

# History of

## Coles', Moorpool & The Eyre St Thomas Day Trust

The Trust was formed by the unification, of three small Rampton Charities whose common origins were for poor relief in the Civil Parish of Rampton.

### Moorpool Charity

The oldest of all the Rampton charities, no record is known of the founder, it may date back to medieval times because its original name was 'The Town Acre Charity'. At the time of the black death, Rampton was classed as a small town. Parliamentary Returns of 1786 state an unknown person in the past, gave an acre of marsh meadow land, in the area known as Moorpool Furlong off Torksey Ferry Road, at Rampton, vested in the 'Overseers of the Poor'. In 1828 the annual rent of the field was £1, with the purpose to generate a profit for the benefit of the poor. At Lammas, the Marsh Meadow was thrown open as a common.

Lammas is from Old English for loaf feast and was formally a festival held in England on 1st Aug when bread made from the first harvest of corn was blessed. The Crops were sold annually at the Annual Parish Meeting producing between £3 and £4 in the late 1820's. The money was paid in January after the sale and distributed in spring in small sums by the Overseers among the poor widows and others of the parish.

The 1845 Inclosure Award Act declared that the field shall be "in trust for charitable purposes of the people of Rampton".

The name of the field changed over the centuries. Rampton was no longer a town and because the Eyre family reorganised the land at the time of the Inclosure Act, the size of the field reduced to half an acre. By the end of the 19th Century it was referred to as "The Half-Acre Charity Close" & "Marshfield Poor Close", before World War 1 it was called "Marsh Field Charity". In 1915 it came to be known by its final name, Moorpool Charity. The villagers at the time named it 'Moorpool' probably due to its location off of Torksey Ferry Road within the greater area known as 'Moorpool Furlong' in the Marsh Meadow and 'Charity' because the field was owned in trust for the charitable purposes for the benefit of the poor of the Parish.

Moorpool Charity field continued to be rented to a local farmer, by March 1991 the annual rent being £20. One or two elderly residents recalled playing on Moorpool Field as children, "because it was a good place to dig sand for making Sandcastles". In 1996 when Rampton quarry was expanded the field became part of the quarry workings.

### Coles' Charity

The 2nd oldest of the charities, named in honour of Gervase Cole, who, by his will, dated 2nd February 1703, gave to the poor of the Parish of Rampton, a close (field) called 'Watkin Close', abutting Moor Lane, "to hold to them, forever, the profits thereof". Originally the income was dispersed by the Overseers of the Poor, providing one dozen penny loaves of white bread every Sunday in the Church Porch after Service, for the poorest inhabitants of the Parish attending church. When there was no Service, the Overseers delivered it to the poorest inhabitants.

Almost 1 acre in size, by 1828 it was let to Samuel Fisher for £2 per year; by that time, the Overseers of the Poor of Rampton Parish collected the rent and paid a local baker to make 18 penny loaves each Sunday with a share of the bread being saved for those absent from Church due to illness.

The annual rent of Coles' field remained at £2 until 1963, when it was increased for the first time in almost 150 years to £2 and 10 shillings. Bread rationing after World War 2 ceased the tradition of bread for the poor in Rampton. On 30th March 1953 Mrs Minnitt Proposed and it was agreed that donations of money to "those in need of a little assistance" be the new purpose of the charity. Until the late 1980's small gifts of money or chocolates were donated to elderly residents of the Parish at Christmas Time. In February 1977, a questionnaire was sent around Rampton Parish to ask if residents would like a playing field for children. The majority of votes cast were in favour and Rampton Parish Council asked the Coles' Charity Trustees if they would consider Coles' field for this purpose.

Over the next 18 months the Parish Council installed play park equipment on the field, opening in September 1980.

## The Eyre St Thomas Day Charity

The youngest of the charities, On 17th January 1734 Antony Eyre paid £110-10s to conveyed a cottage with a field adjoining it, situated in Treswell and rented both to John Pople at a yearly rent of £4-10s. Anthony Eyre purchased the property with funds amassed as follows:

- 1726 £50 from the legacy of Elizabeth Eyre widow deceased
- 1726 £20 from the legacy of Joseph Eyre deceased
- 1726 £10 from the legacy of Katherine Eyre deceased
- 1726 £2-10s additionally from the Executors of Katherine Eyre
- 1734 £28-11s-3d interest for 7 years' investment of the above funds via Francis Brown

The purpose of the rental income of the land at Treswell was for the benefit of the Poor of Rampton Parish.

The funds of the charity increased in 1764 when Diana Eyre donated £50 to the charity in her will. By 1828 the cottage was demolished and the 4.5 acres of land in at Treswell was rented to the Pople family for £8 a year.

At that time, Mr George Creswell, the steward of Anthony Hardolph Eyre of Grove, received the rent and paid it over, together with £2 a year interest from Diana's £50 investment, each year to the Vicar of Rampton, who, together with the Overseers of the Poor distributed the funds on St Thomas Day (21st Dec) amongst poor widows and others of the parish of Rampton. The powers of the former Overseers passed to Parish Council's under the 1894 Local Govt Act, however, the Tradition of the trustees making small donations to local residents continued until 1988.

The Pople family continued to farm the St Thomas Day field until the 1930's when it was let to W. Birkitt & Sons. The first rental increase on the land was in 1961 when it increased to £10 a year.

### **The Present Day**

The three Charites had the same common theme, by the 20th Century, payments were made around the St Thomas Day & Christmas Period. However, as church attendance declined it became harder to ascertain 'who' was in need of a little assistance and the payments ceased.

Following the unification of the three charities into 1 new trust. The Trustees invested the funds to generate a small regular income for the charity.

The trustees hold an annual over 60's New Year Celebration and are looking at ways in which the funds of the trust can benefit those in need of a little assistance in Rampton & Woodbeck.