

-:MODDERSHALL:-

Moddershall is a pretty village, sometimes described as a 'Little Switzerland', which once belonged to the Kibblestone township and quarter in Stone ancient parish. It is situated on a tributary of Scotch Brook, two miles downhill and to the south-west of Fulford. The name Moddershall comes from 'Modred's hall', the hall being mentioned in the Domesday Book, 'Modred' being the first Anglo to settle there. Scotch Brook itself flows down Moddershall Valley to meet the River Trent in Stone. In the last two centuries there have been at least eight mills situated on Scotch Brook, some being cloth fulling mills and some grinding flint for the pottery industry. Towards the end of the 19th century Sir M. Lionell Pilkington, Bart, was Lord of the Manor and he and Sir Smith Child were the principal land owners.

By 1871 the population of Moddershall and Rough Close together was 281 and by the time of the 1881 census there were 140 residents living in the 22 households in Moddershall (with one uninhabited) and the 10 households in adjoining Knenhall (with one uninhabited).

SUMMARY OF THE 1881 CENSUS RETURNS FOR MODDERSHALL:-

<u>HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD</u>	<u>AGE</u>	<u>BORN</u>	<u>HEAD'S OCCUPATION</u>	<u>WIFE</u>	<u>IN HOUSE</u>
1 – Thomas Adderley	60	Babbington, Ches.	retired farmer	Jane	5
2 – Richard Jenkinson	50	Stone	cordwainer	Mary	6
3 – William Winfield	60	Stone	blacksmith	Elizabeth	2
4 – Mary A. Sutton	63	Middlewich	annuitant	-	2
5 – George Stubbs	38	Stone	farmer with 150 acres	Elizabeth	11
6 – John Shaw	27	Stone	farmer with 80 acres	Ann	4
7 – Sarah Shaw	30	Field	farmer with 54 acres	-	8
8 – George Rushton	31	Stone	agricultural labourer	Ellen	2
9 – Susannah Hawkins	53	Stafford	-	-	2
10 - uninhabited					
11 – George Boulton	42	Stone	gardener/sub postmaster	Mary	7
12 – John Hill	56	Stoke-on-Trent	dairy farmer with 445 acres empl.18 men & 3 boys	Louisa	9
13 – Thomas Brain	27	Stone	agricultural labourer	Teresa	3
14 – Thomas Rushton	69	Trentham	agricultural labourer	Martha	7
15 – Phillip Rogers	83	Stone	farmer/miller 'Wild Boar'	Fanny	6
16 – Ann Walker	91	Stone	-	-	2
17 – Joseph Rigby	71	Dilhorne	farmer	-	1
18 – Thomas Smith	67	N.K.Staffs.	farmer with 9 acres	-	2
19 – Thomas Boulton	77	Stone	woodman 'Moddershall Oaks'	-	2
20 – Samuel Boulton	38	Stone	ag.lab 'Moddershall Oaks'	Mary	3
21 – William Moss	29	Stone	ag.lab. 'Moddershall Oaks'	Elizabeth	7
22 – John Charnock	60	Upholland, Lancs.	cordwainer 'Moddershall Oaks'	-	3

SUMMARY OF THE 1881 CENSUS RETURNS FOR KNEHALL:-

<u>HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD</u>	<u>AGE</u>	<u>BORN</u>	<u>HEAD'S OCCUPATION</u>	<u>WIFE</u>	<u>IN HOUSE</u>
1 – Philip Stevenson	76	Stone	tailor	Harriet	2
2 – Thomas Tabbenor	42	Stone	agricultural labourer	Catherine	4
3 – James Wooton	38	Stone	agricultural labourer	Jane	6
4 – James Dutton	58	Stoke-on-Tern, Shr.	agricultural labourer	Ann	4
5 – George Goodwin	51	Stone	blacksmith	Hannah	8
6 – Thomas Mollart	46	Stoke-on-Trent	farmer with 118 acres	Mary	6
7 – uninhabited					
8 – Alfred Hart	43	Ranton	farmer	Rosanna	7
9 – Enoch Oberry	54	Eccleshall	cordwainer	Dinah	5
10 – James Corbishley	57	Leek	farmer with 50 acres	Ellen	4

There are one or two buildings of note on the north side of the village. In about 1785 a schoolhouse was built near Berry Hill at Knenhall using £30 left by Mr.Hyatt. In 1818 it was found that this school was only capable of taking 15 scholars and by 1844 when the Moddershall National School was built it had fallen into a delapidated condition and was eventually sold for £47 in 1870. Moddershall National School was erected on land donated by Lady Pilkington, and the small endowment to Knenhall School known as Hyatt's Charity was then made available for the free education of poor children in Moddershall. Divine services were held in the school rooms. By 1892 the school was capable of taking 40 pupils and the average attendance was 30, including what were recorded as being "6 poor children". By 1904 the school could take 60 pupils and the average

attendance was 48.

Among the past master and mistresses of Moddershall National School were:-

Alice Porter (Miss)	1863
Annie Clark (Miss)	1872
Ada Powers (Miss)	1876
Alice Mary Labrum (Miss)	1880
Hannah Mollart (Miss)	1884
Annie Broadbent (Miss)	1892
? Bygrave (Miss)	1904
Kate Webb (Miss)	1921

All Saints Mission Church, towards Knenhall, was built in 1903 by Mrs. Godfrey Wedgewood of 'Idlerocks' and her sisters, but it was taken down and rebuilt on firmer foundations in 1993 due to mining subsidence. The Church is built of Hollington stone and has a bell turret and a lychgate. 'Idlerocks' was a red-brick mansion house set in 90 acres of wooden grounds and had some extensive views towards the west. Then in 1907/1908 Josiah Clement Wedgwood IV, a descendant of Josiah Wedgwood I who had spent some years in South Africa, designed and built Moddershall Oaks House. The house, which is usually known as 'The Ark', is a wooden bungalow built in South African style.

A couple of hundred years or so ago, on the road through Moddershall Oaks, a man was thrown from his horse and died from his injuries. His body was found on the road the next day, with the horse grazing in a nearby field, and from time to time the man's ghost has been seen riding a white horse. By the 19th century this spot was known as 'the frightening'. Another happening in Moddershall in the 19th century was the haunting of Prospect House or Rose Cottage by a lady traveller who called at the house in a poor condition and died before morning, her ghost finally being 'laid' when the roof of the house was taken off.

Closer to the centre of the village itself stands Moddershall Old Manor House, now used as a riding stables, and nearby is 'The Boar Inn', originally known as 'The Wild Boar', with its mill pool where the Boar Mill once stood. In 1868 Samuel Malkin was the miller there and he ground bone, flint and corn. It was closed in 1954 and has since been demolished.



Among the past landlords and landladies of the 'Wild Boar' were:-

Philip Rogers	1863 to 1884
William Shaw	1892
Samuel Malkin	1904
Mrs. Alice May Smith	1928 to 1940

The brook which flows out of the 'Wild Boar' mill pool leads downhill to Lower Moddershall where it used to drive three mills, though only two still survive, Mosty Lee Mill and Splashy Mill. These mills ground corn but were then set up to grind flint for the Potteries and were in use until the 2nd World War. Hayes mill and Ivy mill further down the valley continued to be used until the late 1970's. Unfortunately Foot and Mouth disease broke out at Idlerocks in Moddershall parish in late 1967.