

# Saddleshworth Historical Society Bulletin

**PICTURE PALACE**  
WOOLROAD, SADDLEWORTH.

Proprietor: J. B. Hutton  
Assistant Manager: J. B. Hutton  
Organiser: J. B. Hutton

Week Commencing Monday, NOV. 4th

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday  
Reserved for three nights only of the Great Irish Comedy Drama

**SHAMUS O'BRIEN**  
Adapted from the well-known poem

HELPING HAND      TWEEDLEDUM AS HERCULES  
A Surrealistic Comedy      Another Tell

A Western Drama  
**THE PRICE HE PAID**  
Full of exciting incidents from start to finish

Jim Crow      Close Call  
A Comedy Drama      A Farce Comedy

**THRAITRESS OF PATTON'S COURT**  
A Drama

THE GOSSIP      WORKING FOR HUBBY  
A Vitaphone Comedy      A Comedy

Carr's Generation  
A Vitaphone showing how a man with a good heart can be changed from bad to good

ZIGOTO DRIVES A LOCO      STICKY SIMON  
A Good Comic      Better than a Bundle of Medicine

**MATE OF JOHN 'M'**  
Another Vitaphone      A Fine and Good Sea Drama

Important Engagement of Saddleworth's New Contralto

**MARY NEWBY**  
Assisted by HARRY HADDOX Vocal Duettists in the Repertoire of Good Entertainment Songs

**NOTICE**—The Management reserves the right to alter the Programme at their discretion

Doors open at 7.30      Commence at 8.0  
Saturday at 7 and 8      Doors open at 6.30 and 8.50  
Matinee on Saturday to commence at 2.30      Doors open 2.0

Prices - - 3d., 6d., & 9d.  
Matinee—Children 1d. 3d. and 5d. Adults half-price

BULLETIN  
OF THE  
SADDLEWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 20.

Number 4.

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Cover: An advertisement for the "Electra Picture Palace"  
at Woolroad.



#### OBITUARY

It is with deep sorrow that I report the death, peacefully, at home, of George Gilbert Barrett on 4th February, 1991.

George was for some time the leader of the Archaeology Group and a very active member of the Society's Committee. He left to work in the Midlands and then, on retirement, came back to resume his connections in Saddleworth. Only last year he took up his old position as Archaeology Group Leader and as a Committee member.

His many friends and colleagues already feel a great sense of loss and we all extend our sympathy and condolences to Jean and their children.

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT -

Given at the 24th Annual General Meeting, 12th December, 1990.

It is my pleasure and honour to present this, my first annual report, on a very busy and rewarding year.

I wish to pay a general tribute to your elected officers and to all the other members of a very hard-working Committee, without whom my job would have been far more difficult. In fact, this report is of their achievements during the past year - my first in office.

Our very efficient Secretary, Mr. Neil Barrow, has arranged a varied lecture programme reflecting members' interests with both local and foreign topics ranging from archaeology to the twentieth century. Two speakers have come from the Society and two more from local people.

The contribution made by our Treasurer, Mr. Godfrey Adams, to the work of the Society is invaluable. He continues to work with meticulous care on your behalf with his usual professional expertise.

Similarly our Editor, Mr. Michael Fox, assisted by his brother Peter, continues to produce a lively quarterly Bulletin with a variety of topics to maintain the high standards set by his eminent predecessors. Mr. Jack Hindle adds a literary quality to the Newsletter and distributes information about the 'Bernard Barnes Essay Competition' open to students under 19 on 31st August. Entries are received to the end of the year. Last year an award was made to a sixth form girl from Royton & Crompton School.

Mr. David Gartside, our Publications Officer, reported a slightly disappointing year for the sales of Society publications, £1766 being received against £2766 the year before. He feels that this has been partly due to the very successful "Saddleworth Countryside Guides" temporarily out of stock pending a reprint. He also has had a change in his hours and place of work which have cut down the time he has available to promote sales; he would welcome a Society member, perhaps retired, taking over the distribution of publications and would give any volunteer his full assistance and advice. The "Local Interest Trails" for Diggle and Castleshaw are in preparation.

Canon Airne, our Archivist, records the Society's gratitude to Mrs. Jean Barnes for the gift of a three-drawer filing cabinet containing Bernard's collection of slides, manuscripts and notebooks, which awaits indexing. Three drawers of Mr. Julian Hunt's collection have been calendared and indexed, a fourth should be completed by the end of the year.

Sadly, one of our American members, Mr. Harold Chandler Wrigley, died in October at the age of 82. Before his death he had presented the Society with a copy of his manuscript of the history of his family. He was descended from the Wrigleys of Standedge and Hollingreave, and probably from those of Old Tame.

The Calendar has been refurbished and bound in hard-back ring file to facilitate the recording of additions. Recently a second file has been brought into use.

Our thanks go to Mr. Maurice Dennett for all the help he gives besides his own responsibilities as Museum Archivist. Maurice has now been co-opted to the Committee and is responsible for the 1991 Festival Publication based on the "Cherry Valley Chronicles" for which an order form has been inserted in the "Bulletin".

A great deal of help has been given to our archivists by the Museum daytime staff. Our thanks go also to all who have made additions to our now extensive collection.

Our continued links with the Museum come with Mr. John Buckley's report of work done by the Museum Textile Section (John is leader of our Industrial Archaeology Section). Three open days during the year have demonstrated working machines to the public. Thanks to our skilled spinners and weavers, good cloth of interesting design is being produced for sale in the shop. The machines are occasionally run midweek for school parties.

For the future, work has continued on the setting up of a Jacquard loom controlled by punched cards and capable of producing cloth with a brocade pattern. The Museum has a machine to punch the cards - this is known as a piano (in the trade) and is operated by keys and pedals. A pattern designer from Bradford volunteered to produce a design and set of cards to weave the Museum's wheel logo into the cloth. It was impressive to watch an expert working at speed on the 'piano'.

A Manchester firm has presented a machine to sew the cards into a chain which, when commissioned, will give the Museum all the facilities for Jacquard weaving.

Mr. George Barrett's return to the district led to an invitation to resume his former leadership of the Archaeology Group, and to rejoin the Committee. Evening meetings have been held monthly at the Cross Keys, Uppermill, thanks to the generosity of Mr. Philip Kay, while summer evening or day trips were made to Melandra Roman Fort, guided by Mr. George Taylor, to Arbor Low stone circle and nearby Stanton Moor, guided by Dr. Pat Stonehouse, and to the Castleshaw Roman Forts. Evening meetings have been resumed and Mr. Alec Schofield's quizzes on Archaeology and on Saddleworth have been enjoyed by the group.

Once more the Society's summer trip was superbly organised by Mrs. Wendy Murray. and we enjoyed magnificent weather, food and companionship on the trail of Captain Cooke as far as Whitby. Mr. John Murray remains our representative on the Conservation Committee and as our President we are proud to congratulate him on his invitation to become a Museum Trustee.

Our Vice-Chairman, Mr. Stanley Broadbent, and his wife Elsie, have again this year done so much unsung work for both Society and Museum that a special tribute is necessary.

Mr. Broadbent has been active in several matters on behalf of the Society. These include helping to ensure that the appearance of Uppermill Square is conserved; liaising with the Department of the Environment over the listing of "Rome Mill" at Springhead; furthering restoration of the Woolroad canal warehouse in conjunction with the Huddersfield Canal Society, and helping to obtain new commercial sponsorship towards the cost of reprinting the "Countryside Guide to Saddleworth.

Mrs. Broadbent, our Membership Secretary, has continued to gather subscriptions and correspond with some of our many overseas members. 25 new members during the year has brought the total membership to 406. Two members have made substantial donations to the Society, Mrs. Esther Shaw Lawn and Mrs. Garside Durkee who has given eighty dollars.

Regrettably, deaths of three members must be mentioned. Mrs. Ouida Goss of Boarshurst will be remembered for her many Museum curator duties and as a staunch supporter of the Society for many years. Harold Chandler Wrigley of

North Carolina and Mrs. A. Partington, of Offerton, an aunt of Anne Parry, will also be sadly missed.

I end with a series of appeals:

If members wish to recommend speakers or topics for our 1991-2 programme, the Secretary would be pleased to receive them.

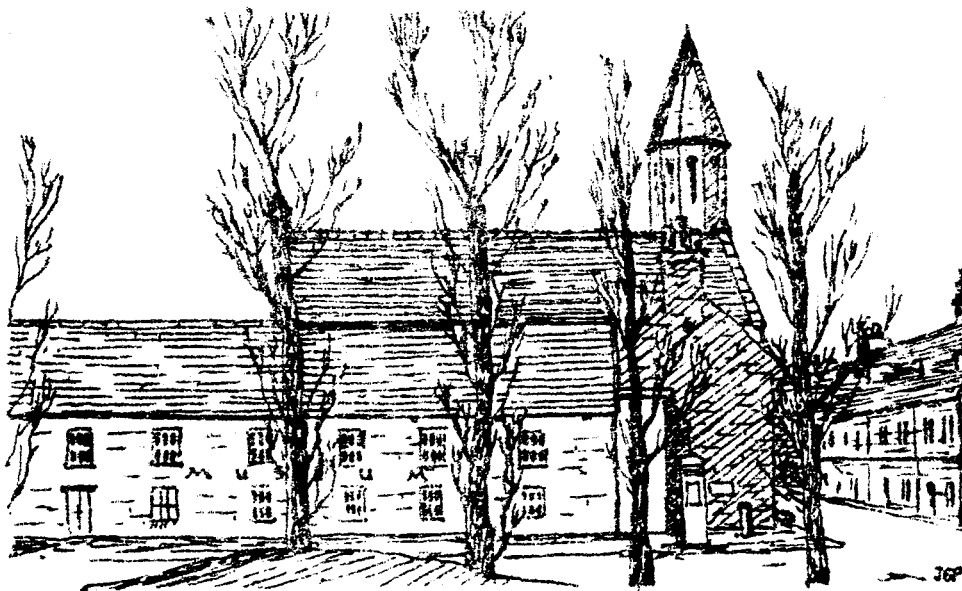
Likewise, the Editor would welcome papers on original research and other local articles for inclusion in the Bulletin, while Mr. Jack Hindle is always ready for items to include in the Newsletter.

As mentioned above, our Publications Officer, Mr. David Gartside, would be glad of assistance in the distribution of books, trails and maps to retail outlets on a regular basis.

Our summer trip, the date of which is Saturday, 13th July, 1991, is also open to suggestions: the Committee has already received Beamish, Bowes and Durham as one idea and Cromford as another.

Jim Carr,

Chairman, Saddleworth Historical Society.



THE MUSEUM - UPPERMILL

## THE CINEMA IN SADDLEWORTH

### PART ONE - THE EARLY YEARS

The arrival of the moving picture at the turn of the century was the harbinger of many changes in everyday life. As a means of providing recreation for mass audiences and by being open to all classes of society, it offered a new source of entertainment in the lives of many people.

The earliest films, not shown in purpose-built cinemas, had been pioneered by the French Lumiere brothers, who, using hand-cranked cameras had framed the passing scene into "A Series of Brilliant and Interesting Scenes absolutely true to Life in PRECISION, PROPORTION AND MOTION," as a Lumiere handbill of 1896 boasted. The first year that British audiences were to see the novelty of these "animated" pictures was 1896, in London. Later they came to Manchester.

The popularity of music halls, most towns having at least one, perhaps made it inevitable that they would provide the early venues for moving pictures. Similarly, it was the popularity of the new films and their novelty that made them attractive to travelling fairgrounds, which were to bring moving pictures to audiences throughout the country and particularly in the north west when the industrial towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire held their annual "Wakes week" holiday.

Saddleworth was no exception. The annual Wakes fair in Uppermill, held at the turn of the century in a field which is now the site of Hopkinson Close, saw at least one visit of these showmen with their early animated pictures, as a record of the occasion recalls.

One enterprising showman had filmed the large exodus of men leaving the Dobcross Loomworks at the end of the day, and projected this during Wakes week in a large tent in the fairground. The picture, though silent and somewhat basic, having been taken on a hand-cranked cine camera, proved a great attraction, the "reality" of everyday scenes being captured in movement. Bob Spencer, who was employed in the moulding department, was so intrigued to see himself returning home from work carrying "tea-bottle," "tommy-box" and "London and Yorks," that he attended each show, keeping up a running commentary on his fellow workmen as they flashed across the screen, naming them all: "Bill O' Lukes," "Coffee Bill," "Joe Weight," "Ted Pudden," and others. Doubtless he added greatly to the general enthusiasm for the event.

It is interesting to consider that these, the first moving pictures of themselves they would have seen, would have made a great contrast to the still photographs in their family albums. Their "Sunday best" in such shots would have compared strangely with the informal, moving pictures of their leaving work in grimy overalls, all ready for the tin bath.

Saddleworth's first cinema was the "Electra Picture Palace" at Woolroad, Dobcross, situated in a large stone barn-like structure that once stood on the plot of land next to the "Navigation Inn," and which now serves as a car park. The cinema was certainly open in 1912 as a programme for the week ending Monday, 12th November, survives. Top of the bill for the first half of the week, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday was -

"SHAMUS O'BRIEN - Secured for three nights only -  
The Great Irish Comedy Drama,"  
supporting features included -



HELPING HAND, A Screaming Comedy;  
 TWEEDLEDUM AS HERCULES, Another Yell;  
 A Western Drama - THE PRICE HE PAID, full of  
 exciting incidents from start to finish;  
 JIM CROW - Racing Drama;  
 CLOSE CALL - Funny Comedy.

The second half of the week promised -

TRAITRESS OF PATRON'S COURT - a Love Drama;  
 THE GOSSIP - A Vitagraph Comedy;  
 WORKING FOR HUBBY - A smile, A Scream, A Yell;  
 CARR'S REGENERATION - A Vitagraph showing how a man was  
 changed from bad to good;  
 ZIGOTO DRIVES A LOCO - A good Comic;  
 STICKY SIMON - Better than a Bottle of Medicine;  
 MATE OF "JOHN M" - A Fine and Good Sea Drama.

# PICTURE PALACE

**WOOLROAD, SADDLEWORTH.**

Proprietor: **Harry Radson**  
 Assistant Manager: **W. H. Radson**  
 Operator: **W. H. Radson**

Week Commencing **Monday, NOV. 4th**

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday  
 Secured for three nights only - The Great Irish Comedy Drama

## SHAMUS O'BRIEN

Adapted from the well-known poem

HELPING HAND  
A Screaming Comedy

TWEEDLEDUM AS HERCULES  
Another Yell

A Western Drama

## THE PRICE HE PAID

Full of exciting incidents from start to finish

Jim Crow  
Racing Drama

Close Call  
A Funny Comedy

Thursday, Friday and Saturday

## TRAITRESS OF PATRON'S COURT

A Love Drama

THE GOSSIP  
A Vitagraph Comedy

WORKING FOR HUBBY  
A smile, a scream, a yell

Sunday, Monday and Tuesday

## CARR'S REGENERATION

A Vitagraph showing how a man with 10 children was changed from bad to good

ZIGOTO DRIVES A LOCO  
A Good Comic

STICKY SIMON  
Better than a Bottle of Medicine

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday

## MATE OF JOHN 'M'

Another Vitagraph. A Fine and Good Sea Drama

Important Engagement of Saddleworth's New Centre

# MARY NEWBY

Assisted by HARRY RADSON, Wool Dramatist in the  
 Repertoire of Good Harmonised Songs

NOTICE - The Management reserves the right to alter the Pro-  
 gramme at their discretion

Doors open at 7-30  
Saturday at 7 and 9  
Matinee on Saturday: Commence at 2-10

Commence at 8-0  
Doors open at 6-30 and 8-30  
Doors open at 2-0

Prices - - 3d., 6d., & 9d.

Matinee: Children 1d., 2d. and 3d. Adults half price

An unusual aspect was the provision of entertainment during the interval: "Important Engagement of Saddleworth's New Contralto MARY NEWBY, Assisted by HARRY HADDON, Vocal Duetists in the Repertoire of Good Harmonised Songs." "Mary" was the stage name of Miss Newby, a local from Greenfield, who normally worked in the ticket booth, the owner, Benjamin Winterbottom, who went by the nickname of 'Smo Benny' paying her ten shillings for her varied services.

When we realise that this was the time of the silent film some idea of the popularity of this relatively new form of entertainment can be gained from the fact that at the 'Electra' shows were given nightly with a change of programme midweek, while a matinee for children was screened on Saturdays. The matinees could be enjoyed by a child for 1d. 2d. or 3 d. with adults being allowed at half the normal price per seat, 3d. 6d. and 9d.

Whether the "Electra" had been purposely built as a cinema is unlikely. Under the Cinematograph Act of 1909, a milestone in the history of cinemas, the first purpose-built cinemas or 'Picture Palaces' were introduced. Film projected at the period was made from cellulose-nitrate. Being highly inflammable its use represented a serious risk when projected in a large hall of people. An Act restricted its use from 1st January, 1910, all places showing these films thereafter having to project them from a fire-resistant projection box, well away from the audience and suitably equipped with fire-fighting equipment.

In November 1912 plans for a purpose-built picture palace to be erected at Uppermill were passed, the site being that of Buckley Old Mill near the Square. By February the following year the foundation stone had been laid and by September 1913 this new purpose-built cinema was being promoted:

#### "NEW PICTURE HALL FOR SADDLEWORTH"

The Milnsbridge Picture Palace Company will on Monday next open a new picture palace theatre at Uppermill. The building which is of distinctive architecture, fronts the main street at Uppermill. The comfort and safety of the public seems to have been well considered by the general manager, Mr. A. Tinker. There is a general cheeriness about the place and the seating accommodation is all that could be desired. The balcony is beautifully carpeted and the whole theatre will be lighted from a dynamo installed in the base. Should this light fail there is an alternative light provided by the installation of gas. The operating box is well away from the public and is fireproof, the door and the screen being asbestos lined. From the box to the screen there is a throw of 66 feet and in place of the familiar screen the pictures will be exhibited on a wall of white puma. The company have arranged an extensive programme for the first few weeks and exhibitions are to be seen at popular prices."

(Mossley and Saddleworth Reporter 10/9/1913).

With such modern facilities it no doubt offered considerable competition to the already established, though much smaller "Picturedrome" at Woolroad.

The same edition of this newspaper included the following on its pages:

"No effort is being spared to keep the Picture Palace at Woolroad one of the best in the district. This week there is a special holiday programme which will appeal to all tastes. The pictures are varied and particularly steady."

Just under a year later the Saddleworth Palace had changed hands:

## "NEW PROPRIETOR SHOWING ENTERPRISE"

The new proprietor of Saddleworth Palace is showing his enterprise in a manner which will be highly pleasing to patrons. The first of what it is hoped will be a series of local subjects will be shown this evening. The operator had a busy time last Saturday. Early in the afternoon he visited the Uppermill-Greenfield cricket match; returning to Uppermill he made a picture of the children as they left the palace and was then in time for the inspection of the National Reserve. The first shows an interesting point in the game as well as the excited spectators. The second is amusing. It was understood that the operator was only taking the children as they left the Palace and an innocent crowd so gathered round to witness the operation. By quietly turning the camera the operator gathered all in and spectators so became subjects caught in all sort of amusing pictures. The last picture will, of course, be the star of the programme. It shows the whole of the inspection. Colonel Freeman, the commanding officer of the battalion arrives at Uppermill in the motor car of Mr. J.P. Taylor, J.P., who has placed himself and car at the disposal of the National Reserves in the present crisis. The inspection of the 180 or so men on parade follows, the drills are pictured, and finally there is the grand march past, in which every man is clearly pictured. Never before has such a picture been seen in Saddleworth. 'Red Beaver' the well-known Indian lecturer, appears as the "turn" and gives an interesting account of Indian Life and Warfare. The general pictures are of excellent quality, the whole making up a programme which should sustain unflagging interest."

(Mossley and Saddleworth Reporter 29/8/1914.)

Its weekly programme was now regularly advertised in the papers, with a write-up promoting the various dramas and comedies of the screen. Many of the films were relatively short, being split into episodes that held the viewer on a 'cliff-edge', tying them to return the following week if they wanted to see the outcome. With films changing initially twice a week and, from 1st June, 1914, three times a week, the popularity of the cinema as a means of mass entertainment and a relief from the daily monotony of work was assured for some time.

Doors at the Saddleworth Palace opened at 7.30 p.m. and viewing started at 8.00 p.m. weekdays with tickets at 'popular prices' 6d. 4d. and 2d. while Saturdays offered the usual children's matinee, doors opening at 2.00 and viewing from 2.30, priced at 3d. 2d. and 1d. Full attendance was fairly well assured. Saturday screenings also later offered the novelty of continuous performance; 'Come when you like, go when you like - prices as usual'.

Its popularity even competed with the annual Whitsuntide Festival, a special Whit Friday attraction being continuous performance from 6.30 to 10.30, directly competing with the Uppermill Band Contest, attendance at the cinema no doubt depending on the weather.

The cinemas remained open during the First World War. The end of the war was an event to be celebrated throughout the land, September 1919 marking the local occasion:

## "THE WELCOME HOME - NEXT TUESDAY'S CEREMONY AT UPPERMILL"

Final arrangements for the welcome home to sailors, soldiers and airmen were made at an enthusiastic meeting held on Tuesday evening under the chairmanship of Rev. S.R. Potts. The soldiers, etc. are being requested to meet in their respective districts at 1.30 and march in procession, headed by a local band to the Square, Uppermill. There a general parade will take place and an official welcome extended by Mr. F.W. Mallalieu and Mr. J.H. Bradbury, the Chairman of the District Council.

A beautiful cenotaph is to be erected by Councillor Corner, and as the soldiers salute "the glorious dead", a cinema film will be taken as a souvenir of the historic event.

Relatives are invited to place floral tributes at the foot of the cenotaph.

Sports will follow on the ground of the Uppermill Cricket Club, high tea for 900 guests will be served in the Mechanics and Oddfellows Halls and the St. Chad's School and five rooms have been taken for the evening dances to which all over 16 have been invited.  
("Mossley and Saddleworth Reporter" 6/9/1919.)

As noted above the event was filmed and we are fortunate that this still exists, being preserved in the collection of the North West Film Archives; the above extract in effect forms a script to this film, that shows some of the soldiers marching through Uppermill Square, proudly led by local bands. The camera pans around the people watching the occasion, catching as many faces as possible, while the end portrays some of the sports that were held at the Uppermill Cricket Club ground. Its showing at Saddleworth Palace no doubt promoted great excitement among the audience and produced three cheers for the returning soldiers.

The popularity of the 'Electra' at Woolroad had by this time waned due to the more modern facilities offered by the competing Saddleworth Palace. It closed in 1918, moving to Delph. A letter in the "Oldham Chronicle" records the memories of Herman Whitehead who with his brother, Cecil Eric Whitehead, helped to move the cinema to Delph. His brother subsequently became the projectionist at "Saddleworth Palace", while he himself was later to become assistant, prior to this working as the projectionist at the Delph Cinema with assistants Jack and Stanley Gartside who used it as a spare time occupation, the early hand-operated projection machines doubtless proving hard work after a full day's regular employment.

By 1918 the "Star Picture Palace" had become established in Delph, its adverts competing with those of Uppermill Picture Palace in the "Oldham Weekend Chronicle" though some compromise arrangement must have held between the owners. For example, "SECRET OF THE SUBMARINE", Episode 6, would be screened at Uppermill the first half of the week, whilst the people of Delph would have the opportunity to see it the second half. Similarly the people of Delph were able to see another serial for the first time, "PATRICIA, Episode 7" with it going likewise to Uppermill for the second half of the week.

The 'Electra' was however not going to lead as long a life as that of the Uppermill Picture Palace, it coming to an abrupt end in 1921. During one night the police arrived confirming that 'flammable' nitrate films were being used instead of the 'non-flammable' type for which the cinema was licensed. The last films to be shown were 'Blue Jeans' and 'Jilted Jack'. As it was never to reopen following the court proceedings, Uppermill Palace seems to have been prompted to change its title to "Saddleworth Picture Palace".

With "Saddleworth Palace" remaining, its popularity assured, it was set to carry on through into cinemas' next great heyday with the arrival of the talking pictures. In the meantime it enhanced its silent films with musical accompaniment. Lacking the means of a large town cinema which could buy an organ for the purpose, it relied on local talent:

"Pianist, Uppermill Picture Palace - Friends will be please to know that Mr. J.E. Chapman of Greenfield has recovered from his serious operation and has now been appointed pianist at the Saddleworth Picture Palace'. ("Mossley and Saddleworth Reporter" 29/12/1923).

The second part of this article will look at the later years of the "Saddleworth Palace". The author would welcome any recollections or ephemera, such as programmes or tickets, and any comments on this article would also be received with interest. A final puzzle which the author would like to solve - where in Delph was the "Star Picture Palace" ?.

PETER FOX.

## OLDHAM CHRONICLE, APRIL 6, 1918

any could.—Mr. W. Dun-  
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—The Vicar appointed  
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### LYDGATE.

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hand the

## Saddleworth

**W**ANTED half-time LADS for hircroft—  
R. H. Lund & Co. Ltd., Dole.  
**W**ANTED for a few weeks in the Saddleworth  
district comfortable HOME with capable  
person for two children, aged 7 and 9; hillside  
preferred.—Address B 654, Chronicle Office, Oldm  
**W**ANTED FEEDER.—Apply Jas. Abbott &  
Sons Ltd., Tame Water Mill, Dobcross.  
**O**N SALE few cwt. of Arran Chief Seed Pot-  
atoes, 10/6 per cwt.; also Hasting Potatoes,  
8s. per cwt.—Broomhead, Nurseries, Greenfield.

### STAR PICTURE PALACE, BELPH

MONDAY, April 6th, 1918.  
TOPICAL BUDGET.  
"KILAS MANNER," Drama, 5,000 feet.  
"PATRIA," Episode 7.  
Comedy, "TUBBY'S RESCUE."  
THURSDAY, FRIDAY & SATURDAY:  
TOPICAL BUDGET.  
"JIM, THE PENMAN," Drama, 5,000 feet.  
"SECRET OF THE SUBMARINE," Episode 6.  
"VOICE ON THE WIRE," Last Episode.

### UPPERMILL PICTURE PALACE.

MONDAY, APRIL 6th, 1918.  
TOPICAL BUDGET.  
"JIM, THE PENMAN," Drama, 5,000 feet.  
"SECRET OF THE SUBMARINE," Episode 6.  
"VOICE ON THE WIRE," Last Episode.  
THURSDAY, FRIDAY & SATURDAY:  
TOPICAL BUDGET.  
"THE ARAB," Drama, 5,000 feet.  
"PATRIA," Episode 7.  
Comedy, "TUBBY'S RESCUE."

**THE SADDLEWORTH POULTRY SOCIETY**  
LIMITED.  
Affiliated with Agricultural Organisation  
Society, London.

ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING, MONDAY,  
March 25th, in the Mechanics' Hall Committee  
Room, Uppermill, at 8 p.m.

Mr. JOHN LAWTON,  
Wharfedale Vale, GREENFIELD.

## DAY OLD CHICKS.

### EGGS FOR HATCHING.

White Wyandottes, White Leghorns, Black  
Leghorns, Light Sussex, Speckled Sussex.

For particulars and prices, apply WESTFIELD  
POULTRY FARM, Gascoigne, Greenfield, near

## HIGH-CLASS STEAK

From 100 to 4,000

SPECIAL ATTENTION  
ALTERATIONS AND

MILL-GEARING  
DESCRIP

**GEORGE**

OPENSHEAW,

T.M. H.

Telephone:

Tel:

**CHAS. H**

**Boller**

**REPAIR**

Establishment:

I make a  
of Steam  
material for

**JOHN**

Tame Water  
Mill, Oldm  
Road, Saddleworth  
to 1918  
Partnership of  
George, J. J.  
Special Share  
A Partnership  
to keep it in  
Funding Day

**REPAIR**

**BOILER**

**TAKE**

**THE "H"**

**TIME**

IN MEMORY OF -

Gravestone inscriptions at St. Thomas's Church, Heights, Delph, recalling inhabitants of Hollinbank.

MARY wife of JAMES SHAW of HOLLINBANK who departed this life January 20th 1786, in the 34th year of her age.

Also ALICE, their daughter, who departed this life September 15th 1786, in the 2nd year of her age.

Also the above said JAMES SHAW who departed this life March 14th 1817, in the 68th year of his age.

Also JOSEPH SHAW, their grandson, who died at Guildford, July 28th 1877, in the 67th year of his age, also of JANE his wife who died January 21st 1860, in the 47th year of her age.

Also of BETTY, wife of the above named JOSEPH SHAW, who died August 18th 1879 in the 61st year of her age.

Here was interred the body of JOSEPH, son of JOHN AND BETTY SHAW of HOLLINBANK, who departed this life October 15th 1810, in the 2nd year of his age.

Also THOMAS, their son, who departed this life July 8th 1819, in the 2nd year of his age.

Also BENJAMIN, their son, who departed this life February 17th 1822, in the 11th year of his age.

Also WILLIAM, their son, who departed this life September 16th 1823, in the 1st year of his age.

Also JOHN, their son, who departed this life May 25th 1824, in the 21st year of his age.

Also ESTHER, their daughter, who departed this life July 29th 1827, in the 1st year of her age.

Also CHARLES, their son, who departed this life January 26th 1829, in the 5th year of his age.

Also BETTY, his wife, who departed this life 3rd October 1829, in the 45th year of her age.

Also SAMUEL, son of the aforesaid JOHN and BETTY SHAW, who departed this life March 21st 1841, in the 21st year of his age.

Also the aforesaid JOHN SHAW, who departed this life June 3rd 1856, in the 77th year of his age.

Also ANN, ELIZABETH and JANE WILSON, their three granddaughters, who died on the 8th, 16th and 23rd January 1857.  
ANN and ELIZABETH twin sisters aged 6 years, JANE aged 4 years.

Compiled by Mrs. J. Smith of Hollinbank.

## GOVERNING A SADDLEWORTH VILLAGE -

### THE UPPERMILL LOCAL BOARD, 1868 - 1900

For centuries the elected body for parish affairs, the Vestry, oversaw local matters in Saddleworth, from relief of the poor to repair of the roads. However, the great increase in the area's population from the late eighteenth century until the end of the nineteenth, the number of inhabitants approximately doubling from around 10,000 in 1800 to about 20,000 a hundred years later, put much strain on this system. The greater demands of an increasingly sophisticated local society, together with the national trend in the nineteenth century towards more centralised and wide-ranging control of everyday affairs, also acted to make the Vestry seem an outmoded means of fulfilling its tasks.

By 1900 a radical change in the way Saddleworth ran itself had culminated in the formation in that year of the Saddleworth Urban District Council, and the Vestry had long been relegated to overseeing church affairs alone. There had been several stages along this path (for a concise summary of which, see "The Saddleworth Story", Workers' Educational Association, Saddleworth Branch, chapter 5, "Local Government from Vestry to Parish Council"). A principal one had been the adoption by Springhead in 1864 of the Local Government Act of 1858; this permitted small communities to elect a body of individuals to oversee basic functions such as street repair and lighting, sanitation, water supply and the disposal of waste, funded by a local rate. The Springhead Local Board, which administered in this way the Middle Division of Quick Mere, extending to Lydgate and Strinesdale, was watched with some interest deeper in Saddleworth.

Taking especial note were some of the leading citizens of Uppermill. Hardly more than an overgrown hamlet in the late eighteenth century, by the middle of the nineteenth Uppermill had greatly expanded into a thriving and still quickly growing village (See "Uppermill in the Nineteenth Century - The Economic and Social Structure of a Saddleworth Village," in S.H.S. "Bulletin" Vol. 18, No. 3. Autumn 1988, pp. 10-22). In the 1841 Census its population was already 794, while by 1881 it would be four-fifths greater at 1439, a rate of growth probably unmatched elsewhere in Saddleworth during that period. In such a condition of change the Vestry's deficiencies seem to have been more noticeable than in other parts of the district, where the increasing numbers of people were not quite so concentrated.

Whatever the precise motivations of those involved were, on 27th May, 1868, an election was held in Uppermill and twelve individuals were returned to constitute the first members of the Uppermill Local Board (U.L.B.). The U.L.B. was to survive until its absorption in the Saddleworth Urban District Council in 1900, a change of title in 1896 to Uppermill District Council being largely cosmetic. The minute books over its entire existence survive intact at the Oldham Local Studies Library and have provided the material for this article; all dates in brackets refer to those of meetings as recorded in these books.

The first members to be elected included several leading professional men and industrialists from the village; there was no attempt to set up a raw democratic institution, social status and material success clearly being regarded as essential requirements for office. This was emphasised by the election as Chairman of George Shaw of St. Chad's House, Uppermill, perhaps the leading citizen in the community at the time. A pattern of monthly meetings was set from the beginning, the venue being the Uppermill Mechanics' Institute's building of 1859 at the top of Court Street, a room being hired for the purpose.

The range of business felt to be relevant to the U.L.B. is indicated by its officers, these including a rates collector, a surveyor and an inspector of nuisances, whose task it was to ensure that privies, slaughterhouses and the like did not threaten public health. A clerk presided over administration. All post-holders were remunerated, a total of £35 being expended in the year 1885 for this purpose, to take a typical example. The average payment received however, was small: in 1878, for instance, the inspector of nuisances received £4 whilst the temporarily combined post of collector of rates and surveyor was rewarded with £4.12.6 (£4.63). Clearly there was never any intention for Board members to work as full-time professionals, a fact which in itself would perhaps have made difficult the involvement of the working class in its running. One or two individuals did gain their living from the U.L.B. but only as employees without a say in policy; for example, a lamplighter was retained, being paid 7 shillings (35p) a week in 1876 for servicing the village gas lamps.

The area over which these officers had jurisdiction does not come out clearly in the minutes although it appears to have been bounded by the Stalybridge-Huddersfield railway from Wade Lock to Den Quarries, then the Pickhill Brook to Ryefields. At this point it most likely followed the old Ryefields-Uppermill pack and prime way for a short distance before running virtually due south to Rush Hill, approximately along the line followed in the 1880's by the Diggle-Stalybridge railway. From Rush Hill the boundary seems to have struck westwards to cross the River Tame and return to Wade Lock. (The sketchmap in the "Bulletin" article on Uppermill, referred to above, corresponds approximately to this area). At the time of the Board's formation this zone enclosed virtually all the population of the village, most of the housing that now exists to the immediate east having been built this century. The committee meeting on 2nd June, 1886, resolved that stone markers be erected to define this boundary; at least two of these plain, yet distinctive stones, incised "U.L.B.", survive, at Wade Lock and near the bottom of Ryefields Drive, both on the main road through the village.

Ensuring that finance would be readily available to fund its activities was obviously one of the main tasks of the U.L.B. The initial rate, of 1/3 penny in the pound, was set at the first meeting on 18th June, 1868. This was to cover estimated expenditure of £155 over the coming twelve months. The areas of spending widened and the sums involved increased gradually over the years, probably as a reflection of the steady rise in population. The account for the year ending May 1889, for example, demonstrates this increase in spending (22nd May, 1889):

|                                                         | £     |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Repairs and Highway                                     | 115   |
| Sanitary expenses (scavenging and removal of nuisances) | 20    |
| Gas and (street) lighting                               | 45    |
| Salaries of officers                                    | 35    |
| Election expenses A                                     | 20    |
|                                                         | <hr/> |
|                                                         | 235 B |

#### NOTES

- A: all U.L.B. officers were subject to annual re-election.
- B: this figure excludes extraordinary legal expenses of £175, apparently incurred in a tussle with the Saddleworth Rural Sanitary Authority over the disposal of waste.



As with any rating system, setting a figure was one thing, recovering that amount another. In 1876, for example, £148.10.8 (£148.57) was set but only £139.1.0 (£139.05) recovered. The main reasons given were, in descending order of importance, poverty and empty properties. (4th April 1876). It is interesting to speculate how much resistance there was to paying this rate and how difficult the collector's job was in consequence. Whatever the case may have been, the U.L.B. appears to have successfully restrained its spending and there is no evidence of the villagers' ire being aroused at the size of the bills they were asked to foot.

The list of items of expenditure just given conveys a good idea of what tasks the U.L.B. performed. Looking at these in detail provides an insight not only into how the U.L.B. itself worked but also into how local government as a whole was conducted in Victorian Saddleworth.

Uppermill had acquired a small network of streets in the decades before the U.L.B. came into being. It quickly set about its self-imposed task of overseeing their repair and maintenance. As an early step it resolved to clearly define what roads lay within its boundaries:

"Resolved that the following list of names of streets be approved of and the surveyor get them painted on slates and fixed in the proper places - High Street, Bridge Street, Mill Road, School Street, Spring Street, Lee Street, Court Street, Smithy Lane, New Street, Church Road, Chapel Street, The Square, Tame Street, Wade Street, St. Mary's Gate, Moorgate Street, Watergate, Den Lane and Platt's Yard".  
(7th March, 1871).

All these survive today, although Mill Road is now known as Mill Street.

The state of some of these thoroughfares was poor. In 1872, for example, James Newton, a manager at Albion (Dam Head) Mill, was moved to write to the Board:

"I beg to draw your attention to the present unsatisfactory state of New Street. It is quite unfit for the traffic that has to pass over it. We had a load of cotton brought yesterday which could not be brought up to the mill without being unloaded onto a cart. Your attention to the above will oblige". (3rd April, 1872).

It is perhaps the test of the efficacy of a body of local government how well it responds to this type of complaint. It may be significant that the U.L.B. moved with some speed to resolve this problem, deciding at the same meeting that "30 lineal yards of New Street from the turnpike be paved" (the turnpike road was High Street, discussed below) and a delegation was quickly dispatched to both Den and Saddleworth Fold quarries (the latter is also known as Hey Stone Pit) to determine which could provide the best quality granite for the setts. The fact that local industrialists sat on the Board may well have rendered it sympathetic to such pleas.

The villagers were habitually difficult to please, however. In 1874, twenty three inhabitants led by James Allott, the head of the dyeworks near Buckley Old Mill, petitioned the Local Government Board, a body which had been set up in London in 1870 to oversee the development of local governmental initiatives such as the U.L.B. Largely concerned with water supply and sanitation, the petitioners also grumbled at the continuing poor condition of the streets. The Local Government Board sent the petition to the U.L.B. with a terse demand for its "observations", the U.L.B. replying as follows in respect of streets:

"The Board have paved some parts of the district and paved, flagged and sewered two other (unspecified) streets. Notices have been given to level, pave, flag and sewer two other streets". (7th July, 1874).

This is a reminder that the thoroughfares within its area were not automatically brought under its full control when the U.L.B. was formed. But it did have the power to "adopt" them, and frequently used this, particularly when complaints had been received. An example is provided by Mill Road in 1879:

"Resolved that Mill Road having been sewered, channelled, paved and completed to the satisfaction of the Board be and is hereby declared a highway reparable by the Board". (7th May, 1879).

Thereafter this street's maintenance would have been provided from the local rate.

The U.L.B. had no control over one thoroughfare, the main road through the village. This had been opened in 1794 as the Standedge and Oldham Turnpike and was still controlled by the turnpike trustees when the U.L.B. was set up. The Board had great and recurrent cause to regret the fact that its powers did not extend to this road:

"Resolved that the clerk be instructed to write to Mr. W.N. Littler (the turnpike's clerk) calling the attention of the turnpike's trustees to the bad state of the turnpike road through the district". (5th November, 1872);

"Mr. Blackburn (of the U.L.B.) complained of the disgraceful state of the turnpike road through the district, the road being unswept and the drains filled with dirt". (1st August, 1876);

"Resolved that the clerk write to the trustees complaining of the disgraceful state of the road and request that it be scraped and put in repair at once". (7th November, 1883).

The turnpike trustees were perhaps not deliberately ignoring the Board's earnest pleas; they had for long been an impecunious concern with little money to spare for keeping their road in the order that a village expanding as rapidly as Uppermill demanded. The Board's repeated complaints are interesting not so much for their persistent desperation, but in respect of the impotence they betray; the U.L.B. was a tiny body with limited powers and could sometimes only rail against problems without being able to exert effective pressure to ameliorate them. Perhaps fortunately for the Board, and the villagers, the turnpike trusts as a whole in Saddleworth were being wound up at this time, the Standedge and Oldham disappearing in 1885 when the hated tollbars at Wade Lock and Brownhill Vale, that had also attracted the Board's venom, were removed. From 1889 (possibly 1890, as the minutes are unclear on this point) the newly-formed West Riding County Council exercised its power of assuming control of the old turnpike's route. The U.L.B.'s negotiations with the County Council in the 1890's were far more amicable, resulting in the paving of High Street and the reconstruction, in 1898, of the awkwardly narrow bridge with which it spanned the River Tame (for the latter see "Mossley and Saddleworth Reporter" 29th February, 1896, 16th April, 1898 and 23rd April, 1898).

The streets of Uppermill had been lit by gas since 1851, the U.L.B. simply taking over responsibility for gathering the rate for this and ensuring the lamps' maintenance and supply. Again, this apparently simple task

highlights the complexity and strife that ensured election to the U.L.B. was no sinecure. The villain in this case was the Stalybridge Gas Company, a private concern. In 1868 one of the first actions of the infant Board was to request its clerk to write to the gas company,

"..... drawing their attention to the price we are now paying for the street lamps and to show that we have seven nights dark in each month, being two more than we formerly had and that they have made no alteration in the price per lamp but to other consumers a ten per cent cut has been made". (1st September, 1868).

Such approaches seem to have failed, however, Witness 1872 -

"Resolved that the lighting of the lamps throughout the district be discontinued until the directors of the Stalybridge Gas Company come to more reasonable terms for the supply of gas". (5th November 1872).

Although the minutes are silent on the immediate response of this expensive and unreliable supplier, the U.L.B.'s offer to pay 29 shillings per annum per lamp seems to have brought final agreement the following year. (6th August 1883).

In 1884 Mossley and Stalybridge Corporations jointly purchased the Stalybridge Gas Company. Thereafter Mossley Corporation became Uppermill's supplier. Unfortunately relationships seem to have taken a renewed turn for the worse soon after and in 1886 the Board's minutes record that the Corporation was threatening to cut off its supply, "unless the arrears of the gas account are paid". (1st December, 1886). Could this be a hint that the U.L.B. wasn't always the model of prudence and good management that the minutes seem to imply ?

A more pressing need confronted by the U.L.B. was the supply of water and the overseeing of its quality. The petitioners of 1874, mentioned above, were critical of the Board's failure to provide "a good and sufficient supply of water" claiming that "such good and proper supply might be obtained at a reasonable cost." The U.L.B. responded defensively, informing the Local Government Board that the availability of water in Uppermill, although not good, was at least adequate:

"....several owners of property have sunk wells and the Board have made a new public well and repaired the old ones and the water supply is now better than at any previous period." (7th July 1874).

That the Board was perhaps exaggerating is suggested by its having to deal with a case of impure water that autumn. Two samples from a well on Spring Street had been sent for analysis, the resultant report from the City of Manchester Laboratories being unfavourable, due to the finding of "contamination of both with animal organic matter." It may be of significance that the Board was not satisfied with the analyst's recommendation that "the extent of the contamination is such as to render it inadvisable to permit use for ordinary domestic purposes," resolving to seek a second opinion. (7th October 1874). This begs the question as to what the general standard of the many wells that supplied the village before the advent of the mains water was.

The ever-growing numbers living in Uppermill, together with its expanding industries, posed the constant problem to the Board of augmenting an already barely adequate supply of water. The wells in particular, were prone to

run dry in time of draught. The lengths gone to to supplement these unreliable supplies are suggested by an item on the agenda in 1870:

"Resolved that the clerk be instructed to write to Mrs. Schofield of Heathfields to ask if she would receive a deputation from this Board in reference to the water from White Spring Head, it having been intimated that she would now treat with the Board for a portion of the said water." (20th July, 1870).

The White Brook is a minor stream that runs into Uppermill from the flanks of Pots and Pans Hill and was already heavily utilised by several long-established textile mills, including two near the hamlet of Heathfields. The outcome of the Board's approach is not recorded.

The U.L.B. was, however, hamstrung, in the matter of water as in other respects, by its necessity to wait on the decisions of others. In 1869 and 1870 it took a vigorous interest in the schemes by Oldham and Mossley Corporations to build reservoirs in the Greenfield and Chew Valleys. Unfortunately neither came to fruition, depriving Uppermill for a time of the tantalising prospect of piped mains water. (Relevant minute entries concerning these negotiations are : 2nd December, 1868, 8th January, 1869, 11th January, 1869, 2nd March 1869, 12th May, 1869, 2nd March, 1870 and 13th June, 1870. For a detailed account of reservoir schemes in the valleys concerned, see the series of articles in "Bulletins" Vol. 19. No. 4. and Vol. 20. Nos. 1 to 3 inc.).

Almost ten years were to elapse before the prospect reappeared. In 1870, out of the wreckage of the Mossley and Oldham water Bills had emerged a comprehensive scheme for the supply of water from the Greenfield area, a body of several local authorities coming together in the Ashton, Stalybridge and Dukinfield (District) Waterworks Joint Committee (ASDDWJC) to foster this. Although Saddleworth chose to have no representation on this committee, the long-sought regular supply was placed by it within Uppermill's sights. It was not until 1879, however, that the nearing-completion of the ASDDWJC's first reservoir, Yeoman Hey, in the Greenfield Valley, made the U.L.B. feel the time for action was right:

"Resolved that the law clerk be directed to make a formal application to the Joint Water Works Committee to supply the district with water and at the same time enquire when the pipes are likely to be laid" (5th January, 1879).

The ASDDWJC replied smartly. In February a letter from the Committee's Secretary was discussed by the U.L.B:

"I am directed by the District Waterworks Joint Committee to state ..... that as soon as the Greenfield Works are completed the Committee will supply the Uppermill district with water."

He added, however -

"..... I cannot at present say when the mains will be laid."  
(4th February, 1879).

A delay of three years was to ensue before the mains were in use. This is somewhat puzzling as Yeoman Hey was completed in 1880, and on 3rd March of the same year the U.L.B. minutes record that "the mains are now being laid through the district," whilst over two years later, on 3rd May, 1882, the monthly meeting was informed that the mains had been completed "some time", but that water was not yet flowing through. However, in the following month the ASDDWJC wrote to the U.L.B. "promising a supply of water in the

district as early as possible" (21st June, 1882) and this appears to have been instituted soon after. Were unforeseen technical problems to blame for the delay ?

By not being a member of the ASDDWJC, Saddleworth was obliged to pay a surcharge of ten per cent for the water it received from this source. ("Bulletin", Vol. 19. No. 4. p.3.). This may help to explain why the inhabitants of Uppermill appear not to have welcomed the advent of mains water with open arms. In 1883 the Medical Officer of Health stated in his annual report to the U.L.B. that -

"The water supplied by the (ASDDWJC) has now been laid (on) for some time and is improving in quality whilst the quantity becomes regular and abundant. It is a matter of regret that out of about 140 houses in the district I am informed that not more than 80 are using the water". (7th March, 1883).

The same official felt more optimism the following year, however:

"A few cases of sickness can still be traced to the few old pumps which supply surface drainage in the semblance of water to the houses. I am glad to say that the benefits of the good, though rather expensive water now supplied to us by the (ASDDWJC) are becoming more appreciated, and I hope in another twelve months to say that pumps have ceased to exist". (5th March, 1884).

The concern for public health shown in the last statement was a perennial one for the Board. The rapid growth of the village, the relative lack of such basics as a good water supply, and the conservatism and restricted knowledge of hygiene of its inhabitants, ensured that there could be no let-up of vigilance.

However, the U.L.B. seem to have shared some of the drawbacks of the population at large, being often cautious and prone to inertia in matters of health. The best demonstration of this is their tardiness in responding to the wishes of the Local Government Board that the U.L.B. follow suit with other similar bodies and appoint a Medical Officer of Health (M.O.H.) to oversee health issues in the village. The reaction to the first overture from the Local Government Board, in 1873, seems almost to have been one of indifference, the U.L.B. merely deciding to -

".... take no steps in the matter at present but wait and see the action of other local authorities on the subject."  
(5th February, 1873).

Indifference turned to prevarication, reflected by the tone of the frequent letters from the Local Government Board on the topic becoming more and more one of exasperation. Finally, an ultimatum was delivered:

"If any further delay arises in making the appointment we will be compelled to consider what steps would be necessary to take to ensure a compliance with the statutory obligation imposed on (your) local Board."

This letter, discussed at the U.L.B. meeting of 4th October, 1876, stung the Board into immediate action:

"Resolved that Dr. Blackburn be and is hereby appointed Medical Officer of Health to the Board for this district." (4th October, 1876).

The fact that Dr. Blackburn was already a Board member may account for part of the seeming reluctance to appoint an M.O.H; in fact in 1874 this had been given to the Local Government Board as a specific reason for the delay. (6th January, 1874). The U.L.B. may well have seen its parent board in London as a bureaucratic meddler. It is interesting that the Board's apparently casual attitude towards the M.O.H. position seems to have continued after his appointment. This is suggested by the Board's initial intention, apparently with Dr. Blackburn's full consent, not to pay for the services of the M.O.H. The Local Government Board perhaps viewed this as naivety, quickly sending a strong request to the U.L.B. that the M.O.H. be "adequately remunerated" as otherwise in their opinion, he could not be expected to perform his duties satisfactorily. The meeting of 20th February, 1877, which considered this letter, decided that the postholder should receive £5 per annum henceforth.

The Medical Officer of Health, in the guise of Dr. Blackburn or his successor, Dr. Ramsden, could do little but monitor, persuade and cajole, as his powers as a U.L.B. official were limited. Although Uppermill does not appear to have been an especially unhealthy place to live in the second half of last century, at least relative to the rest of Saddleworth, disease was endemic, posing a constant challenge to the postholder. In 1879, for example, the M.O.H. reported to the Board that the following had been the causes of death in the village during the previous year: "typhus fever" 2, enteric fever 1, "phthisis" 3, bronchial pneumonia and pleurisy 7, heart disease 1, "injuries" 2, "other diseases not classified" 15. Total: 31. (5th March, 1879). It was perhaps unusual that smallpox wasn't listed also, as this was relatively common in Saddleworth. For example in 1872:

"The clerk reported that a case of smallpox had terminated fatally in the district and that the family had been ordered to burn the bed which they had done and disinfected the clothes, too."  
(5th March, 1872).

To judge from the comments Doctors Blackburn and Ramsden made over the years, they were constantly frustrated at their relative impotence in the face of such odds, which must have seemed to be made greater by the behaviour and attitudes of the villagers themselves. In 1887 we get a hint that this apparent ignorance or indifference was exasperating the M.O.H., who on this occasion was bemoaning the number of infant mortalities:

"The deaths of children under 5 (during 1886) numbered 18.  
That gives a percentage of 58.64 of the number of deaths (31).  
A very high percentage and one which clearly proves gross  
ignorance of the management of children". (2nd February, 1887).

The M.O.H. seems to have dealt with such problems in either of two ways. On the one hand he could advise the Board that particular courses of action should be taken to minimise a threat to the health of the population at large, however rudimentary the means proposed might be. An instance of this comes from 1879 when we hear from the doctor that -

"In all cases of infectious diseases coming to the knowledge of the Board the houses are visited and disinfected liberally supplied by the Board". (5th March, 1879).

On the other hand the M.O.H. could call on the Board to exercise what powers it had to compel the protection of public health. This was particularly the case where a nuisance, potentially injurious to health, was deemed to be being caused (in this respect, of course, the Board's own Inspector of Nuisances also came into play). In 1881 for example:

"Resolved that the clerk serve a notice on the slaughterhouse in the rear of the "Hare and Hounds" ..... to abate a nuisance caused there by an accumulation of matter, bad drainage, etc. for them to conform to the Board's bye-laws, failing which their certificate to be withdrawn. (1st June, 1881).

Such "nuisances" were rife but the Board appears not to have shied from taking action to remove them. A few years before an M.O.H. was first appointed, the unhygienic habits of one resident were firmly dealt with:

"Resolved that notice be given to Mr. C. Broadbent to remove within 24 hours the nuisance caused by the keeping of pigs at "Bridge Inn" and in case of non-compliance to be summoned before the Justices". (5th September, 1871).

Whether initiated by the M.O.H. or not, the minutes indicate that in general people responded to such threats without further action having to be taken. It might be inferred that overall the Board and its officers, including the M.O.H. were having a beneficial effect on the standards of health in the village, despite being hampered by ignorance, disinterest and their own lack of power.

The M.O.H. and the Inspector of Nuisances, had to exert themselves similarly in dealing with another aspect of Uppermill life that was not only a threat to public health but also particularly unpleasant, the disposal of waste. Human waste was an especial problem, exacerbated by the sheer numbers of inhabitants, the lack of anything approaching a modern system of sanitation and sewerage, and (unsurprisingly, perhaps) the scarcity of landowners who were willing to rent sites for dumping.

The problem seems never to have been satisfactorily tackled by the Board, although its efforts were constant. The above-mentioned petition of leading inhabitants in 1874 made it plain at an early date in the U.L.B.'s existence that at least some villagers regarded the adequate dealing with waste as a priority which the Board was ignoring:

"The sanitary arrangements with regard to privies and the providing of a suitable place for the disposal of night soil are inadequate." (7th July, 1874).

The Board responded with a robust defence:

"The Board have since its formation caused the regular emptying of the privies in the district and there are several places in the district for the deposit of refuse. (We) are now compelling property owners to build additional privies." (7th July, 1874).

In support of the Board's contention that it was regularly taking action in these respects are numerous minute entries recording the enforcing of its bye-laws to ensure that property-owners were providing lavatory facilities and periodically emptying them. The Board also seems to have learned quickly from its early experience that the best way of shifting the indifference of some inhabitants was to threaten them with a summons before the Justices at the outset, rather than first try persuasion and cajoling. As early as 1871 it invited a local policeman, Sergeant Peters of the Wool Road Station, to act as its nuisance inspector, doubtless feeling that the villagers would be more likely to heed his authority. His appointment was confirmed at the meeting of 6th December, 1871, after which he was paid £1 per annum and held possession of the sonorous title of "Nuisance Inspector of the Privies." But even Sergeant Peters seems to have discovered that a long

title and a police uniform were not enough, and in 1873 had to be given increased powers:

"Resolved that in all cases of where privies and ashpits require emptying the Inspector be authorised to take legal proceedings to remedy the matter without waiting to report the same to the Board." (4th June, 1873).

The lack of co-operativeness of some villagers, suggested by the taking of these measures, was a constant barrier to the Board's attempts to tackle the problem of waste. An instance will serve to illustrate what attitudes had to be contended with:

"My (the M.O.H.'s) attention has been frequently directed to the prevalent nuisance of night soil being thrown in the open grids of the district." (4th March, 1885).

The Board's sense of powerlessness in the face of what must have seemed wilful ignorance is perhaps indicated by the M.O.H.'s suggestion as to how the nuisance he identified in 1885 could best be remedied -

"..... May I suggest the Board should offer a reward for any person who could be proved to be guilty of this objectionable offence."

The Board's response is, unfortunately, not recorded.

The Medical Officer of Health, presumably by virtue of his position, seems to have been the principal urger of action on the Board, never letting it lapse into the complacency that clearly affected a proportion of the villagers. His annual report to the Board was a convenient vehicle for this. In 1887, for example, his message seems to have been as much aimed at the Board as the inhabitants. Commenting on the sanitary condition of Uppermill in 1886 he said that -

"Much improvement is necessary. Privies should be more regularly attended to ..... There is much neglect on that count and altogether on sanitary matters there is a good deal of ignorance on the part of the people." (2nd February, 1887).

This tone of even-handed but constructive criticism of the villagers and his colleagues is again evident in his report on the year 1887:

"A proper system for the disposal of sewage and refuse is undoubtedly the most pressing want and should receive your earliest attention. At present most of the sewage, etc. finds its way into the river, the rest being moved at irregular intervals onto farm land." (8th January, 1890).

He ends by making reference to an attempt then being made by the Board to solve the unending problem of locating sites for tipping, this obviously having little success:

"The deputation appointed for dealing with this matter has up to the present entirely failed in its object."

It was not to be until the middle of the 1890's that Uppermill's shortcomings in respect of the disposal and treatment of waste would begin to be firmly tackled as a result of efforts by other bodies, such as the Saddleworth Rural Sanitary Authority and the West Riding County Council, who had more



capital or resources to bring to bear. In 1894 the first major step was made by the West Riding Authorities who initiated a major sewage scheme for the upper Tame valley. One result of this was the opening in 1896 of a sewage purification plant on the borders of Uppermill and Greenfield at Halls. ("Oldham Chronicle" 26th January, 1895 and "Mossley and Saddleworth Reporter" 1st August 1896). The new century would see the pace of improvement quicken, although as late as 1908 the Saddleworth Urban District Council was employing "scavengers" to remove night soil from 357 houses in Uppermill. ("Mossley and Saddleworth Reporter" 15th August, 1908), whilst domestic refuse was still being carted to be dumped untreated on nearby fields. It comes as something of a shock in these days of environmental consciousness and restricted development that in 1901 the Urban District Council proudly announced that a new site for a tip had been found in a field above Saddleworth Fold; even today this untidy mound is a conspicuous feature of the beautiful Pickhill Clough area.

The Board exercised other miscellaneous functions, approving plans for new buildings for instance. A typical example of this comes from 1880 when sanction was given for:

" .....two meeting rooms and one cottage proposed to be built by the Candour Lodge of Freemasons at Brownhill Vale."  
(1st September, 1880).

The wishes of villagers not to be annoyed by The Square constantly being filled by itinerant vendors of amusements was another minor, but appreciated, service that the Board could supply. In 1889 it was resolved:

" ..... that no places on The Square be let between the Wakes time in each year to owners of shooting galleries, swings and hobby horses." (22nd May, 1889).

Overall, the Uppermill Local Board seems to have encompassed a wide range of activities with some success, if only to judge by the relative absence of complaints recorded both in the minute books and the local press. It is arguable that it was hampered by its having only limited powers, essentially conferred by a small number of bye-laws. It may also have been restricted by a lack of resources, its local rate being relatively meagre and probably not easy or expedient to increase much beyond its original level per head. It was in essence a stepping-stone between the archaic system of parish control, epitomised by the Vestry, and the new, nationally-encouraged organs of professional local government, to be represented in Saddleworth in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries by the West Riding County Council and the Saddleworth Urban District Council, into which latter it was absorbed in 1900. By that date its particular brand of small-scale administration of a single community had perhaps become as outmoded as the Vestry before it.

MICHAEL FOX.

## PIGEON POST IN SADDLEWORTH

In the early years of this century when the telephone was indeed a rarity, an ancient form of communication was employed by the Print Works at Denshaw.

On most mornings a horse-drawn lorry would set out from the factory laden with finished bolts of cloth; its destination being the textile warehouse in Manchester. On reaching Moorside the chain-horses were detached to return to their stable in Denshaw.

However, as the weight of the fabrics for processing was usually unknown, some form of communication was essential in order to summon extra horses to assist the lorry on its return journey up the steep hills through Oldham.

Accordingly the morning carter took with him a pigeon basket and, having loaded up, he would release a bird to fly back to the works to give details of his homeward bound load. The message attached to the pigeon's legs would requisition the number of chain-horses needed to meet him in Hollinwood.

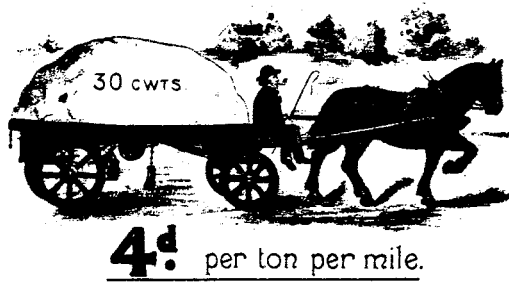
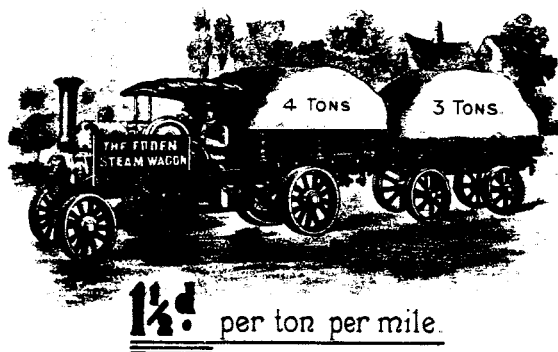
The advent of the telephone put an end to this time-honoured method of communication and, not long afterwards, the horse-drawn transport was superseded by a steam wagon.

It is interesting to note that during the 1914-18 war extensive use of the pigeon post was made by the Allied armies. A memorial plaque can be seen at Verdun erected to honour the faithful birds that were the only means of communication between Marshal Petain's headquarters and Fort Douaumont during its year-long seige.

Such are the well-nigh unbelievable strides in technology that have occurred almost within living memory, even in Saddleworth.

J.H. Schofield.

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## REVIEW

T.COOMBS, RISING FROM REALITY, Art in Oldham from 1820 to 1890.

Oldham Art Gallery, 1990, £4.95.

Late nineteenth century industrial prosperity enabled many northern towns to pay their debt to culture by establishing art galleries and museums. Their art collections are often catholic in scope, representing the diverse interests and new found wealth of their businessmen benefactors. Many towns were able to amass a pretty representative collection of eighteenth and nineteenth century work by artists of national repute. Industrial riches also encouraged the rise of provincial art and many municipal galleries have interesting collections of work by artists born or living in the town. It is with the work of nineteenth century Oldham artists in Oldham Art Gallery that "Rising from Reality" is concerned.

Mr. Coombs concentrates mainly on the work of three artists:

J.H.Carse, Thomas, 'Oldham' Barlow and Charles Potter. They are a disparate lot; which underlines Mr. Coombs' point that there was no nineteenth century 'Oldham School' of artists. That of course makes this a difficult book to write. The only thing these men have in common is that they were connected with Oldham by birth or vocation, and examples of their work now hang in Oldham Art Gallery. Carse was a Scotsman who painted many scenes in Oldham and district which constitute his title to be an Oldham artist. Barlow was an engineer of national standing who happened to be born and educated in Oldham, but who did no local work and moved to London to obtain employment. Charles Potter was also born in Oldham but he was patronised by local men for whom he painted his memorable Welsh landscape scenes. Potter eventually went to live in Wales and, paradoxically, it was at Tal-y-bont that he came nearest to founding an Oldham School for R.O. Bottomley, J. Gledhill and T. Heywood, all Oldham artists, visited him there and followed his lead in producing Welsh landscapes.

In attempting to find some common theme among this motley band of men Mr. Coombs shows us how all were products of a common environment. This is an interesting approach which makes Rising from Reality not only a contribution to art history but also a piece of local history. We are shown how the increasing wealth of Oldham created a local demand for art in the nineteenth century, which presumably had simply not existed previously. This demand was primarily for portraiture and landscape, and this is easily explained. Wealthy industrialists wanted to be immortalised in paint while escaping from the dreary world they had helped to create by surrounding themselves with visions of the English countryside, often in water-colour, always idealised.

No 'Oldham School' developed however because the local patronage was simply not extensive enough. Artists of ambition, like Barlow, had to move away in search of more affluent patrons. Meanwhile as the century advanced and industrialism increased the pastoral scene so much in demand vanished from the Oldham area, forcing local artists to flee the town in search of rural England even if they retained local patrons.

The useful catalogue of nineteenth century Oldham artists at the end of the book demonstrates just how necessary a work of this kind is. For two of the artists listed, even the most basic dates are uncertain, and for J.H. Carse his very identity was, until recently, problematical.

Carse has frequently been confused with his son, as for instance in the 1987 publication on Lancashire artists, "Lancashire south of the Sands". 1. Now, thanks to Rising from Reality this confusion should cease. J. Carse, the son, was never an artist but remained all his life an Oldham iron moulder. His father, J.H. Carse, always something of an itinerant, returned frequently to depict Oldham's rapidly changing townscape and eventually died in Australia. ( Did Carse first come to Oldham to ply his original trade as a stained glass worker in connection with the reconstruction of the parish church?).

The cover and colour illustrations of this book are splendid, the text is pleasantly presented and each double page spread is inviting; in short this is a well designed publication which is a pleasure to handle. Of course there are criticisms, but they are minor. Some readers might prefer captions to be placed immediately under the illustrations rather than at the foot of the page, especially when the text is set in double column format. In a publication where colour illustrations are increasingly limited in number it is perhaps a pity that the second illustration on page seventeen is simply an enlargement of part of the first picture. The point which this makes could just as effectively have been made by a caption. Sometimes the language smacks of jargon. We are not convinced that the term "artistic support base" is especially useful. We are told that a portrait of Barlow "is now untraced" could not it simply have been lost? These phrases are reminiscent of so much 'academic' language which obscures quite as much as it clarifies. In a future edition we hope that the 'hay gatherers' (page 24) will be cleared out of The Cornfield (Plate VI) where they have no business to be. But these are small blemishes in a most welcome work and we look forward to Mr. Coombs taking us into the twentieth century with his next publication.

1. G.E.P. Laws (ed.) 'Lancashire South of the Sands, The Changing Lancashire Landscape Through the Eyes of the Artist.'

A.J. Petford.

LETTERS AND REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Arthur R.J. Broadbent,  
5 Penhurst Avenue,  
SOUTHEND-on-SEA,  
SS2 6LN.

The Editor,  
Michael Fox,

Dear Sir,

Reference the excellent article by Neil Barrow on the Broadbents of Saddleworth. ("Bulletin" Volume 20. No. 2. pp.19-21.). I can add a little useful information on that subject. There were 604 Broadbents recorded in the census of 1841, which works out to about one in forty out of a total population of about 24,000.

My great grandfather, James, was listed as being 55 years of age, he was married to Mary (nee Rhodes) also 55, and living in Delph. Our branch of the family hails from Diggle, and can be traced back to Abraam christened 30-?-1649, will made 19-10-1737, buried 18-11-1737. John Heginbottom is one of the signatories on the will. He was one of the most famous curates of the parish. He was something of a non-conformist. There would have been about forty families originally, and they lived as a tribe, and intermarried. William, my great, great grandfather, also married a Rhodes, Hanna 14-10-1814.

In the 700th Anniversary edition of "Chapelry & Church of Saddleworth" (Howcroft, A.J., Oldham, 1915) in the chapter headed "The Excommunicated" on page 61:

"1612, Archd's Visitation.

Contra Robert Shaw, of Saddleworth. A continuall worker att Service tyme.

Contra John Broadbent of the same. For hewing the Church dore with an axe and making a hole therein.

Contra Robert Broadbent his sonne. For readinge divine service in the abcence of the Mynister withoute Lycense.

Contra James Broadbent, of the same place. For readinge the order of Buryall att the buryall of the dead and in the Church sometymes service, being a younge youth of XVI or XVII yeares of age."

From the above you can see that the Broadbents were well represented.

The forty families prospered, and multiplied, and the community of Saddleworth was born.

What probably happened in the beginning was that when William of Normandy put Yorkshire to the sword, many escaped to the safety of the Sherwood Forest which covered the Pennines, and from the forest clearings on the tops of the hills, they eventually established sheep farming communities.

For a long period of time they would have been classed as outlaws, and lived a nomadic existence with Normans as their legitimate targets, but as they married, they gradually settled down to a peaceful life, and from Diggle, and other hamlets, Saddleworth grew. My dad born 1873 said that we originated in Diggle.

When the Jews were massacred in Yorkshire about 1274, some escaped into the forest, but I doubt whether any of them would have survived the hard life, and the outlaws.

Survival of the fittest would have produced a tough race of people who were not given to bowing the knee to Rome.

Yours sincerely,

A.R.J. Broadbent.

-----

Francis Tierney,  
"Harvest",  
7 Beech Terrace,  
INGLETON,  
Via Carnforth,  
Lancs. LA6 3HT.

Dear Mr. Fox,

I was very interested in Vol. 20. No. 3. 1990, to read about Platts (Werneth). I worked as an apprentice bricklayer from 1943 to 1956 at Werneth, Hartford.

I well remember going up to Ashway Gap to lay a new foundation for the monument to James Platt, about 1946. There would be a gang of seven or eight. We started off from Platts in one of their lorries loaded up with sand, cement and granite and all the tools needed. When we got to the toll house an old man came out and we had to pay a toll of 2d. (two pence). Then we went up and down the hill carrying bags of ready mixed concrete, ready to mix with water at the top. This took a full working day. As it happens we picked a good day. I remember it very well.

Yours faithfully,

Francis Tierney.

"Ex Oldham"

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ASHTON-under-LYNE, STALYBRIDGE AND DUKINFIELD (DISTRICT) WATERWORKS

CORRIGENDUM AND ADDENDUM

In relation to the articles in the last four Bulletins, there were some errors which resulted in incorrect data being printed, and further research has revealed other information, viz:-

Article 1 (Vol. 19. No. 4.)

Page 4 - The cost of Yeoman Hey includes the tunnel referred to on page 5, and all these works were carried out by Messrs. Fogg & Co. The height of the embankment of Greenfield Reservoir was raised by Holme & King Ltd., of Liverpool, under a contract dated 10th March, 1909.

Page 5 - Although it is true that the moorland water from Birchen Clough and Holme Clough bypassed the reservoirs, this was not just because of the poor quality, but to ensure a supply to the millowners downstream. The Waterworks Committee did not therefore have the right to use this water.

Page 8 - The compensation paid to Saddleworth UDC for Chew Well was £50 plus £5 costs. They wanted £75.

Article 2 (Vol. 20. No. 1.)

Page 11 - The Easement for Slack Head and Fern Lee Farms was £23.7s.4d.

Article 3 (Vol. 20. No. 2.)

Page 14 - Mr. Nowell handed over all the keys on the 29th September, 1914.

Page 17 - Thomas Jones slept in Chew Brook on the 29th April, 1911.

Article 4 (Vol. 20. No. 3.)

Page 14 - Although a weekly delivery of mail was arranged for Chew House, the Robinsons usually collected it. I understand that there were prolonged grumblings between the three regular postmen at the sorting office in Greenfield when one of them found that for some reason, usually bad weather, he would have to deliver to Chew House!

Page 15 - George Walton, the second Reservoir Keeper, went up to Chew in late 1954 (not 1957), and I am assured by his daughter that he did not paint the woodwork blue! George, and his wife, Mary, had 3 children who, like the Robinson's children, had to walk up and down the track each day to school. A fourth child was born during the stay at Chew.

The Waltons did not have any transport until 1960, and most provisions had to be carried up. The facilities in Chew House remained the same: cooking was by Primus stove and coal fired range; electricity for lighting only from a generator which charged batteries; washing done in a copper boiler; drinking water from a spring, but also water piped into the house from the reservoir, but this was brown with the peat.

The Waltons also provided tea and coffee for the hikers and grouse shooting parties. The Keeper's wages at this time were about £8 to £9 a week. Interestingly, they had to collect their mail from Greenfield!

Page 17 - Ashway Gap officially opened as a Hospital on 29th January, 1916.

- Second and third paragraphs should be inverted
- I have received confirmation that the plinth was where the floodlight was located.

Page 21 - There was a house on the Ashway Gap site in 1820.

Kevin Lawton.

---

I am trying to find out about the Buckley family who lived at Banks in the Castleshaw Valley, especially John Buckley, born 1813, son of Edmund and Ann. He died in Manila in 1850.

Jan Lee,  
Castleshaw Centre,  
Waterworks Road,  
Delph.

-----

Taken from the "Greater Manchester Courier" (Greater Manchester County Record Office) in September 1990.

#### FAMILY TREE "EXPERTS" SOUGHT

We have received notice of a proposed new directory called Family History Knowledge in Britain. This will be the first attempt to survey all those people with knowledge of their ancestors, or family tree. To be included you should write to Family History Computer Club, 19 Penybryn, Mountain Ash, CF45 3TJ. and ask for a form and further details. The idea is to link this to the next Census to be taken in April 1991, and the release of the 1891 Census in January 1992.



Enquiries about membership of the Saddleworth Historical Society should be sent to:

Mrs. E. Broadbent,  
30 Beechfield,  
GRASSCROFT,  
Oldham,  
OL4 4EL.

The Editor of the Bulletin is:

Michael Fox,  
4 West Mount,  
GREENFIELD,  
Oldham,  
OL3 7LF.

(Saddleworth (0457) 870378)

#### Contributions

The "Bulletin" aims to reflect and encourage interest in all aspects of Saddleworth's history. As such it relies on a regular supply of material in the form of articles, letters and short reviews from members and others interested in the history of the area. Fresh material is constantly required and should be sent to the Editor, who is always pleased to discuss ideas for articles with anyone thinking of contributing. Articles need not be confined to subjects within Saddleworth's borders, but should have some connection with the district.

#### Editor's Note

It is intended to bring forward the publication of the "Bulletin" by one month, the new dates then being 31st January, 30th April, 31st July and 31st October. The new pattern should take effect from 30th April, although this is subject to sufficient material being available to permit publication. Contributors and others please note (and please tell me if the proposed change would be undesirable in any way!)

SADDLEWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER WINTER 1990

"Ship me somewhere east of Suez,  
where the best is like the worst.  
Where there aren't no Ten Commandments  
an' a man can raise a thirst.  
For the temple-bells are callin'  
an' it's there that I would be --"

Rudyard Kipling.  
(written before the First World War.)  
Some things don't change much, do they ?

Another full, informative and most enjoyable lecture programme draws towards its close and our Secretary, Mr. Neil Barrow is to be congratulated for his diligence in providing the top rate lectures and subjects for the Society's discerning lecture audience. The two final lectures are as follows -

7.30 p.m. at the Museum.  
Tuesday 5th March, 91

John Wesley - The Man.  
E.A. Rose.

Tuesday 16th April, 91.

Living Heritage. The Museum of Science  
& Technology at Castlefield. Manchester.  
Robert Manders.

Summer Trip.

The first Summer Coach Trip will be to the Beamish Open Air Museum in County Durham on the 13th of July. An application form and more details will be in the Spring Bulletin.

Archaeology.

Three walks are to be organised by The University of Manchester, Extra Mural Dept., and led by John W. Smith.

|                |                                 |
|----------------|---------------------------------|
| 29th May, 91.  | The Summit Gap - Littleborough. |
| 5th June, 91.  | Blackstone Edge Old Road.       |
| 13th June, 91. | St. Leonard's, Middleton.       |

All these walks start at 6.30 p.m. Apply for the Booking Form and leaflet to Sue Hickman (tel. 061-275-3270)

Music at the Gallery. (Jazz Evenings) 8.30 p.m.

|                  |                           |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| Sat. 6th April.  | The Chicago Teddybears.   |
| Sat. 20th April. | Dave Donohoe's Jazz Band. |

Art Exhibitions at the Museum.

|                    |                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2nd - 24th March.  | The Abbey Collection Paintings by<br>Steven Scholes, Northern Street-scenes set<br>in Victorian & Edwardian times. |
| 30th Mar - 21 Apl. | Saddleworth Group of Artists.                                                                                      |

### Other Events at the Gallery.

Wednesday 20th March, 91.  
 Wednesday 24th April, 91.  
 Sat. & Sun. 27 & 28th April.  
 Sat. & Sun. 4th & 6th May.  
 Sunday 16th June. 91.

Magic Lantern Show - Peter Fox.  
 -do-  
 Model Railway Weekend.  
 Tourism & Leisure Exhibition.  
 Vintage Vehicle Display & Gala.  
 At the King George V Playing Field.

### Archaeology Group.

The next meeting of the Group will be on Wednesday 13th March, and then the 10th April, at the Cross Keys Inn, Uppermill, 7.45 p.m. for 8.0 p.m., when future plans will be discussed.

### SADDLEWORTH FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS.

This, the ninth Saddleworth Festival will have as its theme the music of Mozart. Detailed planning of the programme is now in its final stages by the Festival Committee and will include performances of music, drama, exhibitions and a wide variety of events. Artistes of international repute will include Benjamin Luxon, The Northern Sinfonia Orchestra, Heinrich Schiff, Evelyn Glennie, The Chris Barber Band and The Skampa Quartet from Prague.

Other delights will include a Viennese Ball, an Antiques Roadshow by Christies, a Kendal's Fashion Show, a Hot Air Balloon Race and Fireworks.

The Festival will open on the 25th May and continue until the 2nd June, 91.

Booking arrangements can be made by contacting the Festival Office at the Civic Hall, Uppermill, or the Saddleworth Museum.

### Publications.

The eagerly awaited book 'The Cherry Valley Chronicles', will be published by the Society during May. Maurice Dennett has edited a fascinating collection of letters spanning thirty years of the last century between Thomas & Martha Buckley, who emigrated to Massachusetts, U.S.A., and their son Ralph who remained at home in Dobcross. These letters have been miraculously preserved and were kindly provided by a lady from Marsden. The publication of this exciting book is to be the Society's contribution to this year's Saddleworth Festival of the Arts. The price of the book will be £16.50.

The Book Launch will take place in the Lower Civic Hall, Uppermill, during Festival Week, on Monday the 27th May, 1991, at 2.0 p.m., and this will be an opportunity to obtain a copy autographed by the editor, Mr. Maurice Dennett.

### Appeals.

It is traditional that, during the Festival, the Society runs a Book Stall at most events. Will any Members who are prepared to serve on the stall for a few hours kindly give their names to Jim Carr on 873612.

If, during your Spring Cleaning, you come across any A4 size Jiffy Bags, would you please hand them in at the Museum Shop. These will be used for sending books to Members.

Graham Hitch is heading a Committee which is working on the Museum's Major Exhibition of the year. The theme will be Saddleworth and the effect of its people on the environment through the ages. The Committee would very much appreciate any help in the research into this subject in the form of photographs, old prints, literature and personal experiences. The Exhibition is to open on the 25th May, 1991 and will run until the 21st July, 1991. Please contact the Museum if you can help.

#### MEMBERSHIP SECTION.

It is with great sadness that we heard of the deaths of Mr. Charles Bescoby and Mr. George Barrett, whose obituary is on an earlier page of this Bulletin.

Charles Stuart Bescoby was an old and valued member of the Society. After graduating from Cambridge University he taught Science in Bristol and later in Manchester. As a young man he was a keen fell-walker. Upon retirement he came to live in Delph. He will be much missed in the village where he worked tirelessly for the welfare of the old people.

We have five new members to welcome to the Society since the publication of the last Bulletin, they are -

Miss C.L. Bennett of Greenfield, Mr. H.C. Lambert, Chesham, Bucks.  
Mr. C.A. Watson, Rhode Island, U.S.A., Mrs. E. Stretton, Bispham.  
The Rev. F. Harrison, Vicar of Hey St. John Church, Lees.

We have an interesting connection with Julian Hunt through a new member Mr. Howard Lambert of 145 Waterside, Chesham, Bucks. HP5 1QD, who is well on the trail of the Lees Family at Beswicks, Hill Top, Knott Hill, and Lower Hill Top, this also includes links with the Linthwaite Family where Ann Linthwaite married Abraham Lees, son of Isaac Lees of Swaincroft. All this is admirably chronicled in a privately printed Memorial Volume by William Lees in 1889, a copy of which is in The Hewkin Collection in the Society Archive at the Museum.

Another new member Mrs. Elizabeth Stretton from 7 Rockingham Road, Bispham, Blackpool. FY2 0LP., is researching the Bradburys and has a problem establishing the Saddleworth connection of her Gt. Grandfather, John Bradbury, Sgt. Major 8th Hussars, born June 1839 married Elizabeth Hall, 1866, an uncle Judge James Kinder Bradbury born Bleak Hey Nook 1847 whose father George Thomas Bradbury lived at High Kinders. If any member has any knowledge or can shed light on these genealogical sources Mrs. Stretton would welcome a correspondence.

A letter from Mrs. Barbara Morley of 7 Grantham Road, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 4LS., raises an interesting image of The Morton Dyeworks. Her Gt. Grandparents were Ben & Sarah Morton of Dobcross and Ben built The Morton Dyeworks, their daughter Edith Morton married Herbert Bramley who was the Manager of The Yorkshire County Bank, Mossley. Any information about these Dyeworks to Mrs. Morley or the Membership Secretary.

Festive Season's Greetings were once again exchanged with Mrs. Esther Shaw Lawn, in sunny St. Luis, Obispo, California, having just returned from a lush, green and beautiful holiday in the Islands of Hawaii. Particular thanks are due for her generous gift to the Society of £80 which will be earmarked for our Publication Funds during this Festival year. We are pleased to report that Mrs. Shaw Lawn is in good health after her holiday in the Pacific and extends good wishes to the Membership.

1991 MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION TO THE SOCIETY.

The yearly Membership Subscription to the Society is now due and your particular attention is drawn to this recurring financial detail, which you are requested to despatch with alacrity.

The new subscription rates, which have been increased by 50p are as follows::

|                         |       |
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| Family .....            | £8.00 |
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Please use the form provided on a separate sheet in this Bulletin.

J. Hindle.

February, 1991.

# Saddleworth Historical Society

Registered Charity No. 505074

## ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1991.

To - Mrs. E. Broadbent,  
30 Beechfield,  
GRASSCROFT,  
Saddleworth,  
Oldham.  
OL4 4EL

I wish to renew my Membership for 1991.

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