farmstead where apples grow'
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The Quintessentially Quirky chapter focuses on a place in the county that encapsulates English tradition and eccentricity. For Cheshire, it was a



The Thurn Inn, Appleton Thorn.



The church of St. Cross at Appleton Thorn.

Quirk Alert: Bawming the Thorn

The custom known as Bawming the Thorn originally took place annually, on 29th June, at Appleton Thorn, for many centuries, whereby children would dance and sing around trees that were bedecked with ribbons and coloured paper. Integral to the custom was a cutting from the Glastonbury Thorn, which was said to have originated from the staff of Joseph of Arimathea, he who laid Jesus to rest. The cutting was allegedly brought to Appleton Thorn by Adam de Dorton, a knight of the Crusades and lord of Appleton. Having taken a pilgrimage to Glastonbury Abbey, he returned with the cutting to plant in Appleton as landscaping for his safe return from the Crusades. An offshoot of the Glastonbury Thorn has been sustained in Appleton Thorn ever since. Anecdotal, other theories suggest that this was actually a pagan fertility rite, similar to dancing around the maypole!

Anyway, by the 19th century, the custom had been interwoven into the village's 'walking day', whereby children from Appleton Thorn Primary School walked through the village and sold sports and games at the school. The ceremony



View of St. Cross from the other side. To the right is the thorn tree, decorated with ribbons and ready for the 2017 ceremony.



The ceremony starts with a brass band leading the parade off the village of Appleton Thorn.

Examples of double-page spreads.

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	NAME (STATUS): MANLEY (Village) POPULATION: 414 DISTRICT: Cheshire West and Chester EARLIEST RECORD: Manley, 1086 (Domesday Book) MEANING: Common wood or clearing DERIVATION: From the Old English words (<i>gemann</i> (held in common or communal) and <i>tūn</i> (wood or woodland clearing))
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The original Manley Mills.



St John's church, Manley. There was also a Primitive Methodist church in Manley which was built in 1858, but which closed in 1950.


Manley Geographic Trivia: Manley Mere
Manley is a village and civil parish around seven miles northwest of Chester. Just to the west of the village is Manley Mere where you will find Manley Mere Sail Sports and Adventure Trail. The lake is man-made and is home to a number of water-sports, although the original (and natural) Manley Mere still survives alongside. Meanwhile the adventure trail is around 1.5 miles long and serves up numerous obstacles to contend with. Apparently, a cold water hose is offered at the end to remove all of the mud before you get back in your car...

Manley Historic Trivia: Manley Knoll
In 1912, the Grade II listed house known as Manley Knoll was designed for Llewellyn Jones in what is known as the Arts and Crafts style, having an irregular linear plan with an asymmetrical frontage of two stories including an off-centre porch. To the left of the porch is a timber-framed projection, and to the right is a staircase bay and a service bay, while the rear of the property has four timber-framed gables with a central gable over which is a balcony; each of the gables is decorated with different Cheshire patterns. The house interior was remodelled in 1922 for the Domesday family by the Manchester architect James Henry Sellers. The Domesday family lived at Manley Knoll until 1946 and developed the gardens also along Arts and Crafts lines, with one of the three quarries developed into an unusual quarry garden.



The part of Manley Mere used for sail sports.

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	NAME (STATUS): MARPLE (Town) POPULATION: 25,646, which is comprised of 12,277 (Marple North); 11,409 (Marple South) DISTRICT: Stockport, Greater Manchester EARLIEST RECORD: Marple, early 13 th century MEANING: Pool or stream at the boundary DERIVATION: From the Old English words (<i>gemann</i> (boundary) and <i>pyl</i> (tidal creek, pool or stream))
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Marple Pub: The Navigation
The Navigation is located on the Peak Forest Canal and dates from around 1790. It was so named as it was built to cater for the navvies (navigation engineers) who built the Marple section of the Peak Forest Canal between 1794 and 1796 – or the Peak Forest Navigation as it was known in those days. The Navigation pub is located close to Lock No. 13, one of 16 locks that stretch for around a mile and which raise the canal by 20 ft (6.1 metres). The premier and largest shareholder of the Peak Forest Navigation, was local cotton mill owner Samuel Oldknow. In order to get the locks finished on schedule, and for his boats to be the first to use the canal, Oldknow served the navvies with possets, a milk drink curdled with ale and often spiced – basically an incentive to make them work harder. The possets were actually served up by the Navigation Pub, and made such an impression that the bridge alongside the Navigation has always been known as Posset Bridge.

Marple Church: All Saints
The Grade II listed All Saints' church is the 3rd known church on the Church Lane site to the south of the town. The first was a small black and white timber-framed church built towards the end of the 13th century. By the early 15th century though, the building was little more than a ruin and was required to have 'skewen down in a gale' in 1804. As a result, a new church was built between 1800 and 1811 by architect Richard Goldsmith at a cost of £4,000 – and once again, local cotton mill owner Samuel Oldknow was a major financier, contributing roughly three quarters of the funds, with the other quarter coming from local parishioners. However, by 1875, Goldsmith and Oldknow's Georgian Chapel was proving too small for the congregation, and hence a third church was built around 100 feet (30 metres) to the south of the second. This church was built by architects Medland Taylor and Henry Taylor and consisted of a three-bay nave with a clerestory, north and south aisles, and a two-bay chancel, and cost £2,050 to build. However, although a bell-tower had been included in the plans, it was never constructed (to save on costs) and the bells remained in the Georgian Chapel. The new All Saints' church was consecrated on 30th June 1880, although some services were still being held at the old church.

By 1840, though, the by-now neglected Georgian

Chapel was in a dangerous condition and most of it was demolished. However, the Grade II listed four-stage tower was saved following appropriate strengthening. At the same time, the six original bells of 1816 were re-hung with two new ones, cast in 1963 by John Taylor and Company, thus giving Marple All Saints an appealing ring-of-eight! Today, the isolated tower somewhat unusually stands 30 metres from the tower. All Saints' church, while both churches are approached via two separate lych-gates; the later lych-gate, dating from 1881, is also Grade II listed. The older church still contains memorials, too, including a fine tablet by John Flaxman in memory of Rev. Kelsall Prescott, who died in 1823. Also present is a monument to Samuel Oldknow, who died in 1828, and which was sculpted by famous 19th century sculptor, Francis Legatt Chantrey.