

**The Special Edition**

# **Lostock Hall Magazine**

*Doctor* **DOCTOR**



**Memories of Healthcare in  
Lostock Hall**

**LOSTOCK HALL  
MEDICAL CENTRE**

Lancashire  
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*Preview of Dardsley July 2018 – Abhi Dancers*



*Preview of Dardsley July 2018 – DoctorDoctor stand*

# **DOCTOR, DOCTOR**

[www.doctordoctormemories.co.uk](http://www.doctordoctormemories.co.uk)

## **A Project To Celebrate Memories of HealthCare in Lostock Hall**

Devised by **David Pearson**, Practice Manager of Lostock Hall Medical Centre  
Researcher – **Gill Coward**. Volunteer Researcher – **Christine Smith**  
Project Co-ordinator - **Belinda Scarlett**.

In 2016 Dr Craven from Lostock Hall Medical Centre began to look for a new and better home for the practice that was then based in Leyland Road. In January 2017 she noticed that Marylands Children's Nursery in nearby Browndedge Road had closed, and some enquiries quickly established that its substantial building and grounds was available for purchase. After obtaining the appropriate permissions from the NHS, the sale was completed in September 2017 and work to convert the site began in October 2018. Lostock Hall Medical Centre relocated to Browndedge Road in March 2019.

During a consultation with patients in summer 2017 to confirm support for the move, the surprising long medical history of the building began to come to light. Many people remembered the building by its name – Dardsley. Some people told us they had worked at Dardsley when it was home to the regional Prescription Pricing Service until about 10 years previously. And then a patient related that when he was a young teenager in the 1940s he was taken to Dardsley with a broken shin bone to see a doctor.

“Dr Sharples put a wooden splint on my leg and sent me to the Royal Preston Hospital down Meadows Street.” (Brian Carr)

There were also rumours that a tragedy had once occurred in the building – the suicide of a doctor.

With the NHS about to celebrate its 70th anniversary in 2018, it was decided to set up a project to find out more about the history of healthcare in our local area. With the support of Heather Davis at Lancashire Museums, an application was submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund who generously provided a grant of £40,000.

Belinda Scarlett was appointed as Project Co-ordinator, Gill Coward as Researcher and volunteers Christine Smith, Pat Woodcock and Frida Pearson were recruited.

It was decided to call the project Doctor, Doctor to reflect a link between doctors now and in the past, but also to reference a long line of jokes:

“Doctor, Doctor – my wife thinks she’s a chicken ....” (supply your own punch-line).

In July 2018 the Doctor, Doctor project was launched with a community event at Dardsley prior to the start of building work. More than 300 local people came along for tours of the building, health tips from a range of providers and a variety of entertainment. The practice's wonderful Patient Forum (Doreen Singleton, Pat Cooper, Margaret Eckton, David Wooldridge, Ruth Ryan and Janet Cooper) ran refreshment and fundraising stands. Newly appointed Belinda and Gill ran a memories of healthcare stand with forms to record the names of anyone willing to attend or help run a future workshop to start to gather people's stories. Heather from Lancashire Museums provided historic medical objects to promote discussion and shared memories. The building tours gave patients an idea of what was planned for the new practice building and outlined what had been found out already about the history of the Dardsley site.

Workshops run by Belinda assisted by Christine, Pat and Frida have subsequently been held at a range of community venues in the Lostock Hall, including the Age Concern Friendship Club, Lostock Hall Library and Dardsley itself. These sessions have been enjoyable events where people chatted and shared their personal stories of their experiences from past years of going to the doctor or the doctor visiting them at home and the participants have had a chance to handle museum objects. Some people have agreed to have their stories recorded as sound or film. The sound recordings are being deposited with a University of Manchester project called Story of Our Lives that is working nationally to record the people's history of the NHS – [www.nhs70.org.uk](http://www.nhs70.org.uk). The film recordings have been edited into three separate short films that are featuring in a community exhibition at the end of this phase of the project and on the Doctor, Doctor website – [www.doctordoctormemories.co.uk](http://www.doctordoctormemories.co.uk)

The following sets out the details of what we have found out about the history of the Dardsley building and stories relating to five of the doctors that have worked in the area over the last 130 years.

### **DR THOMAS SHARPLES AT DARDSLEY (1886-1923)**

Gill Coward's research (assisted by Christine Smith) has established that Dardsley was indeed originally home to a doctor's practice – for a father and son, Dr Thomas Sharples and Dr Sydney Sharples.

Thomas Sharples was born on 25 January 1852, son of a Preston pharmaceutical chemist, George Sharples working at 7 Fishergate. The Preston Chronicle recorded that Thomas commenced his preliminary medical examinations

at the Royal College of Surgeons in London in 1870, completing his studies at the University of Edinburgh School of Medicine by 1881. That same year he married Agnes Sykes from Farington, a widow with two sons, Robert and James. Thomas and Agnes had a son together, Sydney, in 1882. Thomas first advertised his services as a Physician and Surgeon in the Preston Chronicle from Agnes' home at Wellfield House in Croston Road.

With the growth in population in the village of Lostock Hall and the surrounding area, the Sharples received approval for plans to build Dardsley in 1886. The property is in the name of Agnes, perhaps financed by the bequest from her previous husband who had died in 1869 and her father who had died in 1878. Plans held at Lancashire Archives that the project had restored, show that rooms that are now consulting rooms for Dr Craven and nurses were originally a Drawing Room, Dining Room and Kitchen in the family house. The current Reception Office was Dr Sharples' Surgery with a Consulting Room across the corridor. The current Waiting Room was originally an open walled courtyard with a stable block and coach house behind. The grounds included plans for a tennis court, kitchen garden and a sweeping driveway from Black Lane (now Browndedge Road). Upstairs in what are now offices for the practice, were six bedrooms – one for Thomas and Agnes, one each for their son and Thomas's two stepsons and two bedrooms in the attic, probably for live-in servants.

Dr Thomas Sharples faced a different range of illnesses and injuries than current GPs, and as a private practitioner he would have charged for his services. Infectious diseases were the most pressing concern at a time before vaccinations were common and while sanitation was poor. Measles, diphtheria, smallpox, typhoid, dysentery, tuberculosis and scarlet fever were still killers. The presence of a surgery in the building plans indicates that surgical procedures, maybe including amputations, took place here with the aid of ether or chloroform. Prior to anti-biotics the risk of death from infected wounds would have been a constant concern.

In May 1892 Dr Sharples engaged in an exchange of letters in the Preston Guardian newspaper with the County Medical Officer, Dr Trimble. It was a dispute over the best means of caring for patients with typhoid fever. Dr Sharples favoured removing patients to an isolation ward in Bradkirk Hospital, Walton-Le-Dale. In 1905 Dr Sharples attended another local doctor, Dr Connell, prior to his death from smallpox at the age of only 38, which he had had contracted from a patient at Bradkirk Hospital.

Current patient Graham Hayes has provided a fascinating medical bill from Dr Thomas Sharples dated 14 December 1905 for the sum of £1, 10 shillings, 6 pence for 'professional attendance and medicine' made out to Graham's great grandfather Thomas Rawcliffe of Pickerings Farm. Graham believes it was for the treatment of his great grandmother who died of tuberculosis at

this time. The bill also provides a statement of the surgery hours offered in that year:

SURGERY HOUSE	SUNDAYS
to 10 o'clock	9 to 10 o'clock
2 to 3 o'clock	
7 to 8 o'clock	

As the local doctor prior to the statutory provision of ambulance services, Dr Thomas Sharples would have been called to attend accidents at homes and work places. In May 1885 the Preston Guardian reported that in May Dr Sharples was called to attend to Thomas Culshaw a railway guard who had been run over by railway trucks after falling backwards over the brake lever. He died at the scene. He also attended an accident at the railway of a worker, Hugh Potts, burnt in the face by hot steam while trying to repair the fire box. He was admitted to Preston Infirmary. The Preston Herald records in July 1887 that Dr Sharples treated a three year old girl, Annie Gibson, for burns after she had fallen into a bucket of hot water.

In 1909 Dr Sharples attended the Lucas family in Prospect Place in Lostock Hall. The mother Alice was concerned about the health of her children Ellen aged 6, Alice aged 4, Annie aged 2 and her son John aged only a few weeks. Alice was exhausted through lack of sleep and concerned about Ellen who had consumption (tuberculosis). He attended again to find the mother 'delusional' and convinced she herself had typhoid. Rest in bed was advised. On 4 March Alice gave Ellen and John carbolic acid while her husband and mother were busy with the other children. The baby died immediately and Ellen a few days later. Dr Sharples gave evidence at the inquest. Alice Lucas was committed to Whittingham Mental Hospital and later to Broadmoor, although she survived to return to her family in 1912. A tragic case long before the symptoms of post-natal depression had been recognised.

Dr Sharples served on various committees for Walton Urban District Council and Thomas and his wife Agnes helped raise funds for the building of St James' Church in Lostock Hall completed in 1892. The Preston Guardian of September 1890 recorded that an event held in a marquee on Dr Sharples' field, attend by 1,00 people, included dancing, brass band music and a display of fireworks. The gardens at Dardsley subsequently hosted Sunday School walks and even an open air operetta performance in July 1907 according to the Lancashire Evening Post.

In October 1913 the Preston Herald reported that Dr Sharples 'severely criticised the treatment of the medical profession under the Insurance Act' that had been introduced by David Lloyd George in 1911. This scheme meant that doctors had to treat insured workers (but not their families) for no charge at a fee set and paid by the government.

As was the custom for middle-class and upper-class families of the time, the Sharples employed servants to help run their household. Fred Brown, born in 1882, lived with his wife Rose in Lupton Terrace in Lostock Hall where he was listed as coachman to the doctor (Sharples) in the 1911 Census. Fred is shown in uniform in a photograph (provided by his niece Dorothy Blackburn at a Doctor, Doctor workshop) alongside his sister Alice a maid and the live-in housekeeper Thirza Kay with Mrs Agnes Sharples seated centrally, probably taken in the gardens at Dardsley. Fred drove Dr Sharples in a gig or coach to the many home visits required of doctors in those times – the best paying clients expected to be seen in the comfort of their house. Being seen attending visits in a fine coach with a coachman in uniform was a good means of advertising the services of the private doctor. By 1918 when Fred joined the Royal Air Force during the First World War as an air mechanic, his profession was now listed as chauffeur, suggesting Dr Sharples had acquired one of the new automobiles.

Fred's niece was told stories about her uncle waiting outside, sometimes for several hours, while the doctor attended a patient.

“In the horse and trap he never knew how long he would have to wait or how cold he would be.” (Dorothy Blackburn)

As had been mentioned, at the start of the project a number of people remembered a story about the suicide of a doctor at Dardsley. Staff working in the Prescription Pricing Bureau from the 1960s and 1970s apparently used to scare each other with tales of a ghost haunting the attic and the staircase. The NHS Business Bulletin for 2008 referred enigmatically to the 'Dr Sharples bannisters'. In carrying out research it was feared that the Sharples doctor's practice had ended in some sort of tragedy. But a death certificate for Dr Sydney Sharples from 1948 gave his cause of death as cancer. The local legend it seems relates to a much earlier event.

In June 1923 Agnes Sharples aged 78 died from endocarditis (heart infection) and septicaemia. Thomas died 10 days later, aged 71, and the Lancashire Daily Post reported on his inquest. The day before his death he visited local colleagues in a taxi and said 'good-bye' and that he was 'done for'. On his return he told his son Sydney that he had taken an ounce of nepenthe, an opium based drug, '15 times the ordinary maximum dose' and collapsed on the sofa at Dardsley. Despite treatment he died in the morning. The newspaper recorded the coroner's verdict:

“His wife's death must have induced an abnormal and morbid state of mind and he would therefore record a verdict of suicide whilst of unsound mind.” (Lancashire Daily Post)

This is a tragic story, but also a romantic one, which resonates to this day the importance of providing support to those suffering bereavement. The grave of Thomas and Agnes Sharples can be seen in Preston Cemetery (Section BB (Church of England), Grave Reference 430)

### **DR SYDNEY SHARPLES AT DARDSLEY (1912-1948)**

Sydney Sharples was born in Farington in 1882 and attended Hutton Grammar School. He registered as a medical student in 1902 and studied and trained in Liverpool and on the 1911 Census was shown as working as a House Physician at the David Lewis Northern Hospital in Liverpool.

In 1912 he was awarded a commission in the Lancashire Territorial Force which meant he was mobilised in 1914 as soon as the First World War broke out, rising to the rank of Captain in the Royal Army Medical Corps in October 1915 (according to the London Gazette). It is reported the commission was backdated to April 1915 – perhaps he had been acting up in the role for a period. He married Jenny Foulkes Hallmark (from a Preston family) while on training in Middlesex in September 1915 the day before embarking for France. Over the next few months the records indicate that he suffered poor health and for a period was returned to England. Despite an appeal due to his continuing ill health, he was posted back to France for active duty in April 1916. His father Thomas then took steps to bring his son home for good. Writing to the War Office on 20 April 1916, Thomas said that due to ill-health he was unable to cope as doctor for his many patients in Lostock Hall, Penwortham, Walton-Le-Dale, Longton and Howick, unless his son Sydney was returned home to help him. Thomas enclosed a medical statement by a Dr Turnbull of his onset of cardiac disease. A special leave of absence was granted and Sydney returned to England in June 1916. Sydney's military file does not include any further entries, but it appears that his active service did not resume.

Gillian Bennett has provided a wonderful photograph probably set in the garden at Dardsley showing Sydney in military dress standing between his mother Agnes and what is likely his wife (or soon to be wife) Jenny, with his father Thomas seated centrally in the foreground. It is intriguing to guess at the precise date of the photograph. Does it date prior to the war when Sydney was in the Territorials, after the start of the war before he was sent to France for the first time in September 1915, during Sydney's sick leave from November 1915 to March 1916, or is it after he is granted a leave of absence in June 1916? Gill Coward's research on Sydney's uniform in the photograph suggests the glimpse of his left sleeve may show a captain's insignia, indicating the photograph is no earlier than April 1915. The flowers on the bushes mean that it is springtime or early summer. Our guess is that the photograph marks something significant for the family – a garden engagement party for Jenny



and Sydney in about May 1915? We will probably never know for sure. But is the preoccupied look on Sydney's face that of a man worried about going off to war?

After the war Sydney became President of the Lostock Hall branch of the Royal British Legion. According to local legend for meetings at the Tardy Gate pub he was known to carry up the stairs a fellow ex-soldier who had been paralysed by his injuries. On his death Sydney left £300 to the Legion that helped them buy the land next to Dardsley that they occupy until today.

From 1918 Lancashire like the whole country had to deal with the terrible influenza epidemic. In 1930 it is recorded that Lostock Hall and Walton Le Dale faced a measles epidemic.

In 1935 the Sharples' chauffeur Fred Brown submitted plans to build the bungalow still known as Denham on the land adjoining Dardsley. Sydney obviously needed him close at hand and his duties extended to that of gardener. A photograph provided by Fred's niece Dorothy Blackburn shows Fred mowing the lawn at Dardsley. Dorothy remembers that her father helped collect medical fees from Sydney's patients on a Friday evening.

By the start of the Second World War in 1939, Dr Sydney Sharples was joined by a young doctor called Dr Sydney Cohen who worked and lived at Dardsley. On 27 October 1940 a German aircraft dropped two bombs on Lostock Hall that hit Ward Street and Princess Street with no warning resulting in the deaths of 25 people. It is recorded that three doctors attended to the wounded that evening into the early hours of the morning – Dr Sydney Sharples, Dr Sydney Cohen and Dr Patrick MacKay Logan.

The Doctor, Doctor project has uncovered a range of memories about Dardsley and Dr Sydney Sharples from the 1940s.

"I seem to recall having to ring the bell to gain admittance. Once inside, a highly polished linoleum covered hallway led to a waiting room. Everywhere was spotlessly clean, orderly and quiet." (Josephine Mann)

"There were some grim pictures on the wall that scared me as a child when I visited." (John Bland)

"My first memory of Dardsley is coming with my mother and thinking, 'oh dear, what a huge building it is'. I was frightened, I really was." (Mabel Hartley)

"All I remember is that my sisters used to take me for a walk, they used to walk me down the wall and then Mr Brown would come out and shout at us!" (Tony Billington)

“I don’t ever remember seeing Dr Sharples outside without a long black coat and a and a bowler hat ... He was very quiet and stern, no conversation that I remember.” (Terry McNulty)

“You had to pay a fee if you came to the doctors. My father was in the Army ... When he was in France the doctors did waive the fees for the time being.” (Mabel Hartley)

“My mother had to hold my brother’s leg while Dr Sharples stitched it. My brother screamed.” (Margaret Norris)

“Dr Sharples used to visit in a Ford Prefect car. Dr Sharples and Dr Cohen had the same type of car – Dr Sharples’ was a black one, Dr Cohen’s was green. Dr Sharples had a chauffeur in full uniform that lived in the bungalow next to Dardsley.” (Terry McNulty)

“Dr Sharples was very kind and gentle, especially with children.” (Gladys Ryding)

Dr Cohen’s widow, Faye Cohen (they were married in 1946), only remembers Dr Sydney Sharples as a sick and bed-ridden man. Dr Sharples died of cancer in April 1948, just three months before the start of the NHS. Faye has kindly given us a collar tag for Dr Sharples’ dog that she had in her possession. It is just inscribed:

“Dr Sharples. Lostock Hall.”

As the local doctor, everyone would have known where he lived. It is said that his favourite dog was buried in the garden at Dardsley.

The deeds of Dardsley state that the building was transferred to the Joint Pricing Committee for England by Jenny Sharples in June 1951.

Jenny died in 1967 whilst living in Longton. Both Jenny and Sydney are buried in the Sharples family grave with Thomas and Agnes in Preston Cemetery.

## **DR SYDNEY COHEN – DARDSLEY AND COOTE LANE (1939-1986)**

Sydney Cohen was born in Salford in 1911. He qualified as a doctor in Manchester in 1933, practising first in Salford. The 1939 register shows him as working and residing at Dardsley with Jenny and Sydney Sharples.

As mentioned above, he attended the dead and wounded at the Ward Street / Princess Street bombing in October 1940. A current patient has shared the story told to her by her mother:

“When it happened my mother was standing on the dining room table having her wedding dress shortened. Dr Cohen pulled her out, she was buried eighteen hours so she was really lucky to be alive. She was crushed from the waist down and they said she would never have children, but then she had me.” (Pat Cooper)

During the Second World War Dr Cohen served with distinction with the Royal Army Medical Corps, just as Dr Sydney Sharples had in the First World War. He married Fanny (Faye) Kwasnek in Manchester in 1946. After the death of Dr Sharples in 1948, Dr Cohen opened his own practice in Coote Lane, Lostock Hall.

The Lancashire Evening Post records Dr Cohen giving evidence at the inquest into the suicide of waggon repairer John Malley in April 1955 and confirming the death of Hugh Baxter from suicide by hanging in April 1956.

Keith Coles’ photograph from 1965 shows Dr Cohen in Coote Lane about to go on a home visit in his Vauxhall Victor.

Dr Cohen retired in 1986 and died in 1993. His widow Faye still lives locally.

Many local people have shared their memories of this long-serving community doctor.

“Dr Cohen was an outstanding lovely doctor” (Kathleen Sanders)

“All my family went to him on Coote Lane. He was lovely.” (Wendi Whittle)

“I even remember him driving us home after the surgery. Don’t make them like that anymore, a real gentleman.” (Julie Saul)

“He used to let me press the bell for the next patient.” (Berni Coles-Winder)

“He didn’t suffer fools gladly, but if you were ill there was no one better.” (John Bland)

“Dr Cohen expounded the body heal thine self to me in the early 80s. Stop drinking, change your eating habits and was only pleased with me when I told him I did not smoke.” (David Forster)

“Remember him doing a surprise visit Christmas Day when we (3 children) were ill with tonsillitis and he told my mother off for allowing us downstairs to open our presents.” (Carole Baker Green)

“Always found Dr Cohen was a good doctor, but he hadn’t a bedside manner.

You never knew what mood he was in.” (Norman Booth)

“Dr Cohen got on the phone and said to the consultant ‘I want this child in now and I want an apology for Mrs Cooper’.” (Pat Cooper – over action that saved her baby son’s kidney)

“The waiting room at Coote Lane at first was upstairs. When it was your turn to go down you just you had to look around to see who was next. Sometimes there was an argument at the top of the stairs about whose turn it was.” (Barbara Southward)

“I always understood that Sydney was totally dedicated to his work and he loved it. Every day his morning surgery started at 9, followed by house-calls before he came home for lunch, more house-calls then followed with his afternoon surgery continuing until at least 8 o’clock in the evening.” (Faye Cohen)

### **DR WILLIAM COLIN-THOMÉ – WATKIN LANE, CROSTON ROAD, LEYLAND ROAD (1948-1977)**

Born in August 1911 in Ceylon, now Sri Lanka, Dr William James Charles Colin-Thomé completed his pre-registration examination in Elementary Science at Ceylon Medical College in March 1931. He continued his studies at the public medical school in Colombo, that later became the University of Ceylon. In March 1947 Dr Colin-Thomé and his family arrived in Liverpool on the Canadian Pacific Steamship, The Empress of Australia. Dr Colin-Thomé served as the Medical Officer during the six week voyage. He then completed his medical training in Edinburgh.

By 1948 the family settled in Lostock Hall to join members of their evangelical Christian church and Dr Colin-Thomé set up a practice ‘over the bridges’ at 109A Watkin Lane. It is said that he and Dr Cohen in Coote Lane supported each other if either had time off work. The family for a period lived at 310 Leyland Road. Dr Colin-Thomé employed Marina McNulty (née Tuson) as his secretary and later his housekeeper. By 1961 Dr Colin-Thomé had a combined house and surgery at 25a Watkin Lane. In the 1970s he entered a partnership with Dr Ghosh in Croston Road (now Medicare) and then later had his own practice building at 464 Leyland Road.

In 1977 he suffered a severe stroke which forced his retirement, but he stayed living in Lostock Hall until his death in 1987. He named his house in Watkin Lane Taprobane an old name from Sri Lanka.

Many people have described fond memories of this much loved doctor:

“He was a lovely, lovely doctor, a family doctor who listened to people. That’s why the surgery was always full. Everybody loved him.” (Marina McNulty, Secretary and Housekeeper for the Doctor)

“He was a great doctor. When he did home visits he would make himself at home. When my son had chickenpox he stayed for nearly 2 hours.” (Brenda Whiteside)

“He always had a tub of sweets for the children.” (Sue Cornish)

“Dr Colin-Thomé became a family friend. He used to pop round for a cup of tea and to watch television.” (David Tuson)

“You couldn’t wish for anyone better. For my first pregnancy they told my husband they were going to move me to Royal Preston because I got complications. But they rang Dr Colin-Thomé and he came to Chorley Hospital and he helped me and delivered Ian my eldest son there.” (Irlene Booth)

“He was so friendly. He was always inviting people round to his house with his family.” (Pauline Nutley)

“He was my doctor when I was a little girl. He’d be sat behind this big desk and he’d be smoking a cigar and he would tell us off if we weren’t behaving. He was lovely. He was always smiling and laughing.” (Denise Yarwood)

“I have in my possession and have read literally scores of letters of love and appreciation received from patients on his retirement. His very being influenced me to become a GP.” (Prof David Colin-Thomé, son)

## **PRESCRIPTION PRICING AT DARDSLEY (1951-2008)**

On 30 January 1951 a plan to make building conversions to Dardsley was submitted by the Joint Pricing Committee. The organisation using the site became known as the Preston Prescription Pricing Bureau (or Authority). Further changes to the building were submitted in 1963 and 1965. None of the plans survive in the archive. It is not certain therefore when the substantial single-storey extension was added to the building. A ground plan within the Dardsley deeds dated February 1966 shows the site still without the extension, but this is contradicted by people who worked there in the 1950s. One lady who worked there as a docketing clerk in 1959 has stated:

“We were in the older part of the building and the pricers in the new extension.” (Dorothy Kazer)

The Prescription Pricing Bureau provided employment for predominantly

female staff, as many as 70 working on shifts from early in the morning into the night. Sydney Rutter the caretaker says he opened the building up between 6am and 9am and the late shift ran until 10pm. The pricers worked in teams of six in a large open-plan office, sorting prescriptions delivered by the chemists by issuing doctor, to calculate payments due to the pharmacists. The building and its staff had a major impact on the local community. As a young man living in the area, Terry McNulty remembers fondly that he and his mates would refer to the place as the 'talent factory'.

The service was amalgamated with the Bolton office and closed in 2008. The NHS Business Magazine said it had become known as the 'pipe and slippers division' as the majority of the staff lived locally.

The Doctor, Doctor project has collected some of the memories of ladies that worked at Dardsley during these years:

"I came straight here from school. There were only twelve of us in this big building – it was wonderful. We used to sit out in the garden. We found an attic with a wind up gramophone and we used to dance up there at lunch. We had a really good time." (Sheila Tyrer, née Fazackerley, part of the first team in 1951)

"We were rushed off our feet for 2 weeks in the month when all the prescriptions came in and I remember thinking how on earth do they read some of the handwriting." (Dorothy Kazer)

"After we got paid we would go to the chemists for make-up or nail-varnish. Then it was down to the newsagents where we would all get a different bag of sweets. These were then passed around the office later. Happy days!" (Christine Billington)

"I was a copy typist for the secretary, Mrs Canning, who worked for the Superintendent, Mr Harris. Mrs Canning was originally from Holland. Mr Harris lived in Brownedge Road. They were both lovely." (Judith Shaw, worked at PPB 1965-69)

"As a young trainee in about 1978 we were given some unusual jobs. I had to collect money and lunch orders off the 70 or so ladies every day for sandwiches or chips. I remember being so worried one day when I forgot to get the mushy peas! At Christmas all the trainees had to sing carols for the rest of the staff. I hated it. But we had such fun on a Christmas shopping trip down to London." (Alison Aspin, née Heaney)

## **DR RUBAN PRASAD – 410 LEYLAND ROAD (1977-2008)**

In 1977 Dr Ruban (Roopendra) Prasad began working from 464 Leyland Road, taking over the practice from Dr Colin-Thomé. Born in Patna in Bihar province in northeast India in 1942, he completed his initial medical training at the Prince of Wales Medical College in Patna, before coming to the UK in 1968. He furthered his studies at the Royal College of Surgeons in Glasgow and worked as a junior doctor at a number of hospitals in England and Wales before moving into general practice.

In 1979 Dr Prasad moved the practice to 410 Leyland Road (the previous home for Lostock Hall Medical Centre) into a building which had previously been Mr and Mrs Eccles' old furniture shop. In 1981 he bought the neighbouring property in 408 Leyland Road. For a period in 1985 Dr Prasad also ran Dr Cohen's practice in Coote Lane, before combining the two services. Dr Prasad took on other doctors as his partner at different points, in particular Dr Singh and then Dr Umapathy. Dr Ewa Craven joined in 2007.

Dr Prasad was very active in the profession serving on British Medical Association Committees and Chairman of the South Lancashire Local Medical Committee. He frequently gave interviews about medical work to the local media. In 1991 the Lostock Hall Medical Centre building was extended with an official opening in March 1991.

Throughout this period the practice saw the development of the secretary and receptionist roles so important to support the work of the GP. For example Pat Cook and Ellen Price worked for the practice for many years.

He retired in April 2008 and patients and colleagues, including Dr Craven and Dr Umapathy, joined him for a celebratory event where he said 'I could not have wished for a better send off. I have had a good innings. I feel very satisfied and I have made lots of good friends'. Dr Prasad died in 2015, marking in many ways the end of an era.

"The lady who lived in the flat above the surgery did all of the surgery cleaning. There was no separate office and I used the Doctor's portable typewriter on an examination couch. I worked just four hours per week at first. I typed all the Doctor's letters and reports. I carbon copied the prescriptions and when the Doctor saw the patient he then tore one copy off, signed it and gave it to the patient." (Pat Cook, Dr Prasad's Secretary)

"I loved working at the practice and the sense of community. As the years went on patients became a lot more demanding and less willing to treat themselves. The job of a receptionist has got harder." (Ellen Price, Receptionist)

## Concluding Remarks

With the opening of Lostock Hall Medical Centre at Dardsley by Dr Craven it seems healthcare in the area has come full circle. What would Dr Thomas Sharples think?

“I think it is a wonderful thing that Dardsley is being reused. Because there will be more room, there will be more local services for us all.” (Eileen Murray, patient)

Doctor’s services and the challenges of healthcare have seen many changes. Mainly gone are the terrible infectious diseases of the past, but the demands of an aging population and an expectation that every illness should be treatable, brings new pressures. The doctors shared with the people of Lostock Hall in the experience of two world wars, the introduction of the NHS and development of other community health services. Participants in this project have spoken fondly of the doctor living in amongst their community, known and respected by everyone, accessible, visiting their homes and sometimes becoming their friends. What lessons might this provide for the future?

The Doctor, Doctor project does not plan to end here. A touring exhibition is to follow and if further funding can be obtained a wider range of workshops and activities to share the memories and stories we have gathered to a wider audience.

Many thanks to all the participants and everyone that has kindly made available documents and photographs. Thank you for sharing this important part of your lives.

David Pearson  
Belinda Scarlett  
Heather Davis

Gillian Coward  
Pat Woodcock

Christine Smith  
Frida Pearson

*In memory of Dr Krishna Singh (1950-2019)*

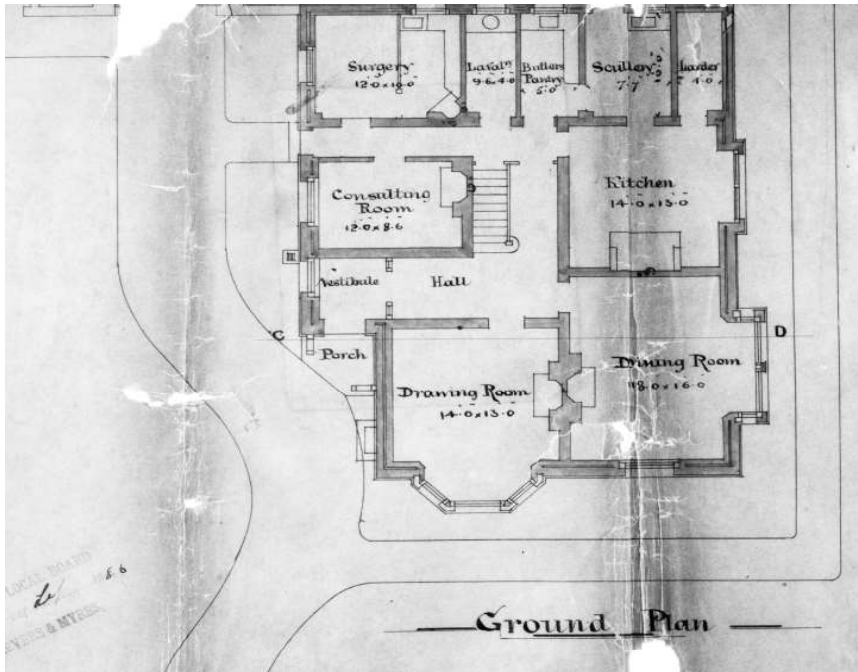
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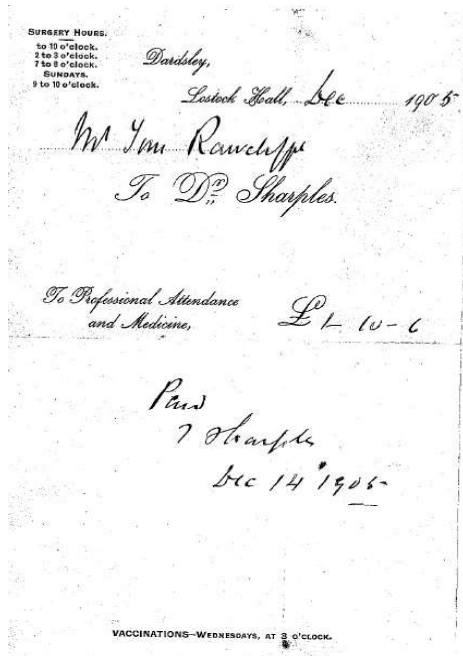




*Doctor, Doctor workshop at Dardsley in 2019*



*1886 Detail of original plans of Dardsley (courtesy of Lancashire Archives)*



1905 Medical Bill from Dr Thomas Sharples to Thomas Rawcliffe (courtesy Graham Hayes)



Agnes Sharples with housekeeper Thirza Kay, maid Alice Brown and chauffeur Fred Brown c.1915 (courtesy Dorothy Blackburn)



*Dr Thomas Sharples (seated) with Dr Sydney Sharples in military dress and their wives Jenny and Agnes c.1914 (courtesy of Gillian Bennett)*

**My son should be at once released from his military duties in order to administer to the wants of my many hundreds of patients who have practically no one to attend to them.**

**Failing your support I feel that the consequences both to myself and to my patients may end in tragedy.**



*19th century Nephente bottle (USA)*



*Dr Sydney Sharples (courtesy Gillian Bennet)*



*Fred Brown mowing the lawn, c.1940 (courtesy Dorothy Blackburn).*



*Ward Street / Princess Street bombing aftermath 1940  
(South Ribble Museum)*



*Dr Sharples dog collar tag (courtesy Faye Cohen).*



*Dr Cohen with his Vauxhall Victor, 1965 (courtesy Keith Coles)*



*Dr Cohen retirement party, 1986*



*Dr Colin-Thomé (courtesy Prof David Colin-Thomé)*



*Dr Colin-Thomé retirement, 1977*



*Sheila Tyrer, Norma Stones (and Elvis), Prescription Pricing Bureau, 1950s*





*Sheila Tyrer, Norma Stones, Marjorie Norris, Dorothy Howard  
on a PPB outing in the 1950s*



*Prescription Pricing staff in the open-plan office, 1960s*



*Dr Prasad opening of extension in 1991*



*Dr Craven's consultation room, previously the drawing room at Dardsley*

# **LOSTOCK HALL MEDICAL CENTRE**

## **HEALTH & WELLBEING**

In its new expanded home the practice is starting to host a range of supporting health and wellbeing sessions available for patients and local people. This currently includes the following:

### **DESMOND – For people with Type 2 Diabetes**                      FREE

- A way of finding out more about Type 2 diabetes
- A resource to help you manage the changes diabetes brings to your life
- A opportunity to meet and share experiences with others

To find out more. Tel: 01772 777620, E: [desmond@lancashirecare.nhs.uk](mailto:desmond@lancashirecare.nhs.uk)  
[www.desmond-project.org.uk](http://www.desmond-project.org.uk)

### **MINDFULNESS COMMUNITY GROUP**                      Small charge applies

- Allow yourself to slow down and to notice your thoughts, feelings and body sensations

Contact Linda. Tel: 07849532966, E: [Imduckworth3655@gmail.com](mailto:Imduckworth3655@gmail.com)

### **EMOTIONAL FREEDOM TECHNIQUES and REIKI**                      Small charge applies

- Helping you improve your emotional wellbeing
- Reducing stress and anxiety

Contact Karen. Tel: 07903 916639, E: [Karen@karenpeddieholistics.co.uk](mailto:Karen@karenpeddieholistics.co.uk)  
<https://karenpeddieholistics.co.uk>

The practice plans to develop this offer in the coming months and years with a vision to provide a holistic health and well-being centre for the whole community. Future healthy activities might include:

- Yoga    Reminiscence workshops
- Well-woman self-help groups – Dr Craven is a specialist GP in Gynaecology and already provides an extensive contraception and menopause service

Watch this space!

# LOSTOCK HALL MEDICAL CENTRE

Dardsley  
Brownedge Road  
Preston PR5 5AD

*A Family Friendly Practice at the Heart of the Local Community*



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