



An interview with Gerald Whiteway of Lindale- a commentary

Gerald Whiteway (1910-2003) was for many years the Lindale undertaker, a big employer and well-known person in Lindale.

The interview was conducted at Gerald Whiteway's home (High Pines) in Lindale on 17 November 1992 by Denys Vaughan (DV). Transcription and further research was by Peter Roden. DV had previously interviewed Arthur Frearson. Gerald was 82 at the time.

The interview started with DV saying that Gerald had just told him that he was born in Lindale in 1912. According to the 1911 census he was actually **born in 1910**, and his date of birth was registered as 12 Jan 1910 in the Ulverston Registry.

His earliest memory was in 1916 when news came through that his brother had died, in the First World War, and his mother and father were 'so upset'. Military records report that Charles Edgar Whiteway, Regimental No. 18834 in 6th Battalion King's Own Royal Lancaster Regiment, died in Mesopotamia on 3 Aug 1917. He is buried in Baghdad War Cemetery.¹

Gerald went to **Lindale School**, presumably around 1915. There were 140 pupils at that time. He knew that as a little board went up every morning with the total on. Mrs Coward was the infant teacher and Mr Thomas Coward was the Headmaster. Gerald didn't like school. He went to Cartmel Grammar School, probably part time, when he was about ten years old, and stayed till he was 14. He was taught by Mr Greenwood. Gerald remembers gardening work there.

After he left school Gerald helped his brother Clifford Whiteway who had the Lindale Post Office, then called The Stores, on the Main Hill. He took papers round the village in the morning, and also a delivery of groceries.

When he was 16 he decided that he'd like to go into wood working. So he went to Blakemores, on Risedale Hill in Grange, to serve his time. They did joinery work on houses. He became a foreman there before he was 22 (in 1932).

Gerald stayed with Blakemores for seven years, and then **his father, Foliott Whiteway**, died in 1938, aged 70. Gerald had to go down to the local joiner (in Lower Lindale), called Roger Knowles, and put the funeral into his hands. And during the time of the funeral, a few days beforehand, Roger Knowles said 'will you come and work for me?' Gerald said, no, 'I said, I've got a real good job where I am'. When he went down to pay the account, about a fortnight after, Roger Knowles persuaded him to come to Lindale, (to work as an undertaker). And he got into the job of making wheels, as a wheelwright with Walter (Atkinson) and Sam Hoggarth.

Gerald Whiteway **married Doris Park** in 1938, when he had been at **Knowles** for 10 months. (Doris Park had been to school with Arthur Frearson). They had one child, Marie, who went to Canada. Mr Roger Knowles died in 1938 aged 41, twelve months after Gerald started. Mrs Knowles then ran the **undertaking and woodworking business**. Gerald carried on with the Knowles for about 6 or 7 years, but he had different ideas from Mrs Knowles, and he was told by the doctor to find another job, and he started on his own, when he could make his own decisions. So he started **Whiteways Joiners and Undertakers** in the Smithy Hill works. His blacksmith was (Sam) Hoggarth. They made tractor trailers. Robert Casson was a blacksmith at the end of the road (Smithy Hill), and his blacksmiths shop was converted into a bungalow (Smithydale Cottage).

Later in the interview they discussed a transcript of the 1891 census and a 1913 map of Lindale. Gerald Whiteway agreed that John Winder had the shop down the road, (Holly House on Lower Lindale Hill), he was a grocer. He rehearsed incumbents of the Parsonage in Lindale, Mr Irvine, then Buick, Mr Walton, Mr Lord, Mr Harper, John Wilkie, Howard Wilkie.



Jane Bell was his grandmother. Gerald's father, Follriott Whiteway, married Sarah Jane Bell in 1892 in Ulverston Registration District [indexed as Vol 8e page 1315], so probably came to Lindale after the 1891 census. She lived in Fern Cottage, Back Road (see photograph). The 1911 census records that Sarah Jane Bell was still alive as a widow aged 80, and still living at Fern Cottage with daughter Sarah Jane Whiteway, and her husband, Follriott Whiteway, and their family including Gerald.

Gerald commented that he had his first house, Wood Villa, and that he bought Wilson's (George and Chris) **carriage works** (now The Coach House) in an auction sale. He bought all the land and buildings behind the Village Hall, including the **blacksmith's shop and the paint shop**, probably in the 1950s. His father Follriott Whiteway worked for Wilsons for 50 years. His 'father's smithy was up at the carriage works'. He made all the iron work for the carriages; springs, the lamp holders and the steps.

Gerald Whiteway's first wife Doris died in September 1981, aged 66, her date of birth then given as 21 March 1915. Gerald's second marriage was registered in April 1984, his spouse being then named as Edith M Wilson, (George Wilson's widow) known by her second name, Mary.

The interview concluded with a discussion on woodwork. Despite a mention, the interview was not continued. Gerald Whiteway died aged 93 on Boxing Day 2002.

Comments by Sylvia Woodhead 7 November 2016

Thanks are due to Peter Roden for bringing this interview transcript to my notice. The interview raises a number of follow-up questions.

ⁱ NW Evening Post 1 1 November 2016, via John Beckett