

# WINCKLEY SQUARE TIMES



## Friends of Winckley Square

We had a great turnout to our two Christmas Events. Susan gave her talk **'Three Victorian Christmases in Winckley Square'** to a packed audience. It was such a success we intend to make it a regular annual experience. Hundreds came to our **Christmas Concert** and I am pleased to say we didn't run out of Peter's Parched Peas this year. What most of you don't know is that the Concert was nearly cancelled in the morning. (See page 4). What the public never see is the hard work that is involved by many volunteers (over 40 for our Christmas Concert) to put on a successful event, and believe it or not they were all exceedingly happy but tired at the end of the day.

Our volunteers are busy all the year round and I look back on 2022 and wonder how we managed to fit it all in. The photo (top) is of Judy, our Edith Rigby tour guide who also gives talks to adult groups and in schools. Here she is with Michelle Harrison-Baines and her Year 2 class at Ashton Primary School. The children had a wonderful time and, as you can see, they agreed with the 'Votes for Women' campaign.

Our events start again in March – details will be in our next newsletter, on our website and Facebook. On 6 March I will be giving a talk for Preston Historical Society **'Three Winckley Square Women who shaped Preston'**. You can find details and book on [Eventbrite](#) or contact me if you have difficulty booking.

We look forward to seeing you at one of our events this year.

*Patricia Harrison*

Chair of Friends of Winckley Square

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We get a great deal of support from our **local businesses**. They were so generous this year that our raffle was the best it has ever been. As a voluntary group we are dependent on the generosity of our donors as well as our volunteers who raise funds during the year by leading guided walks, talks and staffing our stalls at events.

### Our great Christmas donors were:

- ★ Barristers Chambers
- ★ David Cox Architects
- ★ Frank Whittle Partnership
- ★ Harrison Drury Solicitors
- ★ Lorraine & Mark Giblin
- ★ Naphthens Solicitors
- ★ Preston North End
- ★ Roberts & Stone Studio
- ★ Service Care Solutions
- ★ BID
- ★ Eckersley Property
- ★ Farleys Solicitors
- ★ Freshfield
- ★ Glenn Cookson
- ★ Hedley & Co
- ★ Keith Johnson
- ★ Vincents Solicitors
- ★ W\_RKSPACE

Interested in donating, volunteering or being placed on our mailing list to receive newsletters and details of events?

Please email [patricia@winckley.org.uk](mailto:patricia@winckley.org.uk)

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Friendsofwinckleysquaregardens



We love seeing your photos of the Square; tag [#friendsofwinckleysquare](#) on Instagram.



# A FAMOUS TREE AND BRANCHES OF A FAMOUS FAMILY

by Steve Harrison

On 10 January 2023 the remains of an old tree toppled over in the NE corner of Winckley Square. The tree had been dead for some time. In fact, when the Square was renewed in 2016 and many plants removed, the dead trunk of the old horse chestnut tree was left in place.

## Why was an exception made for this old horse chestnut tree?

Unusually, the tree has a full history. We know it was planted on 24 May 1835 by John Gorst to celebrate the birth of his nephew, John Eldon Gorst (JEG), whose father was Edward Chaddock Gorst of Winckley Square. Edward built the 4th house on the square at 1 Chapel Street and John built the 5th house at what is now 6 Winckley Square. We wrote about JEG in [FoWS Newsletter 16 in Feb/March 2020](#), you can find this on our website.

The links to the wider Gorst family are fascinating but also shed light on how Society in the 19th century operated.

The continuation of the family name was important to many wealthy individuals. Large legacies could be offered to those who would adopt the surname of another in order to preserve the name for posterity. JEG's great grandfather, Robert Chaddock Gorst, had married Mary Lowndes and moved to Preston in 1760. The Lowndes name would have disappeared in 1797 when Robert Lowndes, the last of the males in the Lowndes family, died without a male heir. To avoid the disappearance of the family name Robert made his will conditional on the adoption of the family name Lowndes. His estate subsequently passed via Mary to her husband Robert Chaddock Gorst and in turn to their descendants.

Peter Smith's Preston History website has a dedicated section on [Preston's Cambridge alumni](#) (section E-G). When we look at the entries for the Gorst men who went to Cambridge, we find five of the entries give the Gorst name but add comments such as 'who took the surname of Lowndes'.

GORST (post LOWNDES), EDWARD CHADDOCK. Adm. pens. (age 18) at TRINITY, Mar. 1, 1852. S. [and b.] of Edward Chaddock Gorst [solicitor, of Preston, Lancs., who took the name of Lowndes]. B. Dec. 6, 1833, at Preston. School, Rugby. Matric. Michs. 1852; B.A. 1856, as Lowndes, E. C.; M.A. 1859. Assumed the surname and arms of Lowndes, by Royal licence, July 18, 1853. Of Palterton Hall, Derbs., and of Castle Combe, Chippenham, Wilts. J.P. for Lancs. and Wilts. D.L. for Wilts. High Sheriff of Wilts., 1874. Died May 13, 1909. Brother of John E. (1853) and Thomas W. (1858). (Burke, *L.G.*, 1925.)

*It is clear that the Gorst family name is retained, and everyone knows the Lowndes name relates to an ancestor/ bequest.*



# Control from beyond the grave!

The terms of the Lowndes legacy affected the daughters as well. The legacy made provision for daughters of Edward. They were each to benefit on marriage from the interest from a legacy of £2,000 (over £170,000 today). The legacy was conditional on their father or his trustees approving of the choice of groom. So, not only is Robert Lowndes controlling from beyond the grave what the beneficiaries are to be called, but also exercising control over the prospective bride's choice of a husband. The good news is that she married William Adam Hulton who was deemed suitable. You might recognise the Hulton name as the man who bought land across the Ribble in Penwortham and built Hurst Grange, its stables and coach house and laid out the parkland. William and Dorothy had eight children. They are buried at Penwortham St Mary's.

The Friends of Hurst Grange Park have been instrumental in the recent restoration of the Coach House. **The Park and Coach House** are well worth a visit.

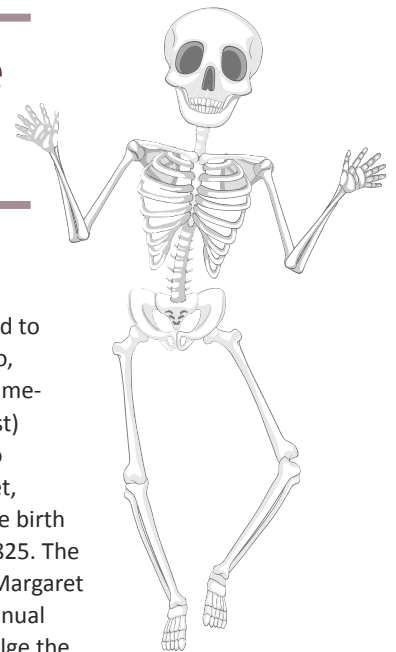


*The Lych Gate, St Mary's Church, Penwortham, dedicated to William and Dorothy: Blog Preston*

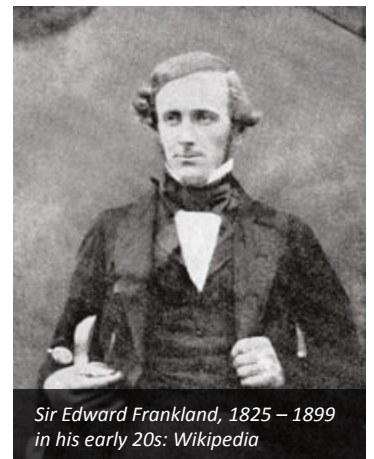
The Gorst family connection still resonates in Preston street names. Gorst Street has now gone; it ran in parallel with Oxford Street in Avenham, Lowndes Street remains.

# Skeleton in the cupboard

In stark contrast to the Lowndes' desire to have the family name used by others, Edward Chaddock Lowndes (Gorst) wanted to keep quiet about his 'illegitimate' son who, nonetheless, was given his father's forename-Edward. Edward Chaddock Lowndes (Gorst) had an affair with a domestic servant who worked in the family home 1 Chapel Street, Winckley Square. Margaret Frankland gave birth to Edward Frankland on the 18 January 1825. The Gorsts wanted the news suppressed but Margaret was supported financially and given an annual annuity. She and her son were not to divulge the name of the father. Margaret later married William Helm of Lancaster, where the family then lived.



The financial arrangement meant young Edward was able to attend good schools. He was apprenticed to a Lancaster pharmacist and went on to become a brilliant and much decorated scientist. He was the first President of the Institute of Chemistry, a personal friend of Charles Darwin, a member of the Royal Academy and was knighted in 1897. A half-brother to JEG but a radically different upbringing. Edward, despite his great fame and success, never really came to terms with having a father who would not recognise him. It's a stark reminder of how being born out of wedlock was a shameful secret in the 19th Century.



*Sir Edward Frankland, 1825 – 1899 in his early 20s: Wikipedia*

## Remains of the horse chestnut tree

The remains of the tree are there to see in Winckley Square. Tony, the warden, is incorporating what is left into the planting in the space where it stood. It will remain a reference point for guided walks around the Square and perhaps it will still be visible for its 200th anniversary in 2035.

*Please note... I am happy to add multiple surnames to my own family name Harrison for anyone who is concerned that their family name will die with them and wishes to preserve the name by offering me a substantial legacy!*

*Thank you for contributions from  
Tony Lewis and Peter Wilkinson of FoWS and of Friends of Hurst Grange Park*



# Earth Stood Hard as Iron

**11am**

Set Up. Volunteers arrive. Plenty of time, we don't open until 2.30.

**11.01am**

**STOP** The temporary flooring laid on the grass, designed to keep people's feet dry, is covered in solid ice. The snow that fell has frozen solid on the surface. It's an ice-rink.

**11.02am**

**ACCESS** The paths are icy and the area around the Peel statue is frozen over.

**11.05am**

**WE NEED TO CANCEL!** We can't put people at risk. SPARKS cannot perform on it. Many of those who attend are 'mature'. We can't go ahead on this ice-covered metal floor.

**11.10am**

**BUT** the sun is shining. Perhaps the ice will thaw.

**11.20am**

**BUT** the sun is low; the buildings are high. There will be no thaw.

**11.30am**

Can we get grit for the surfaces? Richard from PCC sets off to see if he can source grit.

**11.40am**

Our first duty is the safety of those attending. **WE SHOULD CANCEL!**

**11.45am**

900 people have declared interest - they are really look forward to it. **LET'S NOT GIVE UP YET.**

**11.46am**

What if we smash the ice with hammers then rake, brush and shovel away the broken shards?

**11.50am**

Volunteers race home and return like an army of mediaeval peasants clutching farm implements, prepared to do battle with the enemy: AKA the elements. Paul takes the lead with his lump hammer crying 'I am the mighty Thor.' He looks inspired but resists the temptation to bare his chest.

**12 noon**

The site becomes a workspace with specialist smashers, rakers, brushers and shovellers.

**12.05pm**

Richard returns with grit. Tony begins the task of gritting all the paths.

**12.30pm**

The solid floor is cleared. We are 90 minutes behind schedule and none of the gazebos is erected. The volunteer food team arrive but have no gazebo and the oven is not yet in place, let alone lit.

**2.30pm**

Expletives deleted. We are ready. **THE SHOW COULD GO ON!**



Concert photography: Paul Rushton and Sally Cullen

