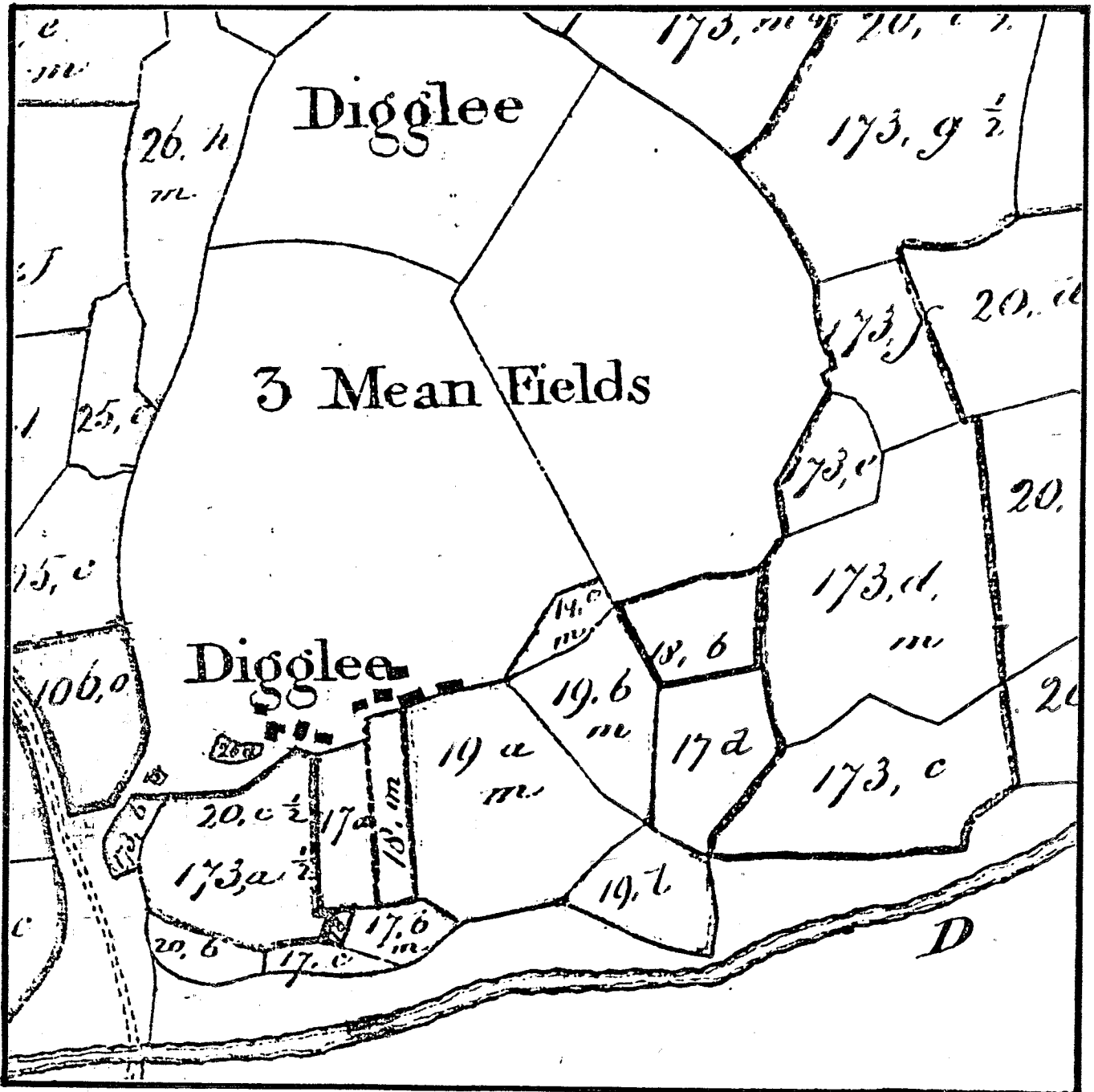


Saddleworth Historical Society Bulletin



BULLETIN
OF
THE SADDLEWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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SADDLEWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING, 1st DEC. 1987

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This is the 21st AGM of the Saddleworth Historical Society and I am pleased to present my annual report as Chairman. In the presentation of this report I have been helped as always by the Secretary's minutes of our Committee Meetings, by the reports of individual members of the Committee which I have been asked to incorporate and by the newsletters which accompany our Bulletins. The five co-opted members of the Committee were again co-opted this year. The General Committee convened on twelve occasions and when it was considered desirable sub-groups were appointed to consider specific issues and to report back to the Committee.

The members of our Committee have earned our gratitude for their dedication to the interests of the Society, a dedication which frequently seems to take priority over domestic and business requirements. It can't be easy to earmark time to the Society when you are in the throes of trying to sell your house or having to travel in bad weather considerable distances to attend Committee meetings.

Our Secretary, Mrs. Barbara Booth, organised another excellent programme of speakers for the winter months.

For the past 17 years Barbara has served as Secretary to the Society and I have valued highly her friendship and the support she has always given me as Chairman. At the June meeting she resigned from the Committee. She has played a significant role in the growth of the Society and I know you will all join me in thanking her for many years of loyal service. The Committee had to appoint a successor to fill the post until the AGM. Fortunately Barbara had handed over to Neil Barrow early this year the responsibility for arranging the new programme of lectures. He was invited by the Committee to fill the post of Secretary until the AGM and I hope this meeting will confirm his appointment to the post of Secretary.

We have bought a gift for Barbara, not from Society funds but from members' donations and we had intended making the presentation this evening. I understand, however, that Barbara is not coming so we will have to await a suitable occasion to present it.

We learned that four of our members died this year - Muriel Nield, Lord Rhodes, Harvey Griffiths and Eric Hewkin, and we sent expressions of sympathy to their families.

B. BARNES MEMORIAL FUND

You will see from the Treasurer's Report how the Bernard Barnes Memorial Fund stands. One of the aims of the fund was to encourage study on aspects of our local history by making grants in approved cases to individuals who apply for assistance. No such applications have been received so far. The Memorial Lecture given this year by Mr. Colum Giles was well attended. A small group of members are regularly tidying up the site of the Memorial Plaque at Heights. They are planning to extend the site incorporating various plants. This was recommended by Mrs. Petford who went to a great deal of trouble visiting the site making a sketch showing the distribution on the site of these plants and giving invaluable advice. We have since approached the OMBC and sent them a copy of this plan. We are hoping to have some assistance, perhaps supplying these plants or by allocating a gardener at the right time.

INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP

No progress has been made this year on the restoration of the Wool Road Warehouse but the Industrial Archaeological Group under Mr. John Buckley obtained a quotation for the construction and fitting of suitable doors. They were, however, reluctant to spend any more money until we had decided for what purpose the warehouse would be used. This question has come up from time to time in Committee and within the limitations imposed by the lease they have been unable to suggest a solution. The possibility of some other body, particularly the Huddersfield Canal Society, taking it over has been mooted from time to time and it was finally agreed unanimously that we sound them out. Mr. Stanley Broadbent, who has liaised before with this Society got in touch with Mr. David Sumner, the Chairman, who invited him to bring a delegation from the Society to attend our May meeting. Their Chairman and Mr. Trevor Ellis, Vice Chairman, came and after discussion said they were very impressed with the idea of taking it over. They have since advised Mr. Broadbent that their Society has agreed and that they are now making arrangements with the British Waterways Board to formalise this action. If successful they will finish off any outstanding work on the warehouse.

Mr. David Chadderton, as one of the trustees of the warehouse, has been informed of what we were proposing to do and has agreed with that course of action.

ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP REPORT

The leader of the Archaeology Group, Mr. Jim Carr, reports on a busy year for this our most active sub-group. The year's programme included lectures from Ken Booth on Bucton Castle and Hadrian's Wall, Ron Wardleworth on Roman Roads and Forts in Wales and North Yorkshire, on Greek Temples and Roman Town at Paestum, South of Naples, Beryl Maloney on her visit to Egypt and Jim Carr himself on Roman Cirencester and Bath.

In May, Jim Carr and David Start of the Greater Manchester Archaeology Unit appeared on a Granada Reports news item on the cosmetic reformation of the Castleshaw Roman Fort with minimal maintenance as opposed to a fully exposed and almost certainly weather damaged display area. On the 30th May, as part of the 1987 Saddleworth Festival activities, Professor Barri Jones of Manchester University and John Walker and David Start of the G.M.A.U. addressed an appreciative audience at Saddleworth School, followed by a tour of the Castleshaw site in the afternoon.

For their annual reciprocal visit by the Friends of the Craven Museum, Skipton, on the 18th July, the Group went to the Tolson Memorial Museum, Huddersfield, and thence to Castle Hill, Almondbury, where David Start and Norman Redhead were the guides. Later, at Saddleworth Museum, John Smith and Julian Hunt gave slide lectures on Saddleworth buildings and the origins of some Saddleworth villages.

On Saturday, 1st August, Jim Carr led the Society's busy and successful trip to Hull and Beverley. In September Colin Harding began his W.E.A. class on Roman Britain at Saddleworth School and Jim Carr was re-elected to the Council for British Archaeology Group 5. In November the Archaeology Group mounted an S.H.S. stand at Manchester University for the annual Reports Meeting of C.B.A. 5; Robina McNeil included Castleshaw in her report on 'Recent Work of the G.M.A.U.' and Dr. Pat Stonehouse outlined his work on the Pule Hill Base early Mesolithic site. Saddleworth also featured in the C.B.A. 5 November Newsletter with articles on the Castleshaw Roman Fort by David Start, on Saddleworth Museum's exhibition on the Romans in Saddleworth planned for June 1988, and on the 21st Anniversary of the S.H.S.

PUBLICATIONS

1987 has seen the launch of the Society's most ambitious publication to date. 'Saddleworth Buildings, a Guide to the Vernacular Architecture of the Parish of Saddleworth in the Pennines' by W. John Smith was published in May in association with Saddleworth Festival of the Arts. Mr. Smith's contribution to our understanding of the architectural traditions of the area has been of great value to this Society. Now that his concise analysis is in print his ideas will reach an even wider audience, enhancing his own reputation and that of the Society. At times it seemed as if there was no chance of having the book ready for the Festival. We are indebted to Alan Petford and Julian Hunt for their determined encouragement of the author and to the printers, Commercial Centre of Hollinwood for printing and binding the book in under three weeks. It was officially launched at a reception at the Swan Inn, Dobcross, on the eve of the Festival and sales of this £15 volume are already nearing 500.

1987 also saw the publication of a new Local Interest Trail, the ninth in this popular series. Written by Julian Hunt and ably illustrated by Nick Wood it guides the reader around the hidden corners of Dobcross and explains the growth of the village. It too has sold extremely well and reached the semi-finals of a national competition for guided walks sponsored by Wimpey.

The Society has purchased 250 off prints of Alan Petford's scholarly article 'The process of Enclosure in Saddleworth 1625 - 1834' published in the current Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society.

We have already set in motion our plans for future Festivals. Mr. Jim Carr has undertaken the editorship of a volume on the archaeology of Saddleworth for the 1991 Festival. Volumes on the prehistory and the various historical periods will appear at subsequent Festivals our aim being to have a multi-volume Standard History of Saddleworth by the end of the century. The Committee of the Saddleworth Festival of the Arts has promised its support.

Mr. David Gartside submitted to the Committee a detailed report on the stocks and sales of all S.H.S. publications. We owe him our thanks for the excellent work he is putting in. In the year ending 31st October 1987 the Society's income from publications, excluding Bulletins, was £8001.00 including £5060.00 for 'Saddleworth Buildings'.

MUSEUM

Mr. Gordon Parry, Museum Liaison Officer, is our representative on the Museum Managment Committee. Most of you will know that he is responsible for drawing up and circulating a duty roster for the volunteer curators who man the Museum each weekend. Since the Tourist Information Office was set up in the Museum last June the duties of the curators have been considerably reduced. They are no longer responsible for opening and closing the Museum at weekends and manning the shop since the Tourist Centre staff are on duty at weekends and have taken over these responsibilities. Mr. Parry reports that the Information Officer, Miss Helen Bailey, has been most co-operative and appreciative of the help of our volunteer curators. Although the curators' work is now limited to collecting entrance fees, issuing tickets and supervising the Museum, Mr. Parry hopes they will continue to offer their valuable services. In addition to these Society/Museum jobs he continues to provide the Bulletin Newsletters for us and I know how much our membmbers enjoy reading this feature. As if that weren't enough for one person to do he also attends all our lecture meetings and writes reports on them for the press. It is here in his report that he makes a strong plea to us. Beacause of his hearing difficulty he is finding this latter task increasingly difficult. He would be most grateful and relieved if someone would volunteer to take over these reports on our lectures for the press. It is an important function because of the publicity it provides for the Society and I hope someone will please respond to Gordon's appeal.

ARCHIVES

Canon Airne, the Society's Archivist, reports that there has been a steady increase in archive material during the course of the year including 26 items from Mr. J.C. Wrigley of Canada - deeds, memorials, wills, etc. We thank all those who have contributed. Many people have items of interest in their possession without realising their value to historical research. The Society will be glad to advise on them and will welcome suitable material as either gifts or on permanent loan. It is encouraging to hear of success amongst those who consult our archives. Mr. Dennett reports that Miss Helen Barker, a 13 year old pupil at Hulme Grammar School, who lives in Scouthead, submitted entries in 1984, 1986 and 1987 for a nation wide project competition for young people sponsored by several firms. Her entries in the first two of these years won second prize. This year the subject was the history of a local area; Helen concentrated on Springhead and Austerlands, making good use of the Historical Society archives and those of the Museum.

The honorary archivists have received a thank you card from Helen bearing the news that her entry won this Year's competition. The award was made to her on Friday, 6th November, at the Dorchester Hotel in London. Well done, Helen!

When the archives were being reorganised some years ago a number of archivists were employed under an M.S.C. scheme. This has led some people to think that Mr. Dennett, the Museum Archivist is employed under that scheme. This is not the case. Mr. Dennett works in a voluntary capacity as has always been the case with the Society Archivist. We are indebted to Mr. Dennett for his invaluable help with the Society archives and to the Museum Curator, Mr. Robert Macmillan, and his staff for their help in dealing with some of the enquiries and helping researchers.

CONSERVATION

The Committee has been concerned with building developments in Saddleworth. A member sits on the Conservation Area Advisory Committee and therefore we are appraised of planning applications. We are particularly concerned with the recent demolition of a listed building at Grange, and are keeping an eye on the manner in which it is restored.

SADDLEWORTH FESTIVAL

In addition to the one-day school on Roman Britain and the Castleshaw Fort, the Society ran a further one-day school on 'The Dual Economy, Agriculture and Textiles in Saddleworth'. This very enjoyable and successful event was organised by Alan Petford and Julian Hunt. Members of the Confederation of West Riding Local History Societies attended the school.

A GREENFIELD CHILDHOOD 1881 - 1885

Percy Yates Woolley was my grandfather's youngest brother, brought up in Greenfield where his father, William Woolley, was the station master. On 21st August, 1880, the 10 year old Percy received a small book and on the first page he wrote in beautiful copperplate script "This book was given me on my birthday by my brother Herby. I mean to keep a diary in it for next year 1881." He kept his resolve until the book was full in 1885.

At first the diary was written daily, but there was often "nothing" to report, or else he wrote weather comments such as "very wet" or (less often) "a fine day". On 7th February "There was a great snowstorm this morning" and "A lot went down to the Royal George and snowballed Joe Lump, T. Wolton, W.Reid and Oliver. I was one of the foremost of the persecutors." On 5th February "The Northern Lights have been more brilliant on Monday night than for many years before." In September 1884 he wrote "We have had the best summer that I can remember."

Only two events of more than local importance are noted. On 15th Mary, 1881, "Yesterday the Czar of Russia was killed" and on 21st April "Lord Beaconsfield died last Tuesday." An event rare enough to merit a mention was the oranges given at a tea party after Miss Green's wedding. She must have been the vicar's daughter for later "Mr. Green was made a Cannon." On 25th February, 1881 "A party of the 5th Lancers rode past."

There are occasional references to school - mostly to examinations. On 8th March there was the "Drawing examination I have got an excellency I think. I did a nice copy." This speaks volumes for the nature of art lessons in 1881. Regular school examinations were referred to as "Brindle and Turkey exams" and seem to have been followed by half holidays. In August 1883 he recorded that "I was commended (very justly so) in these". Once "Master kept us in this afternoon a long while. Very vexed at him." Later, "Today Bob Mellor and John Bradbury got a precious wiggling apiece for playing truant on Sunday. Master batted their ears with all his might which was a very bad thing as it might have made them deaf." Next month "Master would not let us have any play" and a few weeks later "I got caned today". Perhaps he had been fighting for in March he wrote in his diary "Today I had a fight with Henry Cropper and mauled him bad". The school seems to have closed for a week's holiday at Easter and two weeks in August.

At the start of the diary Saturdays were spent on trail hunts. Percy records that he was tired, weary or worn out from much running around and he recorded when Dodger or Bounty won. He was delighted on 13th April when "I went to the barber's today to have my hair cut. The man is called Ben Hall and lives at Frenches. His dog Bounty, a big large hound, has won 4 copper kettles." When the family pet died the boys buried her and put "Here lies Fan" on her gravestone.

During the August holiday of 1881 "We have begun building a hut on the back" and five days later "The hut fell on me and hurt my shoulder". The following August "In Wharmton we built a temple in the shape of an equilateral triangle. A while ago we built a round ring with a table inside." In June 1881 "We cricket every night. We play with Wharmton Ramblers' Club bat". Herby must have shared Percy's interest as soon "Herby has got a new bat" and a week later "Herby has got wickets."

The boys obviously helped with the gardening. In March Percy wrote "Today we threw stones away from the garden" and next day "We dug in the garden again". In May "We found such a tremendous swarm of coltsfoot on the plateau. This afternoon mother has made some beer of them". Next day "The beer is very nice. We had some to our dinner today." The following month, "I got some haze nuts today." In July, "I went wimberrying today and had wimberry pie tonight." Two years later he wrote "Nettle beer home-brewed." His mother was reared at Smallwood in the Cheshire countryside so she knew how to use the wild plants. Meanwhile Percy was collecting birds' eggs. "I got a blackbird's egg today. The other was a robin's. The blackbird's egg was green and the robin's white with red spots." Hikes across the local moors are implied by "seen rabbit on the moors at noon on Sunday."

There are occasional outings with his friends to Cowhill, Grasscroft, Dobcross, Shaw, Sherbrook, Delph, Oldham Wakes and to Belle Vue. In November, 1881, a group of boys "went to Buckton Vale, a distance of 8½ miles. There was in days gone by (it is said) a Buckton Castle, but nothing is there now like a castle. There is a fine row of stone houses and a few others besides a printing works." In July 1883 Herby and Percy accompanied their 20 year old sister Annie and her school class to Stamford Park. "We rode to Ashton and had our tea in an eating room in the park. We walked back and had a great deal of fun." Wednesday singing practices are frequently mentioned, in preparation for the Anniversary. Congregational tea parties also show his link with Christ Church Friesland. On the last page of the diary in May 1885 he wrote "I was confirmed and last night had the tea party at school. Today, Whit Sunday, I received the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper for the first time."

The seasons and Church calendar were mentioned throughout the diary, e.g. Road End Fair at Easter. March was swarming time when the moors were burnt. On 5th November 1883 "I have had fireworks." On 26th March 1880 "Percy got new clothes and had a cup of cocoa at Mrs. Aird's." Had he been showing off his new clothes for this reward? On birthdays small presents were received. For his eleventh birthday "Mother gave me a scrapbook, Annie some scraps, Maggie a small picture, card and pen, and Auntie a box and lock." (The diary has a long gap when his diary

was locked in the box and the key was lost). On his twelfth birthday "Got a beauty of a jackknife, bow and arrow. Herby on 19th July got scarfing pr(ayer) book and watchchain." His mother had watchchains made for all her sons from her plaited auburn hair, bound with gold clips. By 1883 Percy was being awarded book prizes and presents, and in February he wrote "For a time I have been going to Greenfield Library. At present I am reading Dombey and Son." A month later he was reading David Copperfield.

By 1883 the boys' futures were being discussed. In February "Herbert C. went away a bit since, Think either me or Herby will go to where he is, Parkers of Oldham." This last sentence is the only one in the diary to be crossed out. Their parents must have changed their minds and decided that all their sons should apply for jobs on the railway. On 18th March "Herby went to be passed on Wednesday and was successful." By 30 April "Herby gone to Heaton Lodge box." Presumably Herby would have travelled daily by rail from Greenfield to Heaton Lodge signal box.

One year later on 5th April 1884 Percy wrote "I have been working for Cyrus (Herby) a month as he has been poorly." The next entry some two months later states "On Saturday, 26 April at 6.3 a.m. my dear brother Cyrus Herbert died and was buried on Tuesday, 30 April. Since then we have all been gloomy. I am a booking clerk at Greenfield L. and N.W.R." Percy was 13 when he started his job but it looks as if he had to wait until he was 14 before his appointment could be confirmed. In September "I went and passed the doctor in Huddersfield last Tuesday." He reported having his "likeness" taken on his 14th birthday. Can this be the group portrait of the staff at Greenfield Station? This includes the young diarist growing so quickly that his jacket and trousers look too small; my grandfather, John William Woolley, chief booking clerk wearing a bowler hat, and their father seated in the middle surrounded by the rest of the station staff.

Hilary Arnold,
Huddersfield.

BOOK REVIEW

Victorian Saddleworth, by Michael and Peter Fox. Saddleworth Museum and Art Gallery. Saddleworth. 1987. 48 pp. £2.50.

The familiar associations of Saddleworth are the stone weavers' cottages and the mills of the early industrial period. Studies of Saddleworth, by 1801 one of the forty largest "towns" have much to contribute to a wider regional understanding of the earlier industrial period and it is this period which has attracted most attention. The Victorian period has, in contrast, been largely ignored yet Saddleworth has a rich, if less striking Victorian heritage. Looking down from the hills, the villages of Uppermill, Greenfield and Springhead are largely Victorian, as is the most dominating man-made feature of the landscape, the railway viaduct. This is the first of over thirty illustrations in Michael and Peter Fox's book which is an excellent introduction to Victorian Saddleworth.

The authors have many qualifications. They know the material available, they have a large collection of local photographs and they have an enthusiasm for their subject. This book is not a history but a series of impressions of the social and industrial aspects of Victorian Saddleworth. The text is packed with information, supported by contemporary extracts and photographs along with reproductions of advertisements and documents. We become aware of the Victorian legacies that can still be seen: the schools, co-ops, the police station, mechanics institutes, most of the churches, and even the quarries and road improvements. Saddleworth's experience seems broadly to have paralleled other Victorian communities and illustrations from self-help, education, religion and the like are provided.

On the industrial front the situation is not yet clear. Textiles continued to predominate, although by the end of the period the domestic industry, still observed by Reach in 1849, was all but finished. Was the industry in general decline or did parts of it adapt and prosper? Saddleworth's population in 1901 was declining and nearing the level of 1841. The Victorian period, therefore, poses questions of interest. This book is an excellent appetiser, a well written introduction to Victorian Saddleworth which will hopefully tempt others to research this surprisingly neglected period of Saddleworth history.

Niel Barrow.

Note: Members living outside Saddleworth can obtain copies of Victorian Saddleworth direct from Peter Fox, 8 St. Mary's Gate, Uppermill, Oldham, OL3 6AT, at £2.50 post free.

SADDLEWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PUBLICATIONS LIST 1st NOVEMBER, 1987.

- "Saddleworth Buildings" W. John Smith, M.A., F.S.A. £15.00
Comprehensively illustrated guide to the vernacular
architecture of the district. (Members price £12.00)
- "Saddleworth Surveyed" B. Barnes, P.M. Buckley,
J.M. Hunt, A.J. Petford. £12.00
Selected maps of the township 1625 - 1851.
(Only 10 copies now left).
- "With Ammon Wrigley in Saddleworth" S. Seville. £ 2.95
Illustrated reminiscences by Ammon Wrigley's
son-in-law and companion.
- "Saddleworth Seven One Two" Ed. Donald Haigh £ 2.50
Illustrated survey of the trans-Pennine Roman Road
in Oldham and Saddleworth.
- "Saddleworth Story" - Various. 99p.
Introduction to the geology, geography and history
of the area.
- "Countryside Guide - North". £ 1.50
- "Countryside Guide - South" £ 1.50
- Local Interest Trails: 50p. each.
1. Delph, Heights & Grange.
2. Uppermill.
3. Greenfield,
4. Huddersfield Narrow Canal.
5. Grasscroft.
6. Denshaw.
7. Delph.
8. Lydgate and Grotton.
9. Dobcross.
- "The Process of Enclosure in Saddleworth, 1625-1834
A.J. Petford, M.A. £ 1.95
- "Castleshaw Roads and Romans" K. Booth. 15p.
Archaeological review pamphlet.
- "A Manufacturer's Business 100 Years Ago" S. Andrew. 75p.
- "Address to the Various Classes of Men in Saddleworth"
J. Nield. 75p.

All available from the Publications Officer,
David Gartside, 5 The Shaws, Uppermill, Oldham, OL3 6JX.
(Telephone 04577 5106).

Post and packing will be added to the invoice where necessary.

Most issues of the Bulletin from 1973 onwards are still available
from the Editor, price 50p.

COMMON ARABLE FARMING AT DIGLEE

In 1770 a local surveyor named John Lees prepared a map of property belonging to James Farrer, Lord of the Manor of Saddlworth (1). The landscape he depicted was one of scattered hillside farmsteads - even the small hamlets betrayed their origins as isolated holdings which had been subdivided, added to and rationalised over many generations. One hamlet, however, fails to conform to this pattern. Diglee, situated between riverside meadows and a large open field, has many of the features of a typical English village.

Diglee, Digglee or Diggle (the word is spelt in many different ways) would seem to suggest a clearing (lee) with a ditch (dig) either forming a boundary or draining the land. There are no signs of ancient earthworks near Diglee today, but there is no doubt as to the antiquity of the settlement. The limits of grazing rights given by the Lord of the Manor to Nostell Priory in the 13th century include a reference to Diglee:

".... from Stonnegge to Stablish Loth of
Diggeill and from Stablish loch to
Bradeston" (2)

that is from Stanedge to Stable Clough, above Diglee, and from Stable Clough to Broadstone, above Runninghill.

The occurrence of a place name does not presuppose settlement, but a contemporary deed found amongst the Shaw family papers proves that Diglee was cultivated at this time. Roal the Botiler, a son-in-law of the then Lord of the Manor, sold to John son of Robert of Stavely:

"....All the lands which William of the Sykes once held in Sadelworth ffrithes, which lies in a place called Dygel and pasture for 20 goats in Harrop and Dygel and for all other his cattle in the common pasture of Sadelworth; also wood for burning, enclosing and building by permission of the forester rendering yearly a chief rent of 4d." (3)

In 1303, Ralph de Boteler recovered possession of 8 acres of meadow land in Saddleworth from Richard Staveley. (4) There are distinct similarities between this transaction and the gift of 8 acres of land in Saddleworth to the Nuns of Kirklees made by the Lord of the Manor Robert de Stapleton in the late 13th century. The deed of grant has not been located but it was inspected by the Rev. T.D. Whitaker and abstracted in his History of Whalley. (5) It too refers to "housebote and haybote" (wood for building and fencing) and reserves all rights of the forest to the Lord. The Prioress of Kirklees also paid a chief rent to the Lord of the Manor (6) but the best evidence that her property was at Diglee is the survival of the field name 'Nun Croft' for the largest of the riverside meadows there. (7) There were in all probability more farmers at Diglee in the 13th century for the unusual structure of the settlement, as outlined below, assumes a minimum of four individuals cultivating the land.

At the dissolution of the monasteries, the land in Saddleworth formerly belonging to Kirklees Nunnery was sold to two speculators, Richard Andrewes of Hayles, Gloucestershire, and William Ramsdmen of Longley, near Huddersfield. The tenant was one Richard Wrigley who paid 6s. 8d. rent per year. (8) By indenture of 31st December 1543, Andrewes and Ramsden sold the farm to John, James, Reginald and Edmund Wrigley for £27. (9) In 1591 a half year's rent of 3s. 4d. was paid to the Lord of the Manor by 'Richard Wrigley for Diglee'. (10) In this rental, Wrigley is listed with the freeholders of Saddleworth, but soon afterwards he must have sold the freehold back to the Manor. In rentals and leases of the 17th and 18th centuries the Wrigleys of Diglee remain as tenants only, but their farm was still called 'Wrigley's Diglee' as late as the sale of the Manor in 1791. (11)

The Wrigleys are mentioned in a lease of land at Diglee dated 7 May 1633 which gives some indication of how the large open field above the farmhouses was cultivated. The lease is to Edmund Broadbent and Edmund Shaw of Diglee, husbandmen; the term is 21 years and the rent only 1s. 6d. per annum. It grants:

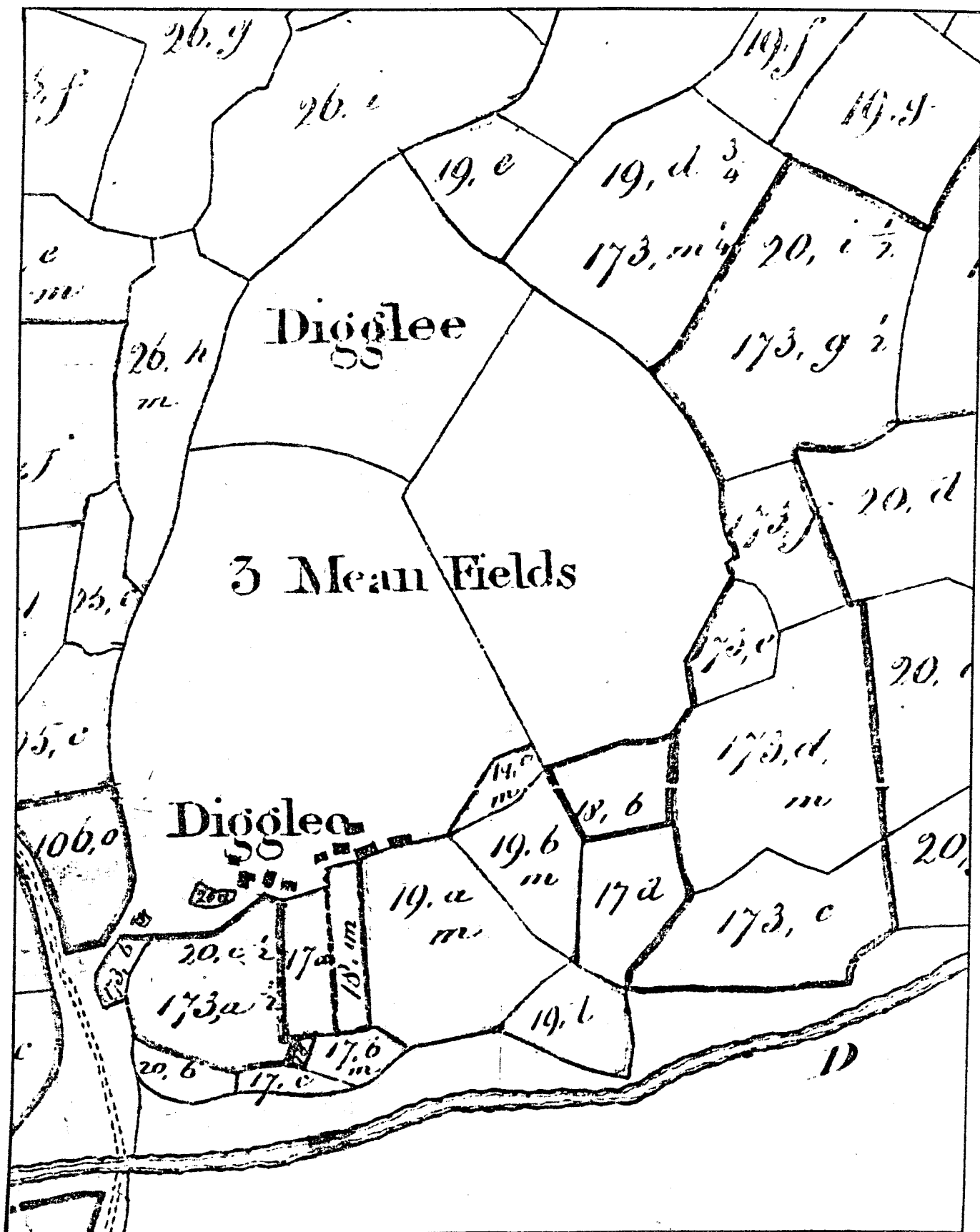
".... ffoure doles of lands lying in a close called Coate Flatt containing two days work with a plowe more or less and also two parcels of lands the one of them lying in a close above the dwellinge house of ffrancis Wrigley alias Platt of Diglee aforesaid and the other lyinge in a close called Greatley head both the said parcels containing likewise by estimation two days work with a plowe....." (12)

That there are three fields in Diglee divided into doles or strips for ploughing suggests rotation of crops with one or two of the fields left fallow in any section. The doles would be marked with wooden or masonry 'meres' or markers, but when the field was fallow it could be grazed by any of the farmers' cattle.

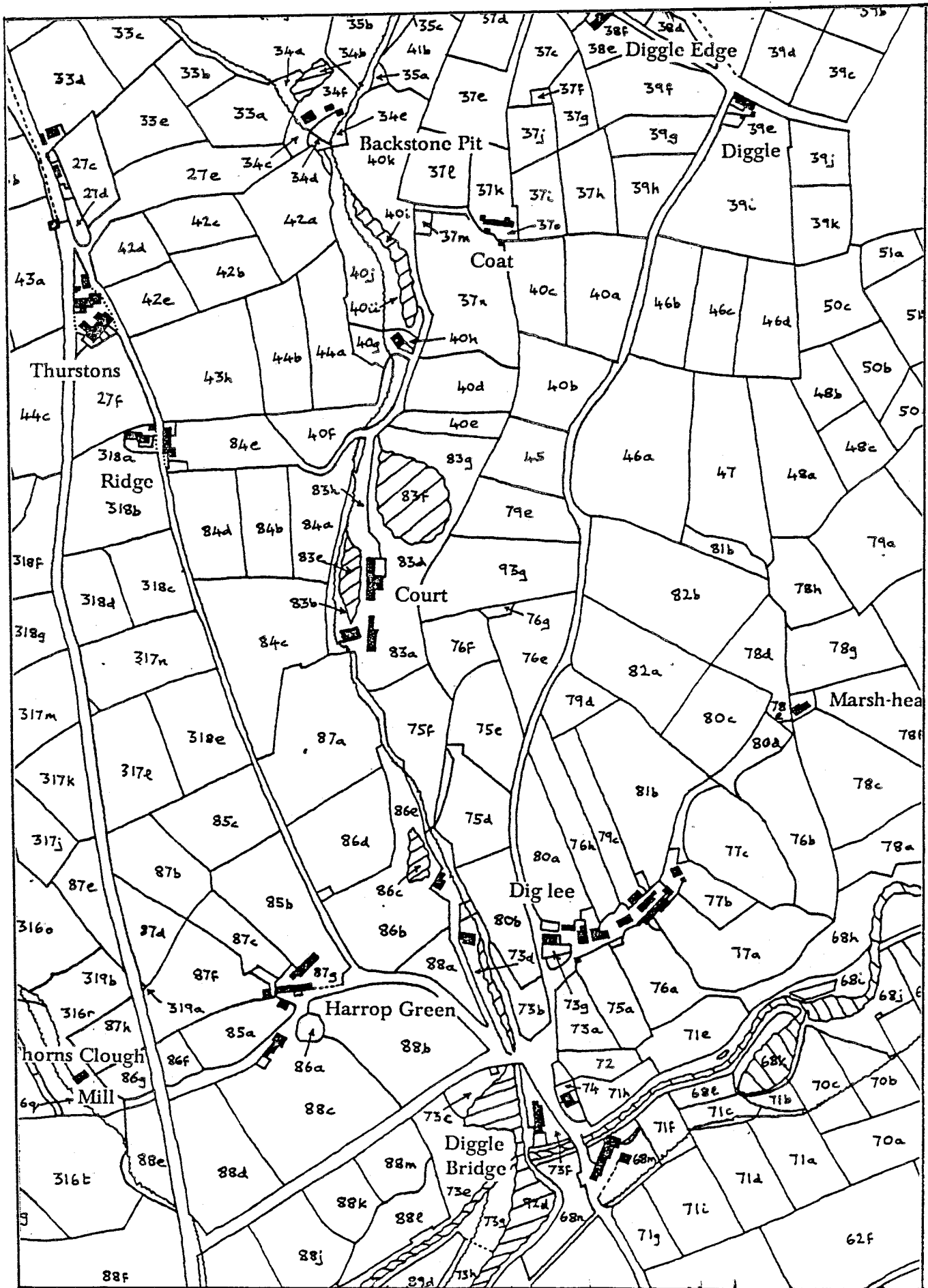
In 1669, five Diglee farmers were assessed for tithes. Their names were James Broaodbent, Thomas Bredbury, Edmund Shaw, John Scolefeild and John Wrigley. Together they were growing just over 5 acres of oats. (13) From a court roll of 1751 it appears that their rights in the three fields were jealously guarded:

"....We lay in pain That no person or persons
Whatsoever do make any way over the Great Field
The Great Ley and the Coat Flatt lyeing at
digglee...." (14)

These field names do not appear on the 1770 map where they are denoted 'Digglee 3 Mean Fields'. Nor are they referred to in the key to the map in which the five farmers of Diglee are credited with varying acreages 'in the mean Fields' amounting in total to just under 25 acres. (15)



Digglee in 1770



Diglee in 1822

With the sale of the Manor of Saddleworth in 1791 most of the tenant farmers of Diglee bought their freeholds. With no agent of the Lord of the Manor to oversee the smooth operation of their three field system, the new owners split each of the fields into quarters or eighths and walled off their portions. William Broadbent of Diglee, clothier, received 1/8 of the Great Field (the field above the houses) and 1/4 of the Coat Flatt (the northernmost field). (16) There was of course some consolidation of holdings and before any walls went up Thomas Platt of Diglee, Clothier, who was allotted 1/4 of the Great Ley (the most easterly field of the three) and 1/8 of the Great Field, immediately bought 3/8 of the Great Field from John Smith of Dobcross, the owner of Diggle Bridge Mill. (17) Despite this rationalisation, two of the strips in the Great Field are clearly visible on the 1822 Township Map, marked 76h and 79c.

In 1806 Thomas Platt's son, Thomas, was bankrupt and his 1/2 part of the Great Field was sold. The deed mentions:

"....the New Meadow, the Great Ley and the Diglee Field formerly part of closes called the Great Mean Field and Great Ley as the same are now fenced off and divided with stone walls." (18)

The same deed mentions the newly constructed Boat Lane which cuts straight through some of the strips in the Great Field:

"....1/3 of a roadway from Broof (in later deeds 'Rooth') yate in Diglee to Diggle Edge which the Huddersfield Canal Company have lately fenced off and made into a road or way...."

Walking along Boat Lane today it is impossible to see any signs of ridge and furrow ploughing or any remains of mere stones which might have marked out the strips in the Mean Fields in medieval times. It is fortunate therefore that sufficient information can be gleaned from property deeds to prove the practice of a form of agriculture which had hitherto been dismissed, particularly by this author, as foreign to Saddleworth.

Reference

1. 1770 Map of the Inclosures in the Parish of Saddleworth belonging to James Farrar. The original map is in Saddleworth Museum but it is reproduced in Barnes & others Saddleworth Surveyed, 1983, pp. 16-45.
2. From Nostell Priory Coucher Book. Abstracted in Radcliffe, J. The Parish Registers of St. Chads, Saddleworth, 1887, Vol.1, p.465.
3. The deed is in the Lancashire Record Office DDL 569.
4. Radcliff, J. 1887, Vol.1, p.471.
5. Ibid. Vol. 1, p.470.

6. There are a series of Saddleworth rentals in a document inspected by W. Bowman but now missing which she called The Staley Rental. Her notes on the rental are in the Lancashire Record Office DDX 350. See also S.H.S. Bulletin Vol. 16, pp. 38-42.
7. Barnes, B. & others, 1983, pp. 32, 36. There are also several fields named 'Nun Ings' at Holden Smithy but these are likely to be later encroachments on Harrop Edge perhaps connected with the farm at Diglee.
8. Particulars of Grants, 35 Henry VIII. Public Record Office.
9. William Ramsden's Account Book. Huddersfield Library.
10. Wentworth Woolley Papers, Box 8/6. Leeds University Library.
11. Particulars of a very improvable estate in Saddleworth ... to be sold14th, 15th, 16th, 18th, 19th and 20th April, 1791. Lot 158: Wrigley and Shaw, Diglee.
12. Wentworth Woolley Papers, 8/5.
13. S.H.S. Bulletin Vol. 14, p.23, 1984.
14. Ibid Vol. 16, p.10, 1986.
15. Barnes, B. & others, 1983, pp. 32, 45.
16. West Riding Registry of Deeds, DH 676 864. West Yorkshire Record Office, Wakefield.
17. Ibid. DG 639 907 and DH 185 231.
18. Ibid. FA 66 84.

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SADDLEWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER WINTER 1987

I am writing this at the end of January 1988. We haven't had much winter yet and things seem pretty quiet but, no doubt, when you've finished reading this you will think that a lot gets done even in quiet periods.

The lecture season started with the Bernard Barnes Memorial Lecture at the Millgate Centre in October. It was entitled "The Evolution of the Yorkshire Woollen Mill 1780 - 1900" and was given by Mr. Colum Giles who has made a study of the development of the woollen industry in the Leeds and Bradford area.

At the November meeting Mr. Walter Allcock, B.E.M., told a fascinating story of events on the Western Front in the Great War of 1914-1918. An interest which was inspired by the stories of his father and uncles in his youth.

Early in December at the Annual General Meeting, John Murray was re-elected Chairman and Stanley Broadbent Vice Chairman. All the members of the Committee were re-elected and the appointment of Neil Barrow as Secretary was confirmed.

We had a combined Christmas and 21st Anniversary Party at the Museum a fortnight later with food, games and dancing arranged by the Social Committee. A very enjoyable affair.

The Boxing Day Walk wasn't a very enjoyable affair though, with my wife, Ann, breaking her ankle on the descent from Platt's monument above Ashway Gap. That made two of our members with broken ankles over the Christmas period with Dorothy Latimer having broken her leg whilst walking in Derbyshire at half term. Both are making good, but slow progress.

The New Year opened with Terry Eckersley's lecture on the Saddleworth Union Workhouse. I wasn't there as the meeting clashed with a Chamber Society Concert in Delph, but I understand it was well attended and very interesting.

Future Lectures

- | | |
|---|--|
| Thursday 18th February. | The Cotton Operatives of Lancashire in the Inter-War Years by Alan Fowler of Manchester Polytechnic. |
| Thursday 10th March.
Pl.note corrected date. | A.V.Roe and Beginnings of the Aircraft Industry by A.D.George. |
| Wednesday 6th April. | Opening the Holmfirth Postcard Museum by Patsy Bayles. |
| Tuesday 26th April. | From Digglee to Diggle by Julian Hunt. |

Archaeology Group

This group now meets on the FOURTH Wednesday in the month at 8.0 p.m. at the Cross Keys Inn, Uppermill. The first meeting on the 27th January was on Roman Coins. Further meetings 24th February and 23rd March 1988. During December Mrs. B. Maloney related her experiences and showed slides of her journeys to Egypt, and her voyage up the Nile to Abu Simbil.

Roman Villa

Members may have seen an article in the Oldham Evening Chronicle outlining plans to build a Roman Villa at Castleshaw. Disquiet was expressed about this at the Annual General Meeting and at the January Committee Meeting it was agreed to write to the editor of the Chronicle expressing our views and to ask the Planning Department and the Education Officer for more information about the proposal. Many of you will have read this letter which was published on the 5th February which stated the Committee's views admirably.

Roman Fort

This year's Summer Exhibition at the Museum will run from the 4th of June to the 31st July and will feature the Roman Fort at Castleshaw. 'An Outpost of Imperial Rome' has been suggested as its title. Very imposing. There will be some precious exhibits on show and the organisers would be glad to hear of anyone willing to supervise the exhibition for a few hours. Ring Jack Hindle, Saddleworth 4200 if you can help.

Museum Curators

The establishment of the Tourist Information Centre at the Museum has meant that the duties of volunteer curators over the weekend period are considerably reduced though their services are still valuable and appreciated. To show this appreciation there is to be a 'get together' for curators at Roger Tanner's house in February.

Jazz Nights

The Jazz sessions organised by Stanley Broadbent are continuing to be a great success. Stanley works very hard on these monthly events and I am sure he gets much satisfaction from the obvious enjoyment of those who attend and from the contributions he is able to make to the upkeep of the Museum. Try to support him! Waduku on Saturday, 27th February, Dave Donohoe's Jazz Band on Saturday, 19th March, and Tony Smith's Jazz Band on Saturday, 9th April.

Membership

We have a record number of twenty one people who have joined the Society since the publication of the last bulletin, they are:

Mr. & Mrs. G. Brunavs, Warwick	Mr. S. Davies, Preston.
Mr. & Mrs. D. O. Asquith, Uppermill.	Mr. & Mrs. D. Smart, Greenfield.
Mrs. A. C. Gee, Grasscroft.	Miss K. Barlow, Uppermill.
Miss M. Edwards, Dobcross.	Mr. & Mrs. J. Bottomley, Delph.
Mr. T. Eckersley, Greenfield.	Mr. & Mrs. D. J. Cottam, Grotton.
Mr. & Mrs. J. Starkie, Greenfield.	
Mrs. J. Wareham, Oldham.	Mr. Ian Douthwaite, New Zealand.
Mr. R. E. Whittle, Shaw.	Mr. H. J. Martin, Oldham.

Subscriptions 1988

The Annual Subscription to the Society becomes due this month and the various rates are detailed below. The early return and completion of your subscription slip enclosed would be appreciated by the Membership Section and would benefit the Society.

Family Membership	£6.50	Single Membership....	£5.00
Retired - Single & Family.	£3.50	Student Membership...	£3.50

Letters from American & Overseas Members

We enjoy receiving correspondence from our overseas members and have to report a letter from Mrs. Esther Shaw Lawn which enclosed a kind donation of 100 dollars to the Society. Another correspondence has commenced with Mrs. Kathleen Morrow in Belfast, Northern Ireland, who is descended from Ralph Broadbent, the first master at Castleshaw School, Delph. Her address is No. 7 Rugby Street, Belfast, BT7 1PX. Northern Ireland, in case any member has an interest in Ralph Broadbent. She is, of course, related to Mr. George P. A. Broadbent of Scranton, Pennsylvania, who we believe she has contacted via other relations in the Grasscroft area..

We have also received a special publication 'Universe 999' by a Society member, Mr. Arthur Rhodes Jackson Broadbent, 5 Penhurst Avenue, Southend-on-Sea. It is being read at the moment and concerns natural phenomenon differing somewhat from the present day thinking, but is most thought provoking and, no doubt, will be absorbed by the Editorial and Industrial Archaeological Section Leaders in due course.

As I finish writing this letter Anne is engrossed in "The Diary of a Country Parson" by the Reverend James Woodforde - a book which gives a fascinating account of life in the late 18th century. The five volumes can be found in the Biography Section in Oldham Library.

J. G. Parry.

