

# Backtrack Masthead

Back onto the old map mentioned in a previous article. I have noticed a couple of changes that have been made over the years to old names. The first being that the map refers to the old farmhouse at the bottom of Broad Lane next to Mr Bill Bells bungalow as being Green Lake not Clay Lake as it's called now. The other change to note is that what we now call Stoney Lane (notice the spelling) is in fact Stone Hay Lane. This used to be the main road From Brown Edge to Endon before the Clay Lake Road was made, joining up to Edge Lane at Basnett's Wood and thence to Brown Edge. A Hay was where deer were kept in stalls for winter venison in Saxon times and so refer to a date between 750 and 1066 AD. There are other Hayes locally including Horton Hay, Fegg Hayes and Haywood.



Although this lane now appears to be just a track it was in fact the principal and indeed the only turnpike road between Leek and Newcastle which went via Endon, Brown Edge, Norton Smallthorne Cobridge and Newcastle. If you travel from Cobridge to Smallthorne you can see that the new road to Leek diverts away from the old road just opposite Focus.

Since Stoney Lane was in existence before 1911 (as was the case for Woodlands Avenue at the top of Duke Bank) I believe that it has to be maintained by the County Council. The same goes for the very old roads that join on to Edge Lane which are now not much more than muddy tracks between walls. Since the County Council haven't enough money to even pay for grit this winter then what chance is there that these roads will ever be maintained even as footpaths!

Close examination of the map also shows that the area we now call School Bank was even then a wide open area similar to today, This was before the School and Church was built, but it has a road running around it (Boardman's Bank) before it joins Old Lane. No New Lane of course. However this open space seems to have been a massive outcrop of Rock. Bob Cumberlidge told me that the Church was built of stone excavated from where it was built and that its foundations are on solid rock. The Late Mr Charlesworth from Chapel Lane had seen it built as a boy and told him this. There also seems to be a pool where the Village Hall is now situated. Which explains why, when we were restoring the old school we came across a deep sough or drain that must have been placed then to drain the pool before construction took place.

The above photograph shows the old level of ground to the right before the houses were built



there. The new road could have possibly been cut through by this time.

I forgot to mention in last month's article that the photograph of the house was the first house built in Leonard Drive by Mr Harold Bourne and careful inspection shows that it was actually completed before the other half of the Semi was attached!

This photograph was given to the village archive by his son, Mr John Bourne our Parish Clerk

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Word	Meaning	Derivation
cack	Excretion	ME <i>cakkin</i>
cade	Weak lamb sometimes child	
cag-mag	Poor meat	
cale	To beat or get ahead	
cant	Tell tales	latin <i>canto</i>
casey	Leather football	
chincough	I think it's whooping cough but used when parents are warning children to wrap up in winter.	
chommers	Teeth	
chops	Mouth	
chonnock	Turnip	
chunner	Grumble <i>Wot at chunnerin at</i>	
clem	To be hungry <i>Arm clemmed deeth sirry</i> (starving means to be cold)	
clog again	To get going again	
clog on	To be aged <i>Eys cogin on a bit</i>	
clout	piece of cloth or clothing	OE <i>Clout</i>
cob	Sweat or angry/agitated <i>eyes got a cob on</i>	
cobbed-up	Cluttered up with rubbish	
cockstride	Short distance	
cod	Joke with or to pull someone's leg <i>"Eys coddin thee on"</i>	Norman English
codge	Patch up poorly	
coffer	Grain storage	ME <i>coefre</i>
collywesson	Awkward contrary	
Craft or croft	Small field near farm	
crog-on	Cheating especially with games involving numbers	
crossomical	irritating or perverse	
cunnyfogle	deceitful	
cuther	get heads together for a chat	Scandinavian

During the last couple of months I have been printing my collection of our local dialect words. The most recognised academic researcher on the subject was Mr John Levitt from Keele University. He encouraged me to keep a record of Brown Edge Dialect words and always said that it was the oldest form of English spoken in the UK today. His obituary in the Guardian Newspaper emphasised his knowledge on the subject.

*John Levitt, who has died aged 82, was an adult educationist who believed in learning for its own sake and became increasingly irritated by demands for targets and accreditations. He started as a tutor for the Workers' Educational Association in 1948 and retired 40 years later as director of adult education at Keele University.*

*He was a scholar across the spectrum of English literature, from Anglo-Saxon times to the present day. He published contributions in Margaret Drabble's Oxford Companion to English Literature and entries on 18th-century actors in the 2004 edition of the Dictionary of National Biography.*

*For more than 20 years, until ill-health overtook him, John tutored adult classes at Keele on both Shakespearean and Anglo-Saxon topics. He had an enormous wealth of knowledge of English including Anglo-Saxon literature and, particularly, the origins of, and stories behind, words and their derivations.*

If ever you have listened to "the medieval saga Green Knight being recanted you can instantly recognise the dialect as being from North Staffs even if you can't tell the meaning.

Our rich verbal heritage has been educationally removed from our life and I wonder how long it will be before this is recognised and just as Welsh, Gallic Scots and Cornish is started to be taught again we might see our dialect given more respect.

I just picked a word from the list ie cuther and searched it on Google and found that it is Scandinavian for to talk intimately together and the word cuddle now used is derived from cuther. And cade is old English and French to help a weak lamb or child to survive