

Saddleshworth Historical Society Bulletin

PARTICULARS AND PLAN

OF THE IMPORTANT AND UNIQUE

FREEHOLD SPORTING PROPERTY

KNOWN AS THE

“Ashway Gap Estate,”

COMPRISING A

HANDSOME RESIDENCE OR SHOOTING BOX

containing two Reception, Billiard and thirteen Bed and Dressing Rooms, Gun Room, Bath Room, Domestic Offices
and Cellarage.

EXCELLENT RANGE OF STABLING,

KEEPER'S LODGE, KENNELS, &c.; and an

EXCEPTIONALLY FINE GROUSE MOOR

lying entirely within a Ring Fence and extending to about

2,300 Acres.

POSSESSION ON COMPLETION OF PURCHASE.

MESSRS.

MABBETT & EDGE

Are instructed to offer the above for Sale by Auction,

At “The Mitre” Hotel, Cathedral Gates, Manchester,
On TUESDAY, the 27th day of JULY, 1897,

AT THREE FOR FOUR O'CLOCK P.M.

(UNLESS PREVIOUSLY DISPOSED OF BY PRIVATE CONTRACT.)

BULLETIN
OF THE
SADDLEWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 22 Number 2
SUMMER 1992

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COVER ILLUSTRATION - Detail from a document prepared for the sale of Ashway Gap Estate in 1897 - see article on Saddleworth Water Supply.

EARLY HOLLY GROVE

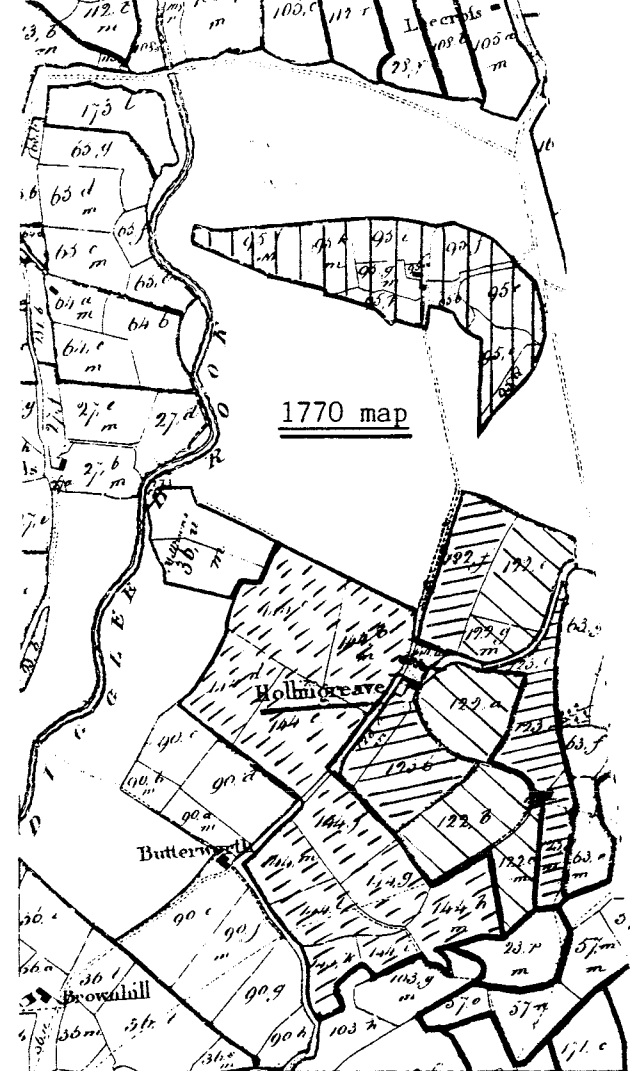
Holly Grove, spelled variously in Saddleworth registers and documents as Hollingreave, Hollygreave, Hollingrove and Hollingrave, lies on the rising ground to the east of the Diggle Brook between Uppermill and Diggle. Its boundaries are not clear on the O.S. map but as Butter House farm and Heys are usually referred to separately, the southern edge can be assumed to be the northern boundary of Butter House, and the northern and NE edges as Ward Lane (J.M.H. in SHS Bull. 9. 16-18, 1979). The Huddersfield Canal (1811) and the London and North Western Railway (1849) cut off the western flatter land bordering the Diggle Brook, thus dividing several farms (see the 1770, 1822 and 1849/51 maps in Saddleworth Surveyed, 1983).

In The Process of Enclosures in Saddleworth, 1625-1834, Petford stated that in the early 17th C., as agriculture improved and became more profit orientated, more sheep and cattle increased the pressure on common grazing; there was a shortage of fodder so that marginal sources such as holly were being exploited. However, it is possible that much of Holly Grove had been cleared during earlier enclosures, for Ammon Wrigley (The Wind Among the Heather, 1916) quoted a deed of c. 1250 relating to Saddleworth Church in which Robert del Holyngreave is mentioned. Edward of Hollingreave was a witness in a document of 1293 (SHS Bull. 11, 30, 1981) and the Stayley Rental (see J.H.M. in SHS Bull. 16 (3) 1986) mentions Robtus de Staveley as holding 9 acres of land and meadow at Holyngreave during the period 1407/1433. In a deed of 1554 (Higson MSS) 'Margarete Trayford of the Garrett, Co. Lancaster, widow' sold to her son Raff Trafford 'all those landes, iz in the town or lordship of Whitelaw in Sadyllworthfryth co. Yorke in the occupation of ...' ten persons (seven in Quick and three in Saddleworth) including one Alexander Bredbente. The Traffords had owned land in the Dobcross/Bridgehouses/Holly Grove area since the 15th C. A deed of 1557 records the interest of John Scholfield of Hollingreave, yeoman, in four closes (fields) near Hollingreave called The Heys, and another of 1587 is a quitclaim from Thomasine Cleyton, sister and heir of John Cleyton late of Holyngreave to George Legh of her rights in certain lands (SHS Bull. 10, 52, 1980). Most of the Staveley family holdings were sold to the Booths in 1625, and in 1635 those in Holly Grove and Woolroad were sold again to John Buckley of Grotton and John Winterbottom of Stonebreaks (SHS. Bull. 12, 54-59, 1982). According to the 1712 Manor chief rent roll, the highest rent of 2s.6d. was paid by John Buckley de Grottonhead for Hollingrea

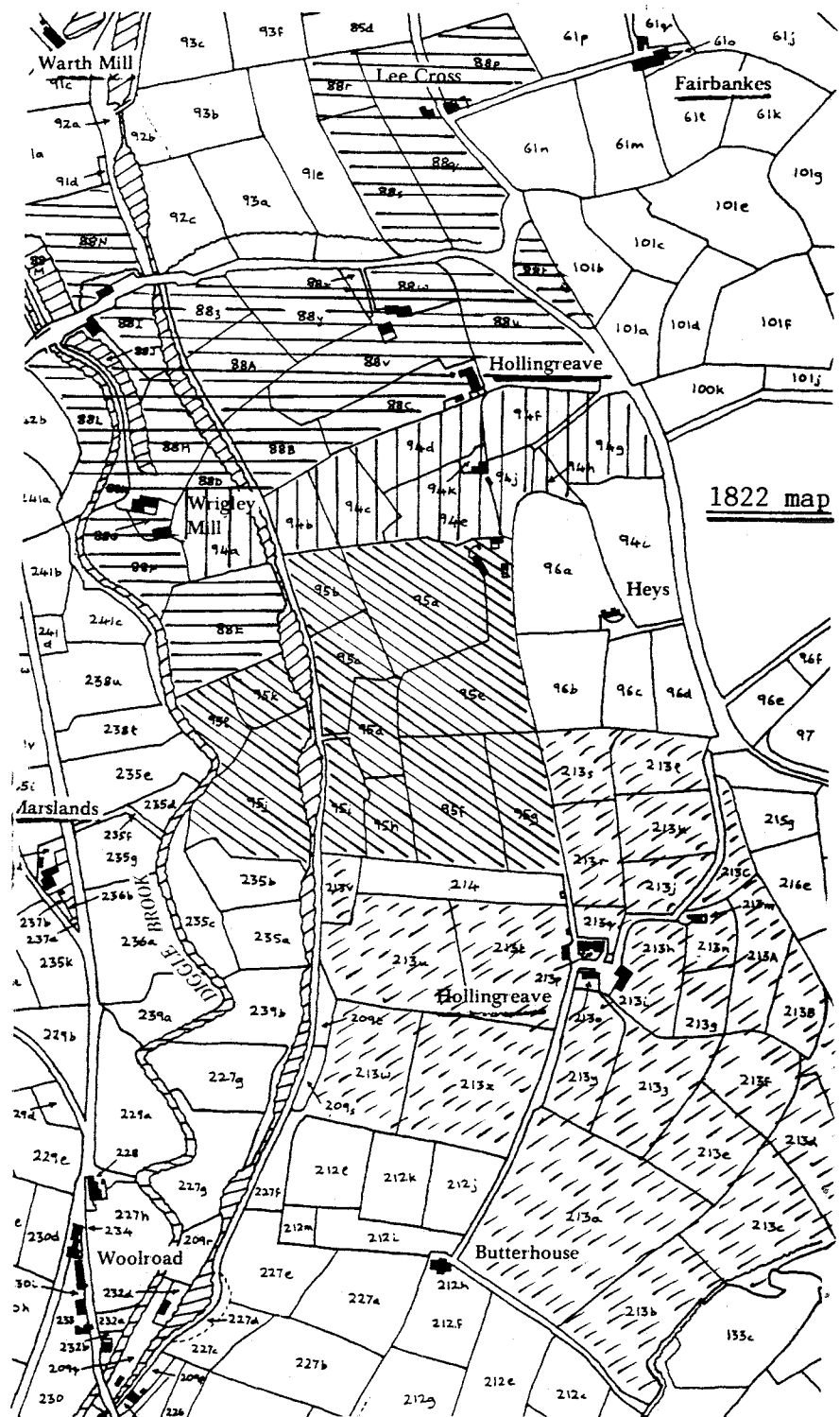
In the 1669 tithe list, based on the acreage of oats grown, the following farmers were charged under Hollingreave:

	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Tithe</u>
John Fowley & Tho. Wilde	3.5	11s. 8d.
John Farrand	2.75	9s. 2d.
John Scholefeild	2.6	8s. 9d.
John Wheewall	2.5	8s. 4d.
Edmund Platt Jnr.	2.4	7s. 8½d.
Edmund Platt Snr.	0.4	1s. 3d.
John Taylor	1.4	4s. 4½d.
W'm. Wheewall	0.1	0s. 5d.

This suggests that there were at least eight holdings at that time. On the basis of these surnames, we can consider the 1664-72 Hearth Tax records, thought to be in the order visited by the assessors. Few residences are named, and only John Scoalfeild is designated as living at Hollingreave but adjacent to each other in 1664 were Tho. Breadberry, Edmond Platt, John Foaley, Robt' Thompson, Thomas Platt, Rich. Whitehead and John Farand. John and William Wheywell were not charged (probably too poor). In the 1666 list Thom. Platt, John Scolefeild, Widd. Scolefeild, John Farrand, Thom. Breadberry,



(Left) DETAIL FROM "A MAP OF THE INCLOSURES IN THE PARISH OF SADDLEWORTH BELONGING TO JAMES FARRAR, 1770" - SADDLEWORTH SURVEYED (SHS 1983)



(Right) DETAIL FROM "A MAP OF THE TOWNSHIP OF SADDLEWORTH 1822" - SADDLEWORTH SURVEYED (SHS 1983)

Edm. Platt and John Folly were adjacent; each was taxed for one hearth. It is reasonable to conclude that these people inhabited the Holly Grove farms. Several of these families were in Saddleworth nearly a century earlier, possibly in the same farms. In William Ramsden's rent list for half of 1591 are George Whewall (14s.9d.) (possibly of Butterhouse), James Whewall and Wm. brodbent (6s.4d.) Alexand' brodbente (14s.3d.) Edm' Farrande & Jam' (8s.4d.), Edmund Platt (12s.), Jo. Scholefeilde (22d.) and several others of each surname but no Fowleys. In his 1629 Will, George Broadbent of Harrope was owed £3 by James Whewall of Hollingreave. In the days before banks the farmers frequently lent each other any spare cash they had. The 1641-2 Protestors against Charles I's attempt to usurp Parliament's rights and those of the established Church of England included all the surnames mentioned above except that of Fowley. In 1673 Edmund and John Farrand and Peter Broadburey were assessors of Robert Broadbent's goods when he died; Robert was owed 17s.4d. by Edmund, 13s. by Peter, 16s.4d. by John Scholefield and John Whewall, 12s.4d. by Edmund Scholefield, 6s.6d. by Edmund Platt, 2s.6d. by Mary Platt and 1s.6d. by James Broadbent, and in 1688 Thos. Platt and John Farrand witnessed John broadbent's Will and in 1689 together with Thomas Breadbury, assessed his goods and chattels.

There are very few territorial references in the parish registers in the 17th C. but these and other documents such as deeds indicate that a branch of the Scholefield family was established at Hollingreave before 1557 (see above). Surnames linked with Hollingreave in the 18th C. are (excluding those which occur only once or twice and were probably apprentices or servants): Bottomley 1724-50; Bradbury 1740-1800; Brierley 1746-52; Broadbent 1712-93; Buckley 1715-1800; Clegg 1725-42; Hilton 1753-64; Holden 1727-87; Kenworthey 1744-66; Lawton 1700-96; Platt 1737-1800; Rhodes 1733-97; Scholefield 1700-1800; Shaw 1723-64; Wheawell 1738-86; Whitehead 1759-62; Wood 1742-81; Wrigley 1726-87.

As the 1770 tenant farmers list makes clear, several of the houses on farms in Saddleworth housed more than one family, who would undoubtedly help occasionally with the farm work. Very few farms were large enough to warrant a non-family labour force. Some of the Holly Grove farmers are clearly named in different records, e.g. George Wrigley, yeoman in 1734, John Scholefield, yeoman in 1736, James Wheawell, husbandman in 1758. Most of the other men were clothiers but there were a few other trades, e.g. Robert Holden, tailor in 1727, Jonathan Bradbury, mason in 1745, James Brierley, carpenter in 1746, and John Scholefield, cordwainer or shoemaker in 1759.

Before 1700 many or most of the farmers also manufactured cloth for their own use but with the rapid rise of the woollen cloth industry during the early 18 C. many families became specialist clothiers and built new houses with upper floors adapted for weaving. Thus a deed of 1774 (BW 509 720) concerning the leasing of common or waste land at Back o'th Lee referred to the following residents of Hollingreave as clothiers: John Wrigley, James Buckley, James Scholefield, as well as James Platt of Butterworths and Jeremiah Rhodes of Leecross. Another example of a clothier was John Broadbent, born at Harrop and baptised in 1679, who married Mary Broadbent, also of Harrop c. 1712. They lived at Hollingreave throughout their long lives and had at least eight children. He died in 1773 aged 94, and she in 1775 aged 84. It must have been a healthy place in which to live. Many of the clothiers undoubtedly were part-time farmers.

The 1770 Manor Records for Hollingreave state that there were four farm houses (farm Nos. 95, 122, 123 & 144), a second house on 123, and four families living in two other houses on 144, all rented from the Manor. Two non-manor farms and the mill would house at least another three families at that time. Which families occupied the different farms?

Perhaps the easiest way of trying to find out is to compare the 1770 Manor survey and the 1822 Vestry survey maps in Saddleworth Surveyed in conjunction with the 1791 Manor sale and other fragmentary records. Whereas full details are given for each rented farm in 1770, and the field numbers enable the farm outlines to be traced in 1822, it is unfortunate that the owners or tenants list and the names of the 1822 farms have been lost.

Starting in the north, the fairly large farm No. 88 (1822) which extended over Diggle Brook and around Wrigley Mill, was divided into three parts by the canal to the west and by Ward Lane to the north. As it was not directly owned by the Manor the southern part of it was not shown in 1770. The northern part, across Ward Lane was Leecross Farm (No. 105) rented by Jeremiah Rhodes and Mary Bradbury, and part of Deanhead, rented by Abraham Rhodes in 1770. Lee Cross, then tenanted by Samuel Broadbent, had been sold with the Manor Estate (Lot 101) in 1791, but although adjacent, these are not strictly part of Holly Grove. The 1822 map has the word Hollingreave against the buildings in field 88c, and three other buildings in field 88v. This is probably the farm called Further Hollingreave in 1726 when three acres of land in Castleshaw were mortgaged to George Wrigley, yeoman (SHS Bull. 14, 72, 1984). In the middle of the area between the canal and the brook was Wrigley Mill, not on the 1770 map but mentioned in the 1766 Quarter Sessions records as a fulling mill owned and occupied by John Wrigley of Hollingreave, a freeholder yeoman who had probably built it (SHS Bull. 13, 41, 1983). In his Will of 1776 it was bequeathed to his sons James and Jonathan, and the 1781-1800 Land Tax records describe the latter as the owner/occupier. This indicates that farm No. 88 was occupied by the Wrigley family, for which John Wrigley paid 9d. per year chief rent in 1712, and James and Jonathan the same during 1785-89. In 1739 (Deed NN 35) James Wrigley of Standedge, yeoman had bequeathed his messuages at Hollingreave to his son John.

The next farm to the south was No. 95 (1770) No. 94 in 1822, rented by Edmund Platt. Of 11.6 acres, 3.9 were meadow. The house was in the middle of the farm. In 1669 Edmund Platt junior had paid 7s. 8½d. tithe on 2.44 acres of oats, and his father Edmund 1s. 3d. on 0.38 acres. The Manor sold the farm to the tenant, Thomas Platt in 1791 (Lot 91) for £400. In 1722 (Deed QQ 290) Thomas Platt of Tamewater, yeoman, had bequeathed to his son Edmund the messuage at Hollingreave.

Next southwards were two farms, Nos. 95 (1822) to the west and 96 to the east, neither directly owned by the Manor and not described in 1770. No. 95 was the larger, of c. 27 acres with three buildings in the NE corner. It was probably a farm listed in the chief rental roll as in the hands of John Buckley in 1712, and of Mr. Buckley 1785-89, yearly chief rent being 2s. 6d. A deed of 1662 mentions a farm at Hollingreave purchased jointly by John Buckley of Grottonhead and Robert Buckley of Grasscroft (SHS Bull. 15, 9, 1985). In 1707 Robert sold his share to John, and the farm remained the property of the Grottonhead Bucleys until its sale to the tenant in 1822. Mr. Hunt (SHS Bull. 9, 16, 1979) quoted the 1702 Will of John Buckley of Chadderton as leaving his lands and messuage in Hollingreave to his son John. In the 1779 survey of the estates of John Buckley of Grotton Head this farm was rented to Isaac Bottomley who died in 1800.

The smaller farm of 6 acres (No. 96) was labelled Heys in 1822 and was not regarded as part of Holly Grove.

Again moving southwards, a meadow of 3.4 acres called Milltown, adjacent to Diggle Brook, belonged to James Buckley of Brownhill. Between the Brook and the canal in 1822 were four fields belonging to Marslands on the far side of the brook. Then came the three farms surrounding the tiny hamlet of Hollingreave. The largest was No. 144 in 1770, rented by Martha Whewall,

of 26.6 acres (5.2 of meadow). There was one new house, two other houses with four families living in them, and very old thatched outhousing. A separate part of the same holding was near Runninghill but sub-let to Widow Bradbury whose husband, Jonathan, had built a new barn and shippen in the Long Intake. This consisted of 8.1 acres (2.7 meadow). In the 1791 Manor sale it was still tenanted by Widow Bradbury (lot 52) and was not sold.

The other two farms were about half the size of No. 144. No. 122, rented by James Scholefield, of 12.2 acres (2.8 meadow) had buildings consisting of one old house, an old barn and shippen, the roof of which had been lately repaired. The other, No. 123, of 12.1 acres (2.6 meadow) was rented by John Scholefield; it had a very ancient house in indifferent repair, a barn and shippen whose roof was in bad repair, and another old house, barn and cowhouse, probably in Barn Flatt. In the previous century (1669) John Scholefield had paid 8s.9d. tithe on 2.5 acres of oats. When the Manor was sold in 1791 these two farms were bought by Jonathan Harrop, farm No. 122, tenanted by Widow Scholefield for £450 (lot 58) and farm No. 123, tenanted by John Scholefield for £450 (lot 59). Farms 144 and 59, then tenanted by James Buckley, who may have taken over from Widow Whewall, were sold to the tenant for £1000 (lot 133). By 1822 farms 122, 123 and 144 had been amalgamated to become farm No. 213 on the Vestry map.

Referring back to the 1669 tithe list, the Wheewall holdings were probably the Butterhouse farm and/or No. 144; the Platt and Scholefeild holdings were probably similar to those of the 18th C., but it is not clear which were those of John Fowler and Thomas Wilde, John Farrand or John Taylor, but they were probably tenants of what by 1770 were the freehold farms in the hands of the Wrigleys and Buckleys.

I gratefully acknowledge the help of Mr. M. Dennett at Saddleworth Museum for help in searching the SHS archives.

Leonard Broadbent.

SADDLEWORTH WATER SUPPLY - MISCELLANY

The history of the water supply to Saddleworth has been described in previous Bulletins (1989-91), but there is always further information to discover, and facts to confirm, viz.:

1903 - Oldham Corporation evidently proposed to build two reservoirs named 'West Carr' and 'Eastwood' below the existing Deanhead Reservoir in the Urban District of Scammonden. The embankment of 'Deanhead' was also to be raised by 5 feet. Water from 'West Carr' would then be conveyed back to the Castleshaw Valley through a tunnel about 4½ miles long.

The proposals evidently got as far as an agreement dated 2nd April, 1903, between Oldham Corporation and Scammonden U.D.C. on proposed road and footpath closures and diversions, but appear not to have been implemented. The M62 motorway and Scammonden Water now occupy the site in question.

1910 - In September, 1910, a pumping station at Quick and a water tower at Lydgate were opened by the A.S.D.(D) Waterworks Joint Committee. This raised water from Greenfield Reservoir, with a water level of 892 ft. to 932.5 ft.* (see plan, SHS Bulletin Vol. 20, No.3, p.25) and enabled mains water, untreated until 1912, to be supplied to Lydgate and the higher parts of Grasscroft. The Joint Committee agreed on the 10th November, 1910, to supply Lydgate Church "on the usual terms and conditions."

The land required for the water tower (196 sq. yards) is referred to in the Lydgate Farm Deeds and there is an Indenture of Conveyance dated 1st March, 1910, between Anne Ford and the Joint Committee.

* In W.P.W.B. Annual Report to 31.3.72 height is stated as 935.5 ft.

The water tower was demolished in November, 1975, having been replaced in 1973 by a new service reservoir on Quick Edge. The pumping station was also abandoned at that time, but the building still exists and planning permission has recently been granted for it to be converted to a house - the smallest in Saddleworth? (Oldham Evening Chronicle 30th June, 1992.

1946 - The Oldham Chronicle of 8th January, 1946, reported on a Ferranti War Secret - The Jelly Fish (Radio Marker Buoy) which they had developed to assist naval navigation and which had been tested out on Yeoman Hey Reservoir. The Jelly Fish operated on a radar principle and could be found in all weathers, day or night, and was hardly visible to the enemy. It would self-destruct if lifted out of the water, or if washed ashore.

1971 - Dove Stone Reservoir (SHS Bulletin Vol. 20, No.3.) received a Civic Trust Commendation.

"The reservoir has been sensitively integrated to the landscape - a major problem for the designer when a scheme can be seen from many points on the surrounding hills. The treatment of the embankment, and of the cliff on the water edge, is skilful, and the changes in the land formation and the planting have been successfully combined with the natural landscaping. It is unfortunate that the Sailing Club House and cottages do not have the same quality."

1971 - As a result of drought, permanent pumps were installed to pump water from the Lower to Higher Castleshaw Reservoir.

1972 - W.P.W.B. agree to lease the Uppermill Depot (SHS Bulletin Vol.20, No. 3, p.26.)

Booster pumping station installed at Yeoman Hey Reservoir between June and September, 1972. Most of it was built underground to satisfy Peak Park planning requirements.

1973 - The W.P.W.B. had decided in 1971 that a service reservoir should be built above Uppermill in order to balance the flow of water, particularly through the booster pumping station at Brown Hill, which feeds Diggle, Delph and Dobcross with water from Greenfield Reservoir. New mains were laid along the former railway track from Arthurs Lane to Uppermill Station during 1971, and in March 1973 the necessary land for the service reservoir was purchased. The construction contract was awarded to Z. & W. Wade Ltd. in November, 1973.

A further contract was also awarded to Z. & W. Wade Ltd. to build a new service reservoir on Quick Edge so that the Lydgate Water Tower, referred to above, could be abandoned. The pumps at this new service reservoir were installed in September 1973.

1991 - New access road constructed below site of Dowry Castle to Crook Gate Reservoir and spillways improved on both Crook Gate and Readycon Dean Reservoirs (see SHS Bulletin Vol. 21, No.1.).

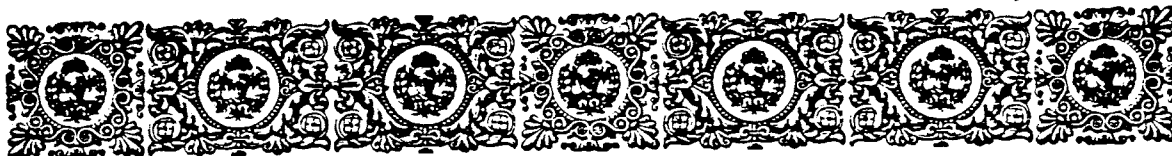
Ashway Gap and Brushes Filter Houses were demolished, but I have been assured that the commemorative plaques have been taken to the Buckton Castle Treatment Works where they will be retained. (SHS Bulletin Vol. 20, No. 3). The stone has also been reused, with that from Brushes being used for a new wave-wall on the Swineshaw Reservoir, and that from Ashway Gap being used to reconstruct the spillway of White Holme Reservoir on Blackstone Edge.

1992 - The work to remove the Strinesdale Reservoir (SHS Bulletin Vol. 21, No. 1, p.18) is currently in progress and the lower embankment has been excavated. The construction of the embankment can be seen to be of the conventional kind with clay puddle core, and shale on the inner side and rather poor quality fill on the outer side. Old mine shafts have however been uncovered and I hope to report in more detail on these in a future Bulletin.

Ashway Gap House

A very brief history of Ashway Gap House was given in SHS Bulletin Vol. 20, No. 3, pp 21-23, but further information has come to hand, principally from documents offering the house for sale in 1897 and in 1978 (Both documents under reference SHM:FZQ - Oldham Local Studies Library), and also an undated press cutting of about 1933 (Tameside Local Studies Library).

The original estate was apparently only 700 acres, but whilst in the ownership of Abel Buckley (between 1885 and 1897 ?) he acquired Ashway Gap Moor at 1,600 acres, thus making the total of 2,300 acres. He tried to sell the total estate in 1895, but withdrew it when it did not reach the asking price of £15,000.



Yorkshire—in the West Riding

On the Borders of Lancashire and Cheshire, about two miles from Greenfield and Friezland Stations on the London and North-Western Railway, eight from Huddersfield and twelve from Manchester.

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Copies of these Particulars, with Plan, may be obtained of CHARLES LORD, Esq., Solicitor, 13, Spring Gardens, Manchester; and of the Auctioneers, at their Offices,

99, MOUNT STREET, GROSVENOR SQUARE, LONDON, W.

It was offered for sale again in July 1897 when it was apparently sold to Mr. Albert Slack, of Hayfield, for £12,000. The sale document gives a full description of the house and estate at that time, including:-

"An imposing castellated structure of embattled Gothic architecture"

"Carriage drive over a mile in length"

"Entrance Hall" and "The Inner Hall"

"The Noble Dining Room with lofty roof spanned by carved oak groins"

"Elegant Drawing Room" ... with sculptured stone chimney piece...."

"Spacious Billiard Room and adjoining Cloakroom and lavatory, with tessellated floor, fitted with marble slab, two revolving basins and supplied with hot and cold water; W.C. with patent flush apparatus by Jennings." "Side Entrance to Gun Room"

"The Principal Staircase with easy ascent to a corridor about 70 feet in length, relieved by Gothic stone arches"

"Six Principal Bed Chambers" "Two Dressing Rooms" "Bath Room"

"On the second floor are Five Good Bed Rooms".

"The Excellent Domestic Offices comprising Servants' Hall Kitchen Scullery Butler's Pantry Dairy, cooled by an overflow tank with constant supply of spring water...."

"The Outbuildings" "There are wine and ale cellars in the Basement"

"The Pleasure Grounds include Scientifically - levelled Tennis Lawn "

"Range of Stabling adjacent are the well-arranged Kennels"

"The Exceptionally fine Grouse Moor choicest shooting grounds in the north of England includes Nine District Drives".

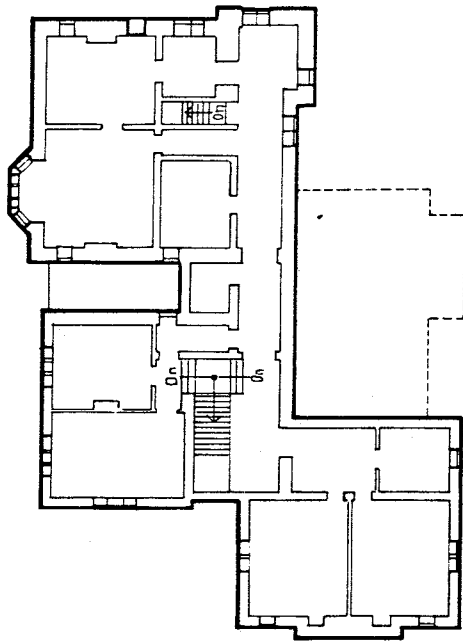
"The Moor, which with the Residence and Grounds extends to about 2,300 acres is reached by a pony track and average game bag may be safely estimated at 500 brace."

This prospectus is a masterpiece of printing with at least 55 different styles of characters! A copy of the first page is printed with this article.

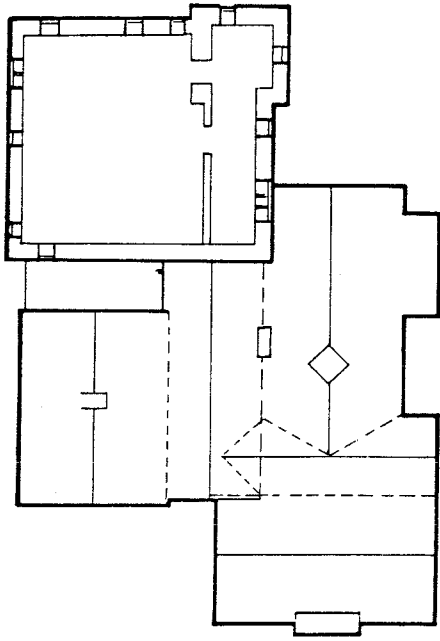
Following the death of Mr. Slack in 1901, the House and Estate was sold to Mr. Jos. Cliffe for £11,500 and he sold it to the A.S.D.(D) Waterworks Joint Committee for £12,000, plus £500 costs. (SHS Bulletin Vol. 19, No.4. p.9.).

The prospectus issued by North West Water Authority in 1978 reflected the disused condition of the House at that time, although it claimed that apart from a single storey, flat-roofed extension to the rear, the property was substantially unchanged since 1875. The plans of the House in 1978, a copy

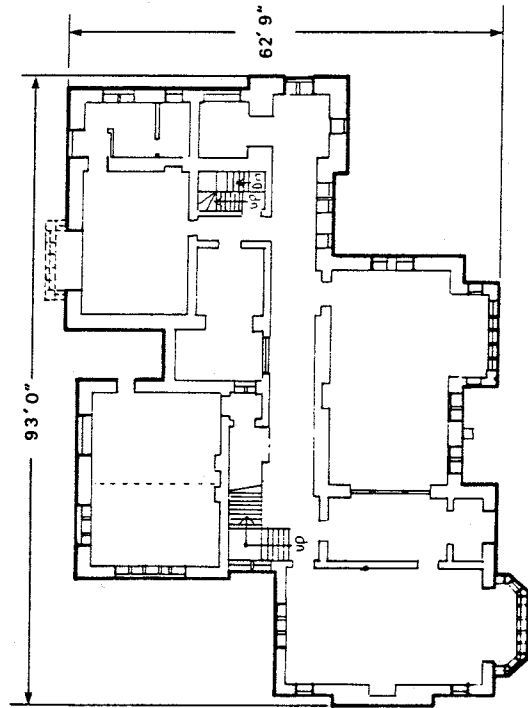
FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR & ROOF



GROUND FLOOR



Ashway Gap House Existing layout

PLAN OF 1978

of which is also printed with this article, does seem to fit the description of 1897 for the ground and first floors, but the second floor does not show the 5 bedrooms referred to - probably because of changes made following a fire in 1903 or during its subsequent occupation.

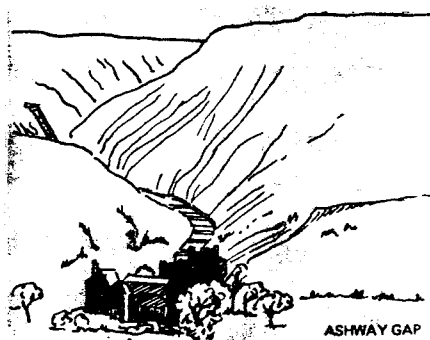
Kevin Lawton.

Main References

Deanhead Reservoir - original plans held by Michael Fox.

Land for Lydgate Water Tower and dismantling - notes of Canon C.C.W. Airne.

West Pennine Water Board Annual Reports 1969-74 (Oldham Local Studies Library).



A Saddleworth Bibliography 1980-89

Whilst this bibliography attempts to be comprehensive it has also been necessary to limit its scope. Firstly it excludes fiction and poetry. Secondly, and this is a more difficult delineator, it aims to include publications of interest to the historian rather than the collector of all things Saddleworth. An attempt has also been made to include works which include Saddleworth where these incorporate original material but not where there are only a few references or where the material used is largely taken from other works.

Books

- | | | |
|---|--|-----------------------------|
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Neil Barrow

THE MEMOIRS OF BECKET WHITEHEAD - PART THREE

(Parts One and Two appeared in the previous two "Bulletins")

Once, I remember, our fireplace had got into a bad state of repair, and my grandfather went down to the village to see Old Bill o' Teb's about the resetting of it. Old Bill came back with him, and together they pulled the range down to see what was wrong with it. The following day Old Bill did not turn up, so my grandfather went to look for him, with the result that they went on a spree together. Old Bill came on the following day, but after working for a while he decided that he would require some red lead before he could go any further. Accordingly he went back to Delph to get some. When he didn't come back to time my grandfather went to look for him, and it was several days before we saw either of them again. This went on for about a fortnight, and we had to do all the cooking on the parlour fire.

I think it would be the 24th September, 1883, that my grandfather had a seizure; we found him in the brook below Millcroft as we were returning from Delph Fair. He lay helpless in the brook, and we managed to get him home and to bed. I doubt if he ever got up again afterwards; he died the following January

It was during this period of my grandfather's illness that my mother got married. After the funeral, she and my stepfather went to live in a little cottage at Johnny Mill. I stayed on at the old home at Moorcroft with my two uncles and my cousin Alice.

After my mother left, the housekeeping was done by my cousin Alice, who was at the time about twenty-four years of age. She was a kindly but rather eccentric young woman, almost totally illiterate, not because she had received no schooling, but because she had failed to take advantage of it. It was her custom to stand for long periods biting her finger nails and apparently studying, but what about I was never able to make out. To hurry over her work never occurred to her and, save the preparation of meals, it was never done on time but when the whim or fancy took her. Despite this, whatever she did was done well; she might be a long time starting, but when she did anything there was no mending it.

She was absolutely the best "twister" I ever saw - and I have seen a good many. The 'edges' and 'throughs' seemed to roll themselves together as if by magic; it seemed no trouble to her; she would go on singing and working as though twisting an 'end' were mere child's play. Sometimes the end would lie in the house for several days untouched; then, suddenly, she would commence, and would not leave it until finished, by which time there was no improving it. Perhaps for several days she had been 'allocking' and doing next to nothing, but my cousin had no idea of the value of time, and any attempts to instil it into her met with failure, as she had the stubbornness of a mule when once set on anything. If it pleased her to work, she worked; if to play, she played.

She was rather below medium height, with dark brown hair, blue eyes and a nose that was rather sharp. Though she had no pretensions to beauty of figure, her features were neither wanting in beauty nor unpleasant. When not thwarted in anything she was of a kindly and generous disposition, often merry, and had a kind of odd wit and manner that was sometimes very amusing. At one time she would entertain the company for a whole evening with her talk and merriment; at another she would be strangely silent. Sometimes she would sing for hours, then a reaction would set in, and she would be absorbed for a long time in her reflections, and in her favourite occupation

of biting her nails. These last never got the chance to grow, for if any nail showed itself it was promptly bitten off.

Altogether she was a rather peculiar young woman, but though she had some faults she had many virtues. To me in particular she was kindness itself; she took me to many places. If she did not take me to the others, she recompensed me with quantities of sweets on her return. To see me smartly dressed was her pride; choosing my first suit and superintending everything connected with my clothes. When she took me anywhere, I had first to undergo a series of dressings and undressings until the general effect suited her. Often she would get me to read to her, or would endeavour to read herself, with me helping her. When away from home, and before company, she would have me to recite some of the many pieces I had learned from my grandfather. She took more interest in me than did my mother at the ages from five to ten, and I describe her thus minutely because she was closely associated with me during the space mentioned.

My grandfather was much missed by all of us, and his demise occasioned many changes in the family. After the first effects of our great bereavement were over we enjoyed for some time a period that was very happy for all of us. My uncles had good work and earned good wages; we had the farm, which was our own, and our circumstances were altogether pleasant. We enjoyed a quietness, peace and prosperity such as few of us have known since.

My Uncle James was at this time a quiet, modest young man, such in disposition as he now is in his more steady periods, but my Uncle Harry has not altered except in years. My cousin and I stayed at home and did generally as we pleased. I roamed the fields and meadows, and went with Sam or Bill o' Robin's around their farms and lands during the mornings or, if the day was wet or inclement, I stayed indoors with my cousin Alice, amusing myself upstairs among the old looms and various lumber. My Uncle James had in this room a stock of eight or nine hundred marbles, the proceeds of winnings during his schooldays, and it took me a considerable time to lose them all through the various nicks and holes in the chamber floor. When the last of them had gone, I was much upset, and it was as much as they could do to stop me pulling up the boards to get at them again. I had no play-mates, there being no children of my own age near to. My uncles went out to work at Delph, and my cousin and I had the place to ourselves. Without my grandfather's company the days were long, and I got into the habit of going to meet my uncles as they came home from work. It was a peculiarity of their job that they never knew when they had finished for the day; it might be soon after dinner or it might be overtime, and after tea. It depended on the state of trade, and trade depended to some extent on the seasons, and going to meet them was a haphazard sort of job.

Sometimes I went much further than my years justified. Frequently I got as far as Hull Mill without meeting them and once 'Charlie Bent', the scourer at Hull Mill, threatened to put me in the stocks - these being a pair of huge wooden hammers used for milling cloth. One time I got as far as the Millgate in Delph. This was getting too bad, and I came in for a lot of admonition and some threats of punishment such as that from 'Charlie Bent' who had been told to look out for me. Having had little of the company of children of my own age, I may say that I took things seriously and for granted. There was no one to tell me that people didn't always mean all they said and that they were only 'kidding'. Consequently I gave 'Charlie Bent' a wide berth by circumventing Hull Mill by about three fields' breadth. but I still kept making my way towards Delph.

It was about this time that my cousin Alice took me one Monday morning for an interview with Mrs. Clayton at Castleshaw School with the view to my becoming a scholar. Afterwards I went fairly regularly in the company of Annie and Sarah Ann Wood, daughters of Giles Wood of Woodbarn, who lived just across the fields. Both of these were older than myself, and when my cousin Alice set me off for school in time they would wait for me. As my cousin was dilatory in this respect, there were times when I did not catch up and had to make my way to school as best I could. Not that I did not know my way, but my sense of time was at fault, if not altogether missing. I arrived one day just as the school was about to loose for dinner time; I distinctly remember the wonder and amusement this caused. Mrs. Clayton was used to late scholars, but I doubt if she was used to them as late as this. I don't remember that she said anything, perhaps she was too astonished for words. It was a hot, sultry day, and not having brought my dinner I had no alternative but to go back home for it.

It wasn't the kind of weather for hurrying and, having lost interest in schools and education, I took a road that led past Old Hey, where an old lady called Mary Platt took me in and gave me my dinner, sharing her own with me. Mary Platt's dinner consisted largely of potatoes boiled in a small pan. Whether there was any meat to them I don't remember. At this distance of time I should say that they would probably be served with a little butter. In any case, they tasted really good to me, after having been rambling about the hillsides all forenoon, when most of the time I ought to have been at school.

Miss Mary Platt was probably a relative of the Platts of Causeway Sett, a farm a little lower down the valley, who were known as 'Bob o' Harry's lot' or 'Owd Harry at Causeway Sett's lot'. Causeway Sett Farm is situated between Old Hey and Sandbed, on what is said to be the old Roman road to Castleshaw.

In my early schooldays I met quite a few people like Miss Platt who were kindly disposed towards me. There was Bill o' Robin's at Banks, or 'Bonks' as we called it, and his wife, Sarah. I came across Bill frequently in the fields, and sometimes had to go to his house on errands. Then there was Jack at Woodbarn and his sister, Ann, who lived at Top o' th' Wood. Jack was a handloom weaver at home, and lived with Ann. He got married after his sister's death, lived at Delph Greaves and worked for Joseph Buckley & Co. at Linfitts Mill. The farmers at Wood at that time were called Whittaker; Edgar Whittaker, the son, about my age, went to school with me. He was rather bigger than I was, and always telling about the money he was going to have to spend on the following day. It seemed to increase at the rate of a penny a day, but so far as I remember it never materialised - Edgar was an optimist!

Giles Wood and his family lived at Woodbarn, but removed later to Springhill at Heights, when their place was taken by George Sparks and his family. Sparks was a navvy, left over from Denshaw Waterworks, who was known as 'Castleshaw Nobby'. When I first knew him he lived in Castleshaw and had an invalid wife, a son in his teens, George, or 'Young Nobby', and two daughters about my age, Kate and Mary. Timothy Edward Pogson lived at Low Bank. One of his sons was in business - 'Pogson & Armitage' at Marslands, until recently. Tim was the son of Joseph Miles Pogson, who may have been some connection of the Milnes's of Millcroft or Wood. The Ellises lived at Ridding Water, the family consisting of Mr. Ellis, senior, 'Owd Josh' as we used to call him, an old handloom weaver, his son, Dick, and two daughters, Annie and Clara. I was destined to know this family very well. The two girls went out with my cousin Alice, and I frequently accompanied them on their weekend walks.

Dick mated up with my two uncles, going shooting and rabbiting with them. In fact, Dick had two guns - breech loaders, one of them double-barrelled, whereas my uncles hadn't any. Old Joss used to boast about these guns of his son Dick's, expressing himself in the broadest Yorkshire dialect, not Saddleworth, with a lot of repetition. Even ordinary conversation became a thing of wonderment to those unused to him. He was perhaps the most comical character in the alley, while Dick was perhaps the most cunning, he was up to all kinds of tricks. Annie and Clara Ellis were both good, hardworking mill girls. Years later my Uncle James married Clara Ellis, and I was to live with her for nearly ten years afterwards, being on living terms with the rest of the family during the whole of that period.

It would be about this time that the new reservoirs were first mooted, and it was not long before we saw people with long sticks, vari-coloured, and things on tripods which went by the name of theodolites, and tapes, measuring up in different parts of the valley. Then began the bargaining for the land, farmhouses and cottages, which was a lengthy job. Some people, like ours, were eager to sell out and turn their property into cash. Others stuck out, despite an Act of Parliament, and defied Oldham Corporation so long as it was possible. On the whole, I think these latter did better. Old Denshaw Jammie wanted £1200 for Marled Earth Nook and, I believe, got most of it. Our people got £420 for our place. Samuel Whitehead Smith got £510 for the farm above, but largely because there was a dam included in it. The water rights to the dam alone would be worth far more than that today. Mr. G.F. Buckley wanted this dam to be reserved to supply Delph, but his colleagues would not back him.

Soon a number of navvies were employed on the job, sinking trial holes to test the underlying rock, seeking a firm bottom on which to rest puddle and concrete. I marvelled at one of these, a chap called 'Suffolk Jack' (Jack King). He was a big man, his pilot coat seeming as big as a woolsack. His boots must have been 13's or 14's, they were heel and toe plated, nailed in both sole and instep with big, square-headed nails. The laces began near the toes and went right to the top, so were of great length - they had to be. One morning he broke one, and it threw him on the spree; he stayed at the Royal Oak Inn at Heights until his money was finished. The first of the trial holes was dug in a meadow of ours across the brook. It went down thirty feet, and I have a copy of the rock succession showing the strata, drawn by Watts, the engineer.

All the spare houses and other accommodation was now being taken up by the influx of the navvies and their families. The school at Castleshaw was soon taxed to its full capacity, and the newcomers were of a tough character generally, Mrs. Clayton soon had her hands full. There were whole families of Tibbotts, Thrustles, Bushbys, Hardistys, Shorts, Walkers, Symeses, Smiths and Walshes settled round the hillsides. In Grange there was Scotch Kit, Lot Smith, Talking Tommy, Tumbledown Joe and Old Rusty, besides Old Smith who had the Lower Farm. At Castleshaw the houses were too far beyond repair for even the navvies to be domiciled in. I don't know where they put them all in at Bleakhey Nook. A family called Evans and another called Maine, besides Arthur Horton, Flash Tipping Harry and Black-fat all managed to find shelter. Quite a number of the old houses were renovated to some extent and rendered reasonably habitable.

The place where my two uncles worked, Rasping Mill, Delph, went slack, and my Uncle Harry went as farm man to his cousin, Mrs. Mary Jane Kershaw, a widow at Strinesdale. My other uncle, James, got a job at Linfitts Mill. When our place was sold to the Corporation they wanted 4s.9d. for us to remain as tenants, but my uncle refused to pay it. The result was that we flitted to a cottage at Millcroft, next door to my mother and stepfather.

By this time my mother had two other children, two little girls, Alice Jane and Mary. This would be about December, 1887, and after the Christmas holidays I was sent, or rather taken, to Hill End School at Delph. I never took to this school; the teachers and practically everyone else were strange to me. I was put in the 2nd standard, like others of my age, and I did fairly well. I had my share of fights, some of these I won, some I lost. I beat Charlie Broadbent, a lad from Sandbed, one playtime. On the other hand, a lad from Grange, called Bob Smith, kicked my shins one dinner-time until they were black and blue. My clog came off during this contest, and I had no choice but to give in. I doubt if I should have won in any case. He could use his clogs, this Smith lad, and I doubt if I could have been as merciless as he was. I wasn't hectoring or bullying or quarrelsome, and could usually agree with those who could agree with themselves. However, all lads are not like that, most of them want to 'felly' over others. I fought a draw with Tom Peacock at Rasping Mill, but I beat 'Crust', a visitor from Oldham, one dinner time at Hill End School. I knocked him down a wall, and gave it to him in the bottom. There was an enquiry afterwards, and one of the girls said that I had been fighting. Mr. Davis immediately had me out, but as 'Crust' was not a scholar of this school, and never had been, the verdict went in my favour, and I was presented with twopence and told to give him some more if he ever came again.

This, with the exception of another twopence which I got for reading a paragraph of a book called 'The Sperm Whale' was all I ever won at school. The paragraph ran much like this:

"Today the captain's boat was in sight when the whale appeared and every nerve was strained to get alongside before he sounded. As the sea looks black with the bulk of an unwieldy monster that dives down to the oozy ocean caves then rises to the regions of day and spouts out his pent-up breath towards Heaven, a chill of dread comes over the hardest bosom'

It was Examination Day, and the Inspector complimented me. Mr. Davis also complimented me and gave me twopence, but added that he thought I knew it off by heart. He was quite right - I knew practically the whole book. I have often wondered if this was my first introduction to great literature.

I am not blaming anyone for my delinquencies at this time, but one thing our people could have done was to send me to school better clad. Also, they could have sent me to school earlier, instead of using me for their own purposes till the last minute. The result was that I was tempted not to go at all sometimes, and got into the habit of playing truant. The funny part of it is that when you have played truant one day you don't like to go the next, and the fault, usually looked upon as a crime, becomes accumulative. In the summer of 1889 I played truant for seven weeks continuously. I remember that it began on my birthday, 17th July. You may reckon from there. At the end of six weeks, the School Attendance Officer, Mr. Burgess, came to look for me. My mother told him that I had been sent to school every day and every week, and the S.A.O. went back to school thinking he had got the wrong name, or the wrong lad. When I said I had been to school every day they believed me at home - hadn't they sent me? I was sent the following week, but I did not go - I daren't! On the following Saturday our people were summoned to appear before the Board of Guardians for my failure to attend school. It was then that my troubles began. I had not only played truant, but had acted deceitfully, told lies and had wilfully misappropriated seven weeks' school fees at four pence a week, something in all 2s.4d. besides a total sum amounting to much more, paid to me by Mr. Ned Horne, the ganger on the Pipe Track then being laid across the hillside to carry the water to Oldham. This money I had earned by carrying tools and doing other errands.

I was fairly rich about this time, and I had plenty of friends among the other lads.

Alfred Bradshaw, 'Alf o' Pippins' who lived at Paradise, knew all about my way of life at the time, but said nothing. It paid him to do so. Where Alf's own interests were concerned he could be as quiet as a mouse. Alf squinted enormously, as also did his brother Dick and his sister Molly, and several other younger ones. His real father was dead, and his mother, ~~Nancy Bradshaw, known as Missingham Nance, kept the family not hailing by~~ taking in a few lodgers and washing for half the people on the Waterworks. I always think of Alf as one of the most interesting personalities of my younger days. He was one of the acquisitive kind - he could have given the Artful Dodger points. After a time they went to Delph, and later still to Darby Bar, or 'Green Withins' as they call it now.

When it came to the time to appear before the Guardians' Court my mother said that if there was anything to pay they would have to 'have the stirk for the fodder' or, in other words, that they would have to have me, and accordingly took me with her to court. The story of my seven weeks of liberty seemed to cause more amusement than anything else. All kinds of things were gone into, particularly my work at school, which was given as satisfactory, and all kinds of remedies were suggested to make me or induce me to go to school. Then one of the Guardians, 'Old Ab at Delph Greaves' said he was sure he had seen me working on the Pipe Track below his house. Then came the question of my age, and as I was turned ten, and seemed to prefer work to school, Mr. G.F. Buckley said that the best thing that could be done would be to find me a job in the mill, half-time. Then they would know each weekend whether I had been to school or not, by the mill book.

Returning from the Court at Uppermill we called at Mr. Davis' house at New Delph. Mr. Davis threatened that if I ever played truant again he would take me into his house and keep me entirely without food for a whole week. I went back to school on the following day; I did not seem to have lost much ground. I was not long, however, before I had another holiday. An epidemic of typhus broke out at Millcroft in the late summer of 1889, caused by the workmen at the Pipe Track fouling the stream that fed Paradise Well. It spread to Dale Sandbed and some parts of Delph; it was thought that the school children might be spreading it. One afternoon Mr. Davis asked of the whole school if any of the scholars had fever at their houses, and Jane Eliza Bradbury said that I had. I was called out and questioned, and as three of our people were in bed with it at the time, I was sent home there and then and told not to come again until it was over.

So I resumed my nomadic life of catching trout, getting blackberries, doing errands and carrying tools for Ned Horne, pig food from Delph and buttermilk from England's farm across the valley. Sometimes I would go with young Bill Tomlinson with a horse and cart to Blue Peter Land for black dirt off the moor, or to Delph Station for lime.

We had two very large pigs that year at Millcroft - or least my stepfather had - and people came from all sides to look at them. My uncle having got his share of the proceeds of the sale of the old farm at Moorcroft Wood, my mother hers, and my stepfather having done well on the Waterworks (Cudworth Quarry) and by means of pigs and the keeping of lodgers, they began to think of something of a more remunerative nature than just working for a wage. My stepfather, who was one of the family of Wrigleys who built

the first Floating Light Inn, naturally let his mind run on to barrels and bottles, and fancied himself serving over a bar. My uncle, who didn't particularly mind which side of the retailing part he was on - waiter or customer - providing he was somewhere about, seemed agreeable enough. At first they thought of the Golden Fleece at Denshaw, but this failing, they settled on the Preston Arms Inn at Diggle, and made overtures which resulted in their taking it.

Accordingly we moved there on the 5th November, 1889. There was some land attached to the Inn - keep for six or seven cows. These cattle were bought, and we set up as innkeepers and farmers. As my stepfather could not milk a cow, and had no desire to learn, having been brought up with a beer pump, and as my uncle had to start work on Castleshaw Waterworks at 7 o'clock each morning, something had to be done about it. So I had to learn to milk, and became farm man, half-time, at ten years of age. I stayed at home in the mornings and went to school in the afternoons. There was also feeding, watering and cleaning up to be done, besides hens and pigs to be looked after. Sometimes my mother or my Aunt Clara (Uncle Jimmy's wife) would help, but mostly it was my job.

When I came home from school it was my job to fetch the cows in. This seemed a simple job, but we had a long-legged, red and white cow that was a rambler. Some times I had to fetch it from Castlehill in the next valley, or from Standedge Foot, or even farther than that. Again we churned all our milk into butter, and as we could not sell it all at home, my stepfather went out to look for customers. He got as far as the Clarence at Greenfield, and managed to get customers at several other public houses besides some of his own relations who lived in private houses. The butter-hawking day was Saturday, and after being shown the round and being given an introduction to the customers, I was duly appointed roundsman and butter salesman. I knew several pubs in Uppermill and three in Greenfield fairly intimately before I was eleven.

On the return journey I had to pick up seven pounds of cheese at Edmund Buckley's at Uppermill (now Sykes's) and 32 half-ounces of tobacco (twist). The cheese was sometimes sixpence per pound, sometimes sixpence-halfpenny. Usually I carried 15 or 16 pounds of butter. If I was threepence wrong in my reckoning I got leathered and sometimes threatened with the reformatory or jail. I often think that by this time I ought to have been a great merchant; I doubt if Lipton had a better start than I had. The 32 half-ounces of tobacco, weighed separately and wrapped up in paper, cost 3s.8d. each. Twist today is more than that for a single ounce. Really I ought to have bought all they had and ordered all they could get, but I had no foresight.

After a time they got an odd man to look after the cows, etc., and I was sent to the mill as a piecer, half-time. I had to learn for a fortnight before beginning for a wage, and as they only paid out once a fortnight a kindly old gentleman who went by the name of Jammy o' Harry's came and gave me two florins with the Queen's head on. This was at the end of a month, during which period I had been knocked about considerably by my seniors. I had several fights with another lad called Jack Dixon otherwise 'Finnock'. I lost both of these because others helped Finnock, who was a Diggle, and a native.

There was a big lant tub at the end of the mule-gate. Lant, or urine, was used in the scouring process, and one afternoon a man called Merry Dick got hold of me and dipped my head in the liquid. A big lad called Henry Gladstone Broadbent, hearing about this, later ordered me to go and throw the man's coat in and sink it with weights, which I did. 'Gladdy' Broadbent was known as 'Prime'. He was a big hefty lad of seventeen or eighteen. It is true that he squinted almost as much as 'Pippin' did, but when Prime looked at

you, you knew he meant it, and you didn't argue. There was a fine row about the coat afterwards, but with Prime on my side I came out all right. You might mistake the way Prime was looking, but there was no misunderstanding the meaning of the look. Councillor Albert Thomas began work at Thornes Clough Mill about the same time as I did, as also did Fred Pyke, who afterwards became the President of Marsden Co-op.

The present approaches to Diggle Bridge were being made when I first went to Preston Arms. Previously there had been a level crossing, a continuation of Sam Road, but no steel bridge as at present. A Liverpool firm, Holme and King, were in charge, and the work went on late at night by the aid of artificial lights called lucigens, which lit up all the area round the station almost like day.

When I first went to Kiln Green School, the master was a Mr. Schofield, a widower who lived in the schoolhouse by himself. He was a nondescript sort of person, short and fat, and perhaps between thirty-six and forty-six years of age. I did not notice anything in his scholarship that was outstanding. This was in 1890. Later he left and his place was taken by a Mr. Charles Oldham, who came from Manchester way. He was tall, ginger, and had 'a guid conceit of hissel'. The first morning that I went to his school I was late, and all the others were in their places. He came forward to meet me as I went in, and said, 'Good morning Timothy'. So long as I remained in Diggle this stuck, and I was known as 'Timothy'. Practically everybody in Diggle had a nickname, or another name of some kind. Once I wrote Mr. Oldham an essay on 'Guy Fawkes' Day'. He threatened to send it to 'Titbits' magazine. I think it was the local names for the various kinds of fireworks that got him down.

When we got a farm man I had nothing like as much farm work to do, but I still had the butter round on Saturdays. Then the new tunnel began in 1891. I had no need to hawk the butter any longer, we could sell it all at home. Soon we were pestered with men wanting meals and lodgings. Diggle was flooded with miners, a large proportion of whom were Welshmen, colliers from North Wales. One that lodged with us called himself 'John Jones from Wrexham, six wives and one children'. As there seemed to be as much money for beer as for lodging money, we got it one way, sometimes both.

The pay in the tunnel was five shillings per shift for labourers. The shifts were eight hours and the work went on continuously. The locals were being enticed out of the mills and from the foundry by these wages, and Mr. James Hollingworth went to the tunnel people to complain about it, but with no result. Our house and all the other pubs were the resort of all kinds of rough, drunken characters, as long as I was there. If you wish to lower the character of a place, money and drink will do it as soon as anything.

I mentioned trout catching before, but that was on the Castleshaw side, where I had been keen and fairly proficient at it. It did not take me long to find out that there were trout in the Diggle Brook. There was also a tunnel under the old Yew Tree Mill, and I had noticed that there were trout swimming at the end of it, but they generally took refuge down the long covered-in part of the tunnel when they saw you. I had noticed that some of them were fairly big, so one Saturday afternoon I decided to see what I could do about it. It was quite a warm day, and I stripped everything except my clogs and went down the tunnel. The water was not deep, owing to the fine weather, nowhere more than a foot, so that meant I was able to get into the holes in the walls, my favourite way of catching them.

I got twenty-three fairly large trout that afternoon, making a pond in the brook side at the tunnel end and putting them in as I caught them. I afterwards transferred them by means of two buckets to a large tub in one of our fields where the cows drank. My stepfather, who was interested in all such-like things, and considered himself a great sportsman, did not take long to inform his customers of my success. The following morning the tub had been tipped over and the trout had all gone. A fine, warm afternoon in summer, and a trout stream with plenty of trout, is something to be remembered. I never did any angling, but I have sold trout to anglers when they hadn't caught any.

Once, when I was at Kiln Green School, we had new reading books, 5th Standard Royal Readers. They were really good books from a literary point of view, and contained some excellent pieces of both poetry and prose. There was 'Barbara Frietchie' in poetry, 'Bingen on the Rhine' and 'The Little Match Girl' in prose. There were plenty more, the book being crammed with good things. I let my memory have its fling amongst them, and it was not long before I knew them off by heart, as they say. I got a lot of pleasure out of that book.

The lad, Fred Pyke, and I, were in the same half-day at school, and Mr. Oldham had only a poor opinion of us as scholars, or for anything else for that matter. When the examination was approaching he announced that the only two failures he feared in that Standard were me and Pyke. When the results came through it turned out that we were the only two who had passed. I can only explain this by thinking that the others were frightened and did not do their best. There were fourteen or fifteen scholars and some of the girls I knew to be quite good. The fourth Standard in those days was the passport to full-time, and I had already passed it at Platt Lane, Dobcross, at a Labour Examination before coming to Diggle.

My mother had two other children by her marriage to him whom I hesitate to call my stepfather. I think it would have taken Tony Weller to describe this man's relationship to me, my real father being alive at the time. Probably Tony would have called him my father-in-law, which he wasn't. Anyhow, she had two other children, both girls. The older of these would be between seven and eight at the time, and went to school, she was called Alice Jane. The other, Mary, was born in 1887, and would only be short of four at the time I am talking about. She now lives at Grasscroft. Alice Jane was very nice looking, with rather light hair and a pink and white skin, good features and rather tall for her age. She was generally admired, not only for her good looks, but for the general kindness of her disposition. Her goodness at home and abroad was something that I marvelled at. Whereas I was usually in trouble, she never was. She went with me to Kiln Green School, and I was proud of her. She would tell me when I had done wrong. Alice Jane was a general favourite when we lived at Millcroft, and took it with her to Diggle.

I remember the Spring of 1891; it was a nice time, with most ideal weather. My sister came home from school and, reporting feeling unwell, was put to bed. I only saw her once or twice afterwards, and then only for a few minutes, when my mother took me up to see her. Once she was rambling. Old Dr. Ramsden of Dobcross was doctoring my Uncle James at the time, and he was in bed in the next room with pneumonia. Dr. Ramsden was called in to see her. One night I was sent to Delph for my father-in-law's boots from the mending, and had to go round by Dobcross to the doctor's for my uncle's medicine. I remember it thundered and lightened and rained all the time I was away from Preston Arms - all the way to Delph and from Delph to Dobcross and back to Preston Arms again. I do not remember that there was any medicine for my sister, perhaps she had had enough - it turned out that she had

When I got home, Aunt Eliza Fisher from Diggle Bridge was at our house, having come to help with the nursing. I completed my errands by delivering the boots and the medicine. It had done more thundering and lightening while I had been away than at any period of the same time that I can remember. The thunder and the flashes followed each other with little interval in between. Later it was decided that, to allow Aunt Eliza to stay all night to help, I was to go and sleep at her house at Diggle Bridge. Consequently, I went down and stayed there. During the whole of the night the big flashes lit up the bedroom at Diggle Bridge, while the thunder threatened to disrupt the whole building.

On the following morning, it being my half-day to attend school, I set out for Preston Arms and my breakfast. At Thorns Clough I met Aunt Liza Fisher, who told me that my sister was dead. I think this was the greatest shock of my early life. Strange to say I had never thought of her dying, she seemed so young. On the previous night, before I set out for Delph, she was rambling and did not recognise me, or even notice me. Being young, I thought it was just temporary, and that everything would be all right in a few days.

The days that followed immediately after were like a bad dream to me. I went about in a dazed condition, taking little interest in things. Perhaps I was overwhelmed by the fact - the fact of death. Later came the funeral at Heights Church. Some of the girls who had been neighbours at Millcroft acted as bearers and I remember how sorry they appeared to be, and no doubt were, that such a life should end so tragically and early.

LETTERS

Mr. Albert Broadbent of "Rimmon" Braystones Road, Beckermest, Cumbria, CA21 2XX, has sent some of his personal recollections of Saddleworth Picture Palace.

"Dear Mr. Fox,

I have written these vis-a-vis with items about the cinema in Uppermill, printed in "Bulletins" Vol. 20. No.4. and Vol. 21 No.3. These articles cover the period September 1912 to 1984 and include an interview with Bob Plummer, the former Manager of the cinema.

I was born in the room above the newsagents shop at Old Manor House, Uppermill, on 29th August, 1918, and I suppose I probably became acquainted with the Palace at about 5 years of age. I probably first set eyes on the entrance from the go-chair which my grandad, James H. Holden, the Newsagent, showed around daily. He had several calling spots, and one, I do remember, was Fred Broadbent's saddler's shop right opposite the Palace, on the corner site. There was a sort of "little owd fellies club" and they sat around a stove set in the centre of the room and expectorated on the sizzling hot stove. I think the doorway was on the front of the corner wall in those days.

I think my granny probably introduced me to the vice of picture-going. As children we all spent perhaps too much time with what was after all very novel. I remember Bob Plummer well, and I confirm much of what he says ("Bulletin" Vol. 21. No.3.).

When I was a patron the proprietor was, firstly, Harry ("Pump") Pearson who kept a bicycle business, a double-fronted place. He also sold 'lamp oil' hence the "Pump". He was elderly, married with a son, Noel, who was in cinema management in Oldham (The "Cosy", off Union Street). There was a grandson, Eddie, about my age and a granddaughter. Harry's residence, being over the shop in Uppermill Square, was most convenient for the Palace. Bob Plummer doesn't say but I can tell you that seat prices were 4d. (old pence) and 2d. under 14. Elsewhere downstairs 'chairs' were about 6d. (3d.) and upstairs balcony about 8d. Saturday afternoon matinee 'forms' cost a child 1d.

During daylight hours the hall was lit by roof lights in the outer roof and false roof. Therefore on Saturday afternoons horizontal blinds operated from the projection room were drawn across, one of the first features I remember. As electricity had not reached Uppermill the Palace generated its own. A D.C. generator was belt driven by a "hit and miss" governed gas engine at the south end of the building. Supply was fairly secure except in the winter. Every winter the engine cooling water would freeze. Now and then I well remember Harry 'Pump' making the necessary and sad announcement which meant we'd 'had it' that night.

When I first saw the inside of the "operating box" the old projectors were still used (this would be about 1925) and the old handles were still going round driven by the added-later electric motors. Projection light was carbon arc and the lamps must have "eaten them". We lads used to recover them to play with, from the rubbish at the back of the cinema. The 'Operator' was well known in the district and always referred to as 'Happy Jack' or simply 'Happy'. Everybody knew him but few knew that he was John Osbaldeston, who hailed from Blackpool. He was fond of the bottle and it sometimes affected his work as manifested when film reels got mixed up! I certainly remember one show. The 'big film' was 'Buttons' and featured child star Jackie Cougan as bell-boy on a trans-atlantic liner. During the preamble of newsreel,

short comedy, etc. suddenly Jackie appeared on screen. on nevertheless, mixed up reels and all!

The show carried

The films were silent, of course. The resident pianist was a young man called, I believe, Duckworth, and came, I think, from Dobcross. Also the Palace had an organ; actually an American-type instrument with dummy pipes. This was situated on the front wall on the right-hand, next to the south-east exit. Very occasionally, and if the film was dramatically suitable and serious, Harry 'Pump' played the organ.

Regular employees, I remember, included Harry 'Tripey' Whitehead, who lived on Tame Street. Alice Whitehead worked in the pay box. She taught at the Council School in the village, now a big comprehensive, and lived in Buckley Street. When Harry 'Pump' retired the new proprietor arrived. The principal was Mr. Wilkinson from Yorkshire - Bradford, I believe. He was married and kept a low profile but had two daughters. Vera, a dark and pretty girl was married to Bob Plummer and Edith was married to Benny Downes. The Plummers ran the Palace whilst the Downes ran their Mossley establishment. The first thing they did at Uppermill was to instal new projectors. Later, when the Stalybridge, Hyde, Mossley and Dukinfield Joint Board brought electricity they got rid of the infernal gas engine with its noisy irregular exhaust bangs.

I don't know where Wilkinsons or Downes lived, but the Plummers lived in Rydal Villas in the same block as Candour Lodge on High Street (No. 337).

I think it was Plummer who made the change to 'talkies'. Two early films I remember were 'Jazz Singer' and 'Singing Fool' both with Al Jolson. I may be wrong, but I seem to remember that the change was not instant; did not silents and talkies run together for a period until the former films were worked out as the latter took over?

Some epics were seen at Uppermill, 'Ben Hur' and 'Hunch Back of Notre Dame' for example, and of course the many films of the old comics - Harold Lloyd, Buster Keaton, Charlie Chaplin, Harry Langdon, etc.

My recollections cover 1921 to the war. After the war I lived in Oldham but I spent a fair time in Uppermill. I can't remember ever setting foot in the cinema again but I remember, of course, the closure in 1959 and the garage extension.

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Eric Roberts,
9 Greenway Drive,
Mossley,
Ashton-under-Lyne,
Lancs. OL5 0QE.

Dear Michael,

Edith Jackson, whose grandfather was the late Hervey Rhodes, gave me this poem which was part of her grandfather's effects.

I am sure your readers would like to read it and conjecture the name of its author.

Sincerely yours,
Eric Roberts.

THE OLD CROSS KEYS

Up on the slope beyond the Churchyard
Hid by trees but still alive
You will see a fine old Hostel
Built in seventeen forty five
And you'll find 'neath oaken rafter
Certain things that never fail
Comradeship and hearty laughter
Friendly faces and good ale.

A quiet hour we pass
With a friendly pipe and glass
And sometimes have a round of bread and cheese
We talk of pigs and politics and Farmer Giles's crop
There's lots of fun and laughter and the
cheering doesn't stop
We get another gill or two
Till John says 'Off you pop'
Oh! its champion at the Old Cross Keys.

Some chaps fancy swell Hotels
But not me - if you please
I prefer the chimney corner of the old Cross Keys
There I chat with Ned and Charlie
While we share the Hillside Club
There's a bit of good old England
In a decent country pub.

A happy time we pass
With a friendly pipe and glass
And behind the spear I like to get my knees
The daily toil is over and a friendly hour we're whiling
And you could hear a pin drop when a voice soft
and beguiling
As Julius in the corner sings
When Irish eyes are smiling
In the kitchen of the Old Cross Keys.

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. It relies on a regular supply of articles, letters, short reviews, etc. from members and others interested in the history of the area. Fresh material is required constantly 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.

The Autumn "Bulletin" is due for publication on 31st October. All material to the Editor by 30th September, please.

(Publication of the Summer Bulletin has been delayed because of technical problems. These also account for the makeshift appearance of some of the typescript.).



SADDLEWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER SUMMER 1992

"O tell me, West Wind, what the skylark hath said ?
What song is she dreaming to-night, in her bed,
That will shake the white towers of morn overhead
With peals of delight ?"

Ammon Wrigley.

The first of the Summer Outings, on the 11th July, 1992, was a visit to Conway Castle and Llandudno, which included the Bronze Age Mining Centre. Except for the weather it was a most enjoyable day. As always, we were indebted to Wendy & John Murray for their splendid arrangements. One of the delights on these occasions is to try and discover what Members have brought in their picnic baskets for lunch. I know that it's rude to stare, but it can be quite revealing. If you can enter into a barter arrangement with a friend then so much the better, but the E.R.M. can get a little complicated. Who can say with any degree of certainty that one boiled-ham sandwich is worth two cheese and onion ones ?

ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP.

Meetings are held on the first Wednesday in the month, 7.30 p.m. for 8.0 p.m., at the Cross Keys Inn, Uppermill, by kind permission of Mr. Philip Kay, beginning 7th October, 4th November, 2nd December, 6th January, 1993, 3rd February, 3rd March and the 7th April.

Evenings will include reports on India, Tunisia, the Prehistoric Copper Mines on the Great Orme, Llandudno and a seasonal quiz.

For further information contact Jim Carr on 873612.

Dates for your diary.

Council for British Archaeology North-West, Saturday 7th November, 1992,
Reports Meeting at Bolton Museum.

Saturday 17th April, 1993, A.G.M.

ARCHIVES. S.H.S. THE BERNARD BARNES SLIDE COLLECTION.

Bernard Barnes slides covering Manchester, Medlock Valley, Oldham, Saddleworth, Marsden, Colne Valley, Merrydale and Guide Stoop, have now been calendared and card indexed. These may be borrowed under the following conditions -

1. On application to one of the Archivists.
2. Signed for in the presence of an Archivist.
3. To be held by the borrower for no longer than 14 days.

MUSEUM - CENSUS RETURNS.

The Museum Archives will shortly contain a copy of the microfilm of the 1891 Census for Saddleworth.

SADDLEWORTH COUNCIL RECORDS.

The Saddleworth Council Records which used to be stored in the Oldham Town Hall basement are shortly to be divided between a store in the Oldham Local Interest Centre, 84 Union Street, Oldham and a new repository in the Acorn Unit, Barry Street, Oldham, the latter being brought up to B.S. 5454 standard for archives. An appointment to view these records must be made at the Oldham Local Interest Centre, when the work is completed.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Lecture Programme - please refer to the Syllabus enclosed.

ART EXHIBITIONS AT THE MUSEUM.

8th August - 30th August.	Saddleworth Group of Artists.
5th Sept. - 27th September.	David Gaskill.
10th October - 1st November.	Jean & David McIntyre.

Textile Working Days.

Sunday 16th August and Sunday 20th September, 1992.

Craft Demonstrations.

Sunday 6th September.	Rag Rugs.
Last Sunday in each month	Lace making.

Other Events.

13th September.	Book Fair.
2nd - 4th October.	Real Ale Festival.

MUSIC AT THE GALLERY.

Jazz nights will continue in September - details available from the Museum Shop. 874093.

The Saddleworth Historical Society Committee meets on the second Thursday of each month and if Members have any important business they wish to be brought up would they please inform the Secretary. It has been agreed that important items discussed at these meetings will be included in the newsletters.

SADDLEWORTH W.E.A. COURSES - AUTUMN/WINTER 1992

All course are held at Saddleworth School, Uppermill. 7.15 - 9.15 p.m.

THE INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY IN THE PENNINES.

Tutor - Alan J. Petford MA
Mondays from 5th October, 1992.
10 meetings and 1 field trip.

The Industrial Revolution began in textiles. The ruins of that revolution lie all about us. From the majestic cotton spinning mills of Oldham to the homely woollen weavers' cottages of Saddleworth and the Colne Valley,

our landscape is dominated by the relics of the textile trade. Come and discover more about these fascinating remains ! All facets of the subject will be covered, the Domestic system; the technology revolution; the Factory system; sources of power; ancilliary industries; the architecture of textiles. The course is fully illustrated with slides and extracts from documentary evidence.

COLLECTING ANTIQUES.

Tutor - John Keith.

Wednesdays from 30th September, 1992.

10 meetings including 1 field trip. (Will be extended to 20 meetings if requested).

Collecting antiques survives and prospers despite the recession ! The shakeout of speculators and profiteers has left the serious collector with tremendous opportunities in diverse fields. This course aims to introduce some of them. In addition to the topics to be covered, the tutor will bring items for evaluation to many of the classes and class members are encouraged to bring their own pieces along each week for identification and discussion. A trip will be organised during the ten week period.

RENAISSANCE ARCHITECTURE FROM 'POLITE' TO 'PROVINCIAL' IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

Tutor - W. John Smith, M.A., F.S.A.

Thursdays from 1st October, 1992.

20 Meetings.

This well illustrated course will explain the massive influence of the Renaissance on creating a richness of architectural styles and expressions probably never envisaged by the Italian originators. Their ideas reached England with the publication in 1624 of Sir Henry Wotton's, 'Elements of Architecture', establishing the basic principles of architectural judgement, which would complement the contemporary architecture of Inigo Jones. What architectural trends led up to this period and what developments followed, will be the basis of this course. This study will show how to look for these influences, not only on the 'polite' country house, but also on the more traditional or 'provincial' homes of the lesser gentry, traders and clothiers of the Northern counties.

A full Winter session of Industrial Archaeology, Antiques and Architecture to interest the lively minds of Society members and improve their knowledge even further.

MEMBERSHIP SECTION.

A Summer greeting is made to the following new members who have joined the fellowship of our Historical Society.

Mrs. A.J. Hill, of Bournemouth.	Mr. P.G. Fryer, Springhead.
Mr. & Mrs. L. Brook, Grasscroft.	Mr. & Mrs. G.E. Felton, Uppermill.
Mr. John Gartside, Bolton.	Mr. & Mrs. P.B. Southgate, Denshaw.
Mr. A. Spencer, Chadderton.	Mr. & Mrs. M.P. Renshaw, Grasscroft.
Mrs. & Mrs. D. Wright of Middleton, and late of Bridge House, Dobcross.	

A special mention must be made of Mrs. Hill who rejoins us after a lapse of some years, but brings with her clear views of the old days at Top oth Meadows, surely one of the viewing points of Saddleworth.

Howard Lambert of Chesham, Bucks, came to see Canon Airne gathering more information of the Lees Family and visited ancestral farmsteads at Knarr, Greenleach and Roebucklow, the latter in a sorry state.

Saddleworth continues to beckon on Whit Friday when Jim, Joan and Charlotte Meadowcroft visited Greenfield for the processions where Charlotte was a scholar over 80 years ago and paid another visit to her beloved Hey Top where she was able to attend a Coffee Morning held at the home of Mrs. Eunice Bingley. Meanwhile there were passing migrant visitors from Australia and America, Mrs. Betty Stone of Curtin, Australia, called at the Museum in Uppermill, after visiting the Local Interest Centre in Oldham to elicit further information on her Dale and Lees connections, of whom William Dale of Hey and Lees Lees of Stonebreaks emigrated (unassisted) to Australia during the 1850's and became the Great Grandfathers of Mrs. Stone, indeed an interesting point both these ancestors are christened at Hey St. John Church. Again in June Mrs. Mary Clay Platt Lee of Haverford, Pennsylvania, visited Uppermill and enjoyed a genealogical session in the Museum with the Archivist, Maurice Dennett, and one hopes that this visit was worthwhile.

Mr. Dannie Wright is the contributor of that valuable piece of cine-film showing the Saddleworth men on parade in Uppermill at the end of the first World War. In his younger days he worked as a projectionist at the Palace Cinema, in Uppermill, and, no doubt, some of his memories may help Peter Fox with his further articles on this favourite cinema of yesteryear.

Wool Road Warehouse.

Finally news of activity on the canal. At noon on Wednesday the 5th August, 1992, Mr. Norman Bennett, the Mayor of Oldham, launched Mr. Robert Witter's boat, 'Intermezzo', down the new slipway constructed at the Wool Road Warehouse basin by the Huddersfield Canal Society, this being part of their re-instatement programme in making this into a navigable canal system. Architectural plans are also being prepared for the conversion of the Wool Road Warehouse into a classroom to be used by the Tameside Wardens in their Education Programme.

J. Hindle.

