

The Breck, Wallasey Wirral Parks, Coast and Countryside

The Breck and Early Wallasey

The Breck's name is first raised in descriptions of Early Wallasey, by Scandinavian Norse immigrants before 1180 AD. Originally called 'Kirkeby i Waleya' (Village with a Church in Waleya). It seems the word Waleya is taken from 'Walha' meaning stranger or foreigner in ancient Saxon and the addition of ey signifies an island. So the name Wallasey comes from the descriptive name that the Scandinavian Norse would have encountered as they approached from the Irish Sea, Village with a church on an island of strangers (or foreigners). The wooden Saxon church was said to be on the 'Brekke', meaning on the slope or hillside.

The Breck was largely unenclosed until 1752 when by agreement among the inhabitants of Wallasey the '*Brake Common*' (as it was known then) was mered out and divided into thirty nine shares, each of which belonging to one of the ancient tenement of Wallasey.

The area has been quarried for its Triassic sandstone for building was quarried from 1836-51 by the 'Freeholders of Wallasey' and later by Sir John Tobin in the late 1840's. Sir Tobin was allowed to close the watering pit on the Breck, which was used by the local populous to obtain '*fresh*' water, providing he maintained the one on the Wallacres at the bottom of the hill (near where Mosslands School stands today). One of the sites key features is Granny's Rock, a large stone pinnacle remaining from the original quarry. The area is excellent for climbing and you can find out more about the Breck's climbs here:

<https://www.ukclimbing.com/logbook/crag.php?id=1628#overview>

In the 1800's the Breck was home to a brick tower windmill known as Wallasey Mill which like similar Bidston Windmill, worked from 1765 to approximately 1875 after which steam power took over and the mill fell into disrepair. In 1845 the area was purchased by Sir John Tobin of Liscard Hall. By 1887 the area surrounding the mill had been purchased and the mill demolished by Mr G.H. Peers. Mr Peers was a cotton merchant and was founder of the Peers institute on St Georges Road. Peers built a huge square towered house called '*Millthwaite*' and the tower stood where the mill had originally stood. After a serious fire in 1968 Millthwaite was demolished and a set of flats were built on the site. They flats are still there today.



The Breck was renamed as King George Memorial Park in 1947, and had a water fountain installed in 1948, but the name never stuck and by the 1960's was back to being officially called the Breck again.



Wallasey Sandstone

Wallasey Stone is generally pale-buff to yellow in colour. Quarrying near Poulton has revealed a sandstone that is coarse and pebbly, but at other quarries the stone is generally finer-grained. The Stone from the Breck was used in the creation of Leasowe Road. The Breck sandstones is also thought to have been used to build up the original coastal embankment at Leasowe in about 1830.

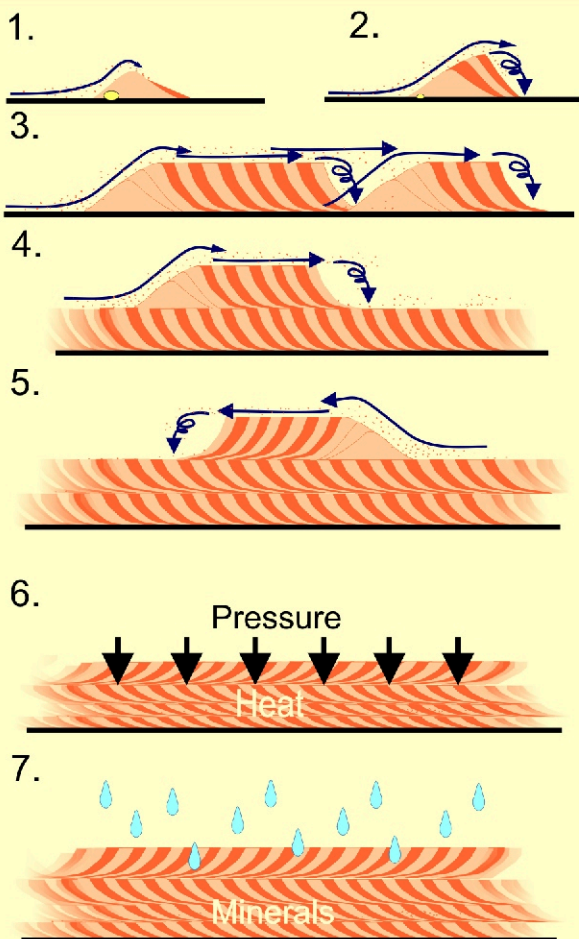
Triassic Sandstone is as its name suggests made up of sand and is a sedimentary rock. Sedimentary rocks are made by the compression of fine particles or sediment from other rocks and minerals. How the rock is created changes the way it looks and behaves e.g. how hard it is, or how easily it crumbles (we call these behaviors 'characteristics'). See diagram below for explanation of how our stone was formed.

The sandstone on the Wirral was laid down some 200-250 million years ago before the dinosaurs roamed the earth in a period called the Triassic period. During this time the Wirral was nearer the equator (and land locked with what is now Europe) and the area was a dune system on the edge of a desert. As the wind blew across the dunes it carried sediment in this case sand and deposited it on the back of the dunes where it is more sheltered from the wind (this is known as the leeward side).

The way in which the sandstone is created (see below) causes crossbedding and layering. The image (right) shows the clear cross bedded layers in the rocks at the Red Noses in New Brighton.



Windblown Sandstone Formation



Triassic Sandstone Formation

1. Initially small grains of sand are deposited (left behind) by water or by wind around an object like a stone.
2. Sediment and sand is dropped on the leeward side of the new sand dune.
3. The sand continues to be laid down until dunes meet up.
4. Dunes begin to form on dunes.
5. As the wind changes direction the pattern of deposition changes. This is called crossbedding.
6. As more layers of sand are deposited pressure builds up in the lower layers and creates heat.
7. As rain or water percolate through the compressed stone, it carries minerals to the warmed areas filling gaps between the sand, causing them to stick together, this is called cementing. After thousands of years the sand becomes stone.