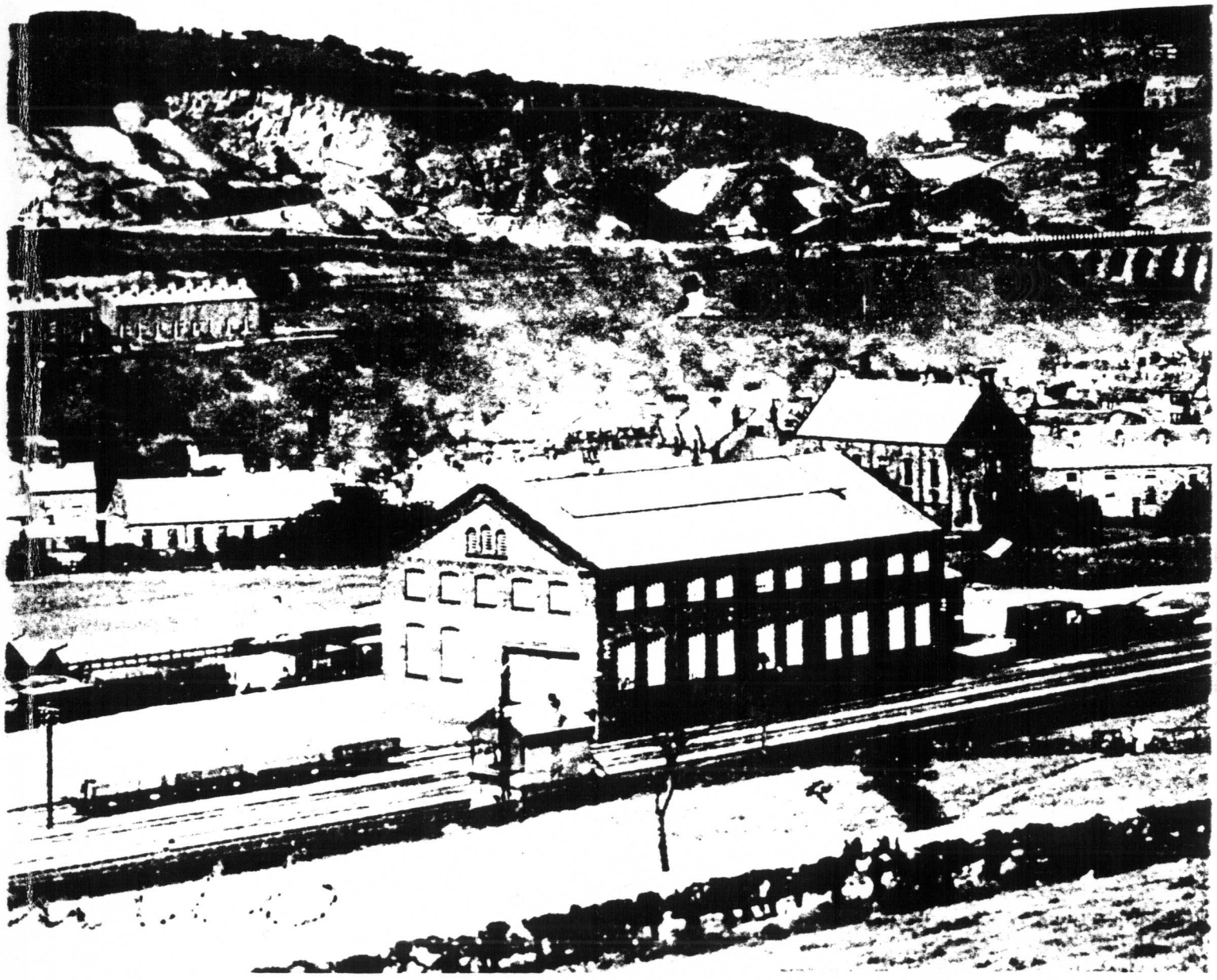
Saddleworth Historical Society Bulletin



Volume 24 Number 3 Autumn 1994

BULLETIN OF THE

SADDLEWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 24 **Number 3**

	Page
Some Descendants of the Platt family of Thorns, Saddleworth - Part One	1
Barring-Out	7
Micklehurst Loop Finale	8
Fairbottom Bobs	14
The People of Bridge House	16
Saddleworth in Wartime - Part Two	19
Letters	22

Cover Illustration: The goods warehouse at Uppermill, photographed from near Ballgrove in about 1900. (See the article on the Micklehurst Loop).

Some descendants of the Platt family of Thorns, Saddleworth

Anyone who has searched for Platt ancestors in Saddleworth will know that the parish and nonconformist registers contain numerous entries for that name. As in many other families, some individuals moved their abode several times, occasionally settling outside the parish.

The following account of the descendants of the Platts of Thorns, includes information on the families of James Platt (1792-1864) of Prospecton, Greenfield, and his brother Joseph Platt (1805-1882) of Moorgate, Uppermill, who was my wife's great grandfather.

An account of Thorns or Thornses is given by the late Bernard Barnes (1979) under its later name Preston House. We are informed that it was once part of a larger holding at Diggle, leased by the Platt family from the Lord of the Manor. It is clear that the Platts were associated with Thorns from at least 1585 when Henry Platt of Thorns was one of the debtors of Ralph Whitehead of Delph (Whitehead's Will, March 1585). An Edmund Platt of Thurnes, husbandman, made his will here in October 1636. It mentions a tenement and farm under the Right Worshipful Sir John Ramsden, his wife Alies and children Francis, Oliver, Alies and Mary. A Francis Platt of Thorns was buried at Saddleworth on 1st January 1657/8.

In the absence of wills or other documentation it is not possible to prove a link with the earliest Platts listed above; however, from the information available, it seems likely that the line we are concerned with descends from a Thomas Platt, husbandman, of Thorns, whose will is dated 5th April 1713. This document mentions his wife Elizabeth and the following seven children, five of whom are to be found in the Saddleworth baptismal register:

EDMUND PLATT (eldest son). He inherited tenement Thorns under the terms of his father's will. Probably married SARAH BROADBENT (see under separate heading).

THOMAS PLATT. inherited from his father a parcel of land in Castleshaw, known as Waters.

ANNE PLATT. Baptised 9th March 1678/9; married JAMES BUCKLEY at Saddleworth, on 30th September 1702. Anne was a widow by 1713.

ALICE PLATT. Baptised 21st May 1682; married JAMES WRIGLEY at Saddleworth, on 13th October 1702. Inherited a parcel of land called the Okenlee pasture.

FRANCIS PLATT. Baptised 6th February 1686/7.

MARGARET PLATT. Baptised 29th December 1689; married JOHN PLATT sometime before April 1713, but the place and date are unknown. A John and Margaret Platt of Hollins

who baptised children at Saddleworth, April 1724 to January 1730/31, may have been this couple. The Margaret of Hollins was buried on 17th August 1731, and John was buried on 9th November 1732.

SARAH PLATT. Baptised 16th June 1695. Under the terms of her father's will, a parcel of land at Castleshaw, known as the Woodclose, was to be divided equally between Sarah and her sister Margaret, wife of John Platt.

Unfortunately the entries in the Saddleworth parish registers are incomplete or entirely missing from some of the earlier years, and this no doubt explains why the baptisms of the above Edmund and Thomas Platt have not been found. The marriage of John Platt to Margaret Platt may also have taken place at Saddleworth, as there are no marriage entries for the years 1705 to 1711 inclusive.

EDMUND PLATT (d. 1723)

As stated earlier this Edmund was probably the son of Thomas Platt of Thorns. He married Sarah Broadbent at Saddleworth on 25th September 1702, and their son JAMES PLATT was baptised here on 12th November 1702.

Edmund Platt was buried at Saddleworth on 18th August 1723, and his widow Sarah on 19th March 1724/5, administration of her estate being granted to James Platt of Saddleworth, yeoman, her son, and Thomas Platt of Saddleworth, cloth maker.

JAMES PLATT (b. 1702)

James, son of Edmund and Sarah Platt, became a clothier at Thorns and married his first wife ANN PLATT of Sandy bed yate on 26th December 1726. There were two children by this marriage, both baptised at St Chad, Saddleworth.

THOMAS PLATT. Baptised 1st October 1727 (see under separate heading).

JAMES PLATT. Baptised 23rd November 1729.

Ann Platt, wife of James, died only two years after her marriage, and was buried on 10th February 1729/30. Later that year ANN BUCKLEY, a spinster, had a child JOHN (baptised 25th December 1730) by the above James Platt, and on 7th February 1730/31, she became his second wife when they married at the parish church, Ann's abode being given as Thorns in the register.

By this second marriage there were six children, probably all baptised at Saddleworth:

FRANCIS PLATT. Baptised 30th April 1732.

EDMUND PLATT. Baptised 13th January 1733/34.

ROBERT PLATT. Baptised ?; buried 17th February 1735/36.

JOSEPH PLATT. Baptised 23rd March 1739/40; buried 22nd June 1740.

GEORGE PLATT. Baptised 26th July 1741; buried 5th February 1741/42.

MARY PLATT. Baptised 6th February 1742/43.

THOMAS PLATT (1727-1789)

The elder son of James Platt, clothier, of Thorns, by his first wife Ann (nee Platt), Thomas was baptised at St Chad on 1st October 1727. Described as a clothier, he was living in 1752 at the house known as Lee. The Saddleworth register contains an entry dated 8th December 1752 for SARAH, daughter of Helen Bentley of Standedge, spinster, by Thomas Platt of Lee, and shortly afterwards on 5th January 1753, Thomas married HELEN BENTLEY at the parish church. Helen, who was born at Knar and baptised at St Chad on 20th January 1733/34, was the daughter of Matthew and Sarah Bentley.

Thomas and Helen (or Ellin) occupied several houses during their married life. In 1754 they were at Stone-edge (= Standedge), in 1757 at Deanshaw fold (Denshaw), in 1760 they were probably at Haugh Hey, and from at least 1761 to 1769 or later, at Hey House. Thomas was also connected with Whams Inn, Denshaw, and it was here that he died in 1789. Whams Inn was quite close to Hey House, a property which seems to have been occupied for a time by Ammon Wrigley and his parents, according to Mr Sam Seville (1984).

The family of Thomas and Helen consisted of the following children, all but one being baptised at St Chad, Saddleworth.

SARAH (Illegitimate, see earlier). Sarah herself had an illegitimate daughter ELLEN by James Wrigley of Denshaw. This child was born at Hey House and baptised on 7th November 1773 at St Chad.

MARY PLATT, born at Stone-edge (Standedge), baptised 15th December 1754. Mary had an illegitimate son JAMES who was buried at St Chad (from Whams Inn) on 4th February 1779. A list dated 11 October 1761 of persons denounced excommunicate appears in the St Chad Parish Vestry Book. It contains the name of Mary Platt, of Hey-house, spinster.

JOHN PLATT, born at Deanshaw fold, baptised 12th June 1757. A weaver by trade, he married BETTY DYSON of Oldham Chapelry on 30th December 1784, at Rochdale.
Following their marriage they lived at Slences (1786) and Ogden Edge (1788-1789), both places being in Rochdale parish.

It should be noted that a John Platt of Slackcote married a Betty Nield of New Tame, on 1st October 1784, at Saddleworth.

They lived at New Tame and baptised their children at St Thomas, Friarmere (Heights Chapel).

HANNAH PLATT, born at Haugh Hey, near Odgen, baptised 4th May 1760, at Holy Trinity, Shaw.

JAMES PLATT, bron at Hey-house, baptised 4th April 1762; buried 3rd March 1763.

JAMES PLATT, born at Hey-house, baptised 12th February 1764 (see under separate heading).

JOSEPH PLATT, born at Hey-house, baptised 24th August 1769; buried 17th November 1769.

In addition to the above children, Thomas Platt had illegitimate twins, JOSEPH and MARY, by Rachel Buckley, spinster, of Dowry. They were baptised at St Chad on 15th January 1762, and the first named, Joseph, was buried there on 16th February 1762. (Rachel, who was baptised on 5th October 1735, was the daughter of Edmund and Ann Buckley of Bowk-house).

Helen Platt died on 1st September 1769, in her 36th year, only a week after her son Joseph was baptised, and she was buried at St Chad on 9th September. Thomas Platt died some twenty years after his wife, on 9th September 1789. Their grave is in the old yard at Saddleworth Church and the memorial inscription tells us that Thomas was of Whams Inn. In addition to Thomas and Ellin (Helen) the grave is the resting place of Betty, wife of John Platt, who died March 1819, and John Platt who died on 4th December 1825, in his 74th year. It is assumed that John was the son of Thomas and Helen although it will be noted that his age was incorrectly recorded on the gravestone.

JAMES PLATT (1764-1815)

The fifth legitimate child of Thomas Platt and his wife Helen (nee Bentley), James, was baptised at St Chad on 12th February 1764, the year in which James Hargreaves invented the spinning-jenny. On 4th January 1787 James Platt married BETTY GARSIDE (or Gartside) of Cherry Clough, his abode at the time being Whams. For a short time after their marriage James and Betty continued to live at Whams, their first child being born here in 1788. By June 1790 they had made their home at Ogden Edge, Butterworth, in the parish of Rochdale, and just over the county boundary from Saddleworth. James, who became a cotton manufacturer and farmer, presumably occupied the property now known as Ogden Edge Farm which was built in 1777, or one of the adjacent properties. The present owner informed me that his deeds refer to the Platt family

James's wife Betty, who was the daughter of John Gartside of Cherry Clough, gave birth to a son JERRY four years before her marriage to James Platt. This child was baptised on 5th March 1783, at Delph Independent Chapel. After her marriage,

Betty had at least a further eight children by her husband James, although only six have been found in the registers. Their first child was baptised at St Thomas, Friarmere, but then for some years the family were associated with Delph Independent Chapel. Later however, they became members of the Baptist Church at Ogden, which was formed in 1783, having been founded by a few members of the congregation of the Baptist Chapel in Town Meadows, Rochdale. A brief history of this church is given by Mr J Corfield (1983).

The known children of James and Betty Platt are as follows:

HANNAH PLATT, born at Wham, baptised 19th July 1788 at St Thomas, Friarmere; married JOHN GARTSIDE of Coldgreave, parish of Rochdale, on 21st May 1810, at Rochdale. Her husband John Gartside (1786-1859) and her mother Betty (nee Gartside) were both descendants of Ralph Gartside (d. 1658), yeoman, of Denshaw. John was the son of Benjamin Gartside (1753-1834) of Coldgreave, a woollen weaver, and his wife Ann (nee Dearden). He came under the influence of James Hargreaves, who started a school at Ogden, and he became relatively well educated for those days at the Ogden school. He learned a most beautiful copper-plate handwriting, could also write and presumably read music, and he became a book-keeper by profession. John was baptised in 1808 in the river Roche, at the age of twenty-two. Soon after his marriage he became a deacon of the Baptist church and served in that capacity for over forty years. Following their marriage John and Hannah Gartside resided in turn at Haugh and then Hamer on the north side of Rochdale. Hannah died of the plague (cholera) in Liverpool, on 6th August 1833, aged 45, and was buried there in the cemetry of St James' Mount Church. Her death is recorded on a gravestone at Ogden. A terrible epidemic of cholera swept across Europe in 1831, and eventually reached Britain,where it killed thousands of people in 1832. We can only speculate as to why Hannah went to Liverpool, but it may have been to see off an emigrant relative. John Gartside died at Henry Street, Rochdale, on 4th July 1859. Incidentally, Irad Gartside Hewkin (1875-1964), who formed such a valuable collection of books etc on Saddleworth, was a descendant of the Gartsides of Coldgreave on his mother's side. His 2 x great-grandmother Sarah Gartside (b. 1755) was an aunt of John Gartside (b. 1786). I am indebted to Mrs Betty Savage of Rushwick, Worcestershire, for information on the Gartsides of Coldgreave and for sending me a photograph of her 2 x great-grandfather, the above John Gartside.

The following children were presumably all born at Ogden Edge:

SALLY PLATT, baptised 29th June 1790, at Delph Independent Chapel.

JAMES PLATT, baptised 4th February 1792, at Delph Independent Chapel (see under separate heading).

JOHN PLATT, baptised 30th March 1794, at Delph Independent Chapel; probably married HANNAH SHAW on 3rd June 1816, at Rochdale, and became a schoolmaster by profession. Living

at Broadmeadow (1817) and Cherry Clough (1819). Known to have had a son EDWIN and a daughter SARAH.

MARY PLATT, possibly registered at Ogden Baptist; married ABRAHAM HENTHORN of Whiteslack, Ogden Edge, in 1818 at Rochdale.

BETTY PLATT, possibly registered at Ogden Baptist; married CHARLES BROADBENT of Old Field or New Tame, in 1817 at Rochdale.

ELLEN PLATT, born 15th February 1803, registered 9th March 1803, at Ogden Baptist.

JOSEPH PLATT, born 15th July 1805, registered 31st July 1805, at Ogden Baptist (see under separate heading).

James Platt died at Ogden Edge on 23rd March 1815, aged 51 years, and was buried on 27th March at Ogden Baptist burial ground. The burial of his widow, Betty, has not been found in the registers. James made his will on 17th March 1815, leaving the profits on one half of his estate to his wife during her lifetime. To Jeremiah Garside, natural son of his wife, he bequeathed £10. The rest of his property was to be distributed between his four daughters and three sons in certain proportions. Sons James and John were appointed executors and their signatures appear as witnesses, together with those of Jeremaih Garside, James Hargreaves, Jesse Ainsworth and Sarah Shaw, who made her mark. Although ill at the time, James was able to sign his will in person.

L N Kidd

(To be continued)

BARRING-OUT

Mrs Bärbel Grayson has sent the editor a photocopy of an article in the March 1994 edition of "Report", the magazine of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, written by Martin Baggoley and detailing the old practice of "barring-out". This occurred when pupils, in order to enjoy more holidays than their head teacher was prepared to allow, took control of their school by force, barricading the doors and windows against their teacher until he conceded negotiations on their demands.

This custom seems to have been widely practised until greater external control of schools led to its disappearance during the nineteenth century. It was often successful, with extra holidays being gained, but an especially headstrong and determined schoolmaster could defeat it. This happened at Delph in the 1840s as the following extract from Mr Baggoley's article recalls:

> "There had been a history of barring-out in Delph, but none had taken place for many years. One year, the boys and girls decided to deny entry to their master, Mr Rooking, in an attempt to gain extra summer holidays.
>
> One of the pupils later recalled the aftermath. 'To a man who had exercised undisputed sway amongst the village children for many many years, this was no light matter, and the schoolmaster's anger was extreme. He condescended to parley, however, through the keyhole and promised a "good holiday" if we would let him in. The door was then unjambed, unbolted and unlocked; the schoolmaster walked in red with indignation, and followed by the troops of scholars waiting outside. Hopes beat high in the breasts of the youngsters as Owd Rooking called to the desk our captain who had initiated these proceedings and had negotiated with the schoolmaster through the keyhole. A few angry words, a lash with the cane, and dismissal from the school, instant and for ever ("perpetual holiday" Owd Rooking called it) were what he got for being our captain. To the rest of the school no holiday came, however. The week or ten days which had in former years been accorded in the summer time was discontinued, and never afterwards renewed so far as I know, so that the youngsters might always have in mind the folly of rebellion against a schoolmaster's authority.' "

Mrs Grayson wonders if any member knows anything more of this incident, or about the master, Mr Rooking. If so please write to her at MARDEN HOUSE, 37 HUDDERSFIELD ROAD, DENSHAW, OLDHAM, OL3 5SB, or send a letter to the Editor for publication in the "Bulletin".

MICKLEHURST LOOP FINALE

I cannot remember why I became fascinated by railways, but I am sure that being born in a particular house on Pickhill Lane in Uppermill had much to do with it. The rear of number 28 happened to be a couple of hundred yards away from the double-track line that the London and North Western Railway had built in 1885 as relief for its heavily-congested main Manchester-Huddersfield route, opened in 1849 along the other side of the Tame Valley. Some of my earliest memories are looking from this house at steam locomotives and their long trains of loose-coupled wagons, battling upgrade out of Lancashire and Cheshire, or drifting downhill away from the West Riding. It seems only natural that I was soon badgering my father to buy me an Ian Allan "Locospotters" book, armed with which I kept an ever more watchful eye on what, in railway nomenclature, was known as the 'Micklehurst Loop'.

At this time, the mid-'sixties, there was still much to be seen on it, although, as I gradually began to realise, traffic was in steady decline. E M Johnson in "Railways in and Around the Manchester Suburbs" (Foxline Publishing, 1989) records that ten or so years before, in 1952, 37 freight trains a day had been timetabled to use the Loop in the down (northbound) direction alone, presumably with a corresponding number making the journey the opposite way. This - by 1994 standards - staggering total, reflects not only the importance of railways to the industries of the north at that time, but also emphasises that the Micklehurst Loop was essentially a route for goods, the bulk of passenger trains using the main line through Greenfield and Saddleworth stations instead. When in 1963 I first stood for hours by the Loop, spotting book, "Jubbly" or "Bazooka Joes" in hand, a lot of this frantic activity had disappeared, but gaps between trains seemed short, even to the limited patience of a six year old.

My usual venue was opposite the large, brick goods warehouse that stood between the cricket field and Grove Road in Uppermill, near the station house that marked the location of the village station, which had closed as long ago as 1917. The line here was rising steeply towards Diggle, forcing locomotives to provide glorious displays of smoke and steam as they shouted past with northbound freight trains. Often I and my companions would be invited into the small signalbox that stood here, the signalman keeping a watchful eye for roving officialdom as he let us pull levers under his strict direction; the distant-signal at Ryefields, about half a mile away in the direction of Diggle, unfailingly defeated my utmost efforts to move it.

Whilst the main attraction at this spot was the through traffic, the small goods yard served by the warehouse provided its own interest. Each day, in the late morning, the "pick-up" goods from Oldham to Stalybridge via Diggle would come into view on the gentle curve from Church Road, to be brought to a stand by the outer home signal in the cutting on the Greenfield side of the bridge taking Rush Hill Road over the railway. The Lees-based Ivatt 2MT 2-6-0 (we called them 'coffee-pots') would

draw forward with a few wagons and then push them vigourously under the bridge and into the yard. Sometimes the technique of 'fly-shunting' would be employed, an exciting spectacle, as the locomotive first gave a hefty push to a wagon, then braked sharply, allowing its charge to drift into a siding where a shunter would bring it to a halt by deftly applying his long pole to its brake.

Now and again through freight trains would pause by Rush Hill bridge whilst the engine detached a few trucks and backed them into the yard. Once, in 1964, I saw a whole train arrive, providing the small staff at the warehouse with several days' work; they would uncouple each wagon in turn, release its brake, then propel it by hand into the shed where a single line of rails served an unloading platform. Perhaps the Admiralty depot in Delph, a regular user of the Uppermill facilities, had chartered this special?

Running between the goods shed and the through lines was a refuge siding in which northbound freight trains could be "looped" to allow faster-moving traffic to pass towards Diggle. As most workings were freights, which lumbered past at no more than twenty miles per hour, this facility was rarely used, but on one occasion in the autumn of 1964, I remember a Stanier "8F" 2-8-0 and train biding its time there in the dusk as a "Peak" diesel-electric rushed disdainfully by with the evening Liverpool-Newcastle express that often used the Loop.

It was far more common for trains to be halted at Uppermill when travelling in the opposite direction, as they waited for preceding workings to clear the section to Friezland (the London and North Western Railway knew where the real Friezland is, if the Whiteheads of Royal George Mills did not!). With the cheerful connivance of the signalman this often led to an invitation to visit the cab of the engine. To be lifted into the hot, oily space between boiler and tender, illuminated by the fierce glow from the fire, was an intoxicating experience for a small boy. The driver and fireman were usually eager to entertain their young visitor; on one occasion they repeatedly sounded the whistle for my enjoyment, much to the perplexity of the guard in the brakevan, who eventually walked the whole length of the train to enquire of the crew, "what the b...y hell do you think you are doing?"

Similar frustration must have been felt by my teachers at Lee Street Junior School in Uppermill, whenever my attention wandered from the three "Rs" to the spectacle of a hard-working steam locomotive crossing the bridge spanning Station Road. Having charge of me in the downstairs classroom was easier for them, as here the view of the line was obscured. One day, however, Mrs Platt punished my chattering by exiling me for a spell to the storeroom adjacent to the playground; it is remarkable how often after this I would become garrulous and unruly at the first sound of a northbound freight.

No guile was needed at home where my enjoyment of the trains was unimpeded. My memories are especially vivid here of those locomotives that carried names, such being relatively rare

on the Micklehurst Loop, on which goods engines predominated. It was useless to share news of my sightings with my mother, whose invincible disinterest in railways was matched only by her disbelief when I assured her that "Thomas Hardy", "Charles Dickens" or one of his fellows had just visited Uppermill. Mere scepticism turned to incredulity on the occasion when I informed her that "Gnu" (or "guh-noo" as I pronounced it) had that very hour gone by our house; Edward Thompson's "B1" 4-6-0s, some with the names of South African antelope, were evidently beyond her experience.

For several years I recorded all such observations on nothing more substantial than a grubby piece of paper, which I quickly discarded after transcribing its precious numbers into my equally grubby "Locospotters" books. Then, by some happy inspiration, my parents bought me an Ian Allan "Trains Diary" as a present for Christmas 1965. From 1st January 1966 I set about writing down my observations of locomotives and traffic on a daily basis. It was none too soon that I did this as, unknown to me, the Loop was in its final year, closure being effected in the autumn.

Although my technique of recording was as erratic and unsystematic as one might expect from a nine year old, reading the entries almost three decades on gives a reasonably comprehensive picture of the line's traffic and locomotives in its last months.

The survival of steam is an aspect of the Loop well captured by the diary. The end of steam on British Railways (B R), foreshadowed in the Modernisation Plan of 1955, was only two years away, and many areas of the country had already lost it completely. But my diary makes it clear that although diesels were common on the Loop in 1966, between half and two-thirds of traffic was still entrusted to steam. Common were ex-London Midland and Scottish Railway (LMSR) "Black Five" 4-6-0s and "8F" 2-8-0s, and BR "Standard" types such as "Britannia" Pacifics, Class 5MT 4-6-0s and the mighty "9F" 2-20-0s. Also to be seen were former LMS Hughes/Fowler "Crab" 2-6-0s, post-war (ex-LMS) Ivatt 2-6-0s, "Jubilee" 4-6-0s (also ex-LMS), Thompson "B1" 4-6-0s and the utilitarian but ruggedly attractive "Austerity" 2-8-0s, built for the War Department during World War Two.

Finding the day-to-day activity of coal, 'mixed' freight and parcels trains somewhat humdrum, I tended to record only those locomotives and workings that were out of the ordinary in some way. For example, whenever a train was powered by two locomotives - the spectacular practice of 'double-heading' - I would write down the fact.

Double-heading was relatively common on the Loop as a means of combating its fierce gradients in the northbound direction. Locomotives of widely different types and ages were paired, as the following instances exemplify:

Thursday 13.1.66: "Austerity" 2-8-0 90642 and "B1" 4-6-0 61173, northbound mixed freight.
Friday, 21.1.66: "B1" 61224 'SIR ALEXANDER ERSKINE-HILL' and "8F" 2-8-0 48292, northbound mixed freight.

Tuesday, 16.8.66: "Crab" 2-6-0 42765 and "9F" 2-10-0 92157, northbound oil tankers.

The last-mentioned train would have been en route between the Shell refinery at Stanlow, near Ellesmere Port, and one of several distribution terminals in the north-east of England, this being a substantial flow of traffic which often demanded double-heading through Saddleworth because of the sheer weight of the loads. The Standard "9F" 2-10-0s allocated to it quite often took on a pilot for the assault of the Pennines. On Saturday, 18th June I saw two instances of this, both involving a "Black Five" 4-6-0 as helper to the "9F", and each adding a touch of sound and fury to my weekend.

Southbound trains were less apt to be double-headed because the falling gradients from Diggle did not require this. Now and again, however, trains which had taken on a pilot for the hard climb from Huddersfield to Marsden would for some reason retain it into Saddleworth. Often, when this happened, the leading engine was removed at Uppermill in the way I witnessed from Rush Hill bridge on Tuesday 4th January. That morning an up goods train was brought to a halt at Uppermill's outer home signal to allow a "Black Five" 45095 to part company with "Austerity" 90721, then run 'light' engine back towards Huddersfield.

Much less common as a method of giving additional power to heavy freights was "banking", whereby the extra locomotive pushed at the rear of the train. I recorded this interesting spectacle on a few occasions during the year. Monday, 19th September was typical; on that day an "Austerity" 2-8-0 clambered past Uppermill with a "Black Five" straining at the back to help it and train to Diggle.

The appearance of locomotives not normally seen on the Loop was another cause of me reaching for my pen. On Wednesday 2nd February for example, post-war Peppercorn "K1" 2-6-0 62005

Pending the inevitable, some steam locomotives found themselves traversing the Loop in 1966 with the aid of the hated diesels. Saturday 25th June furnished an instance of this, 92046 - as a "9F" 2-10-0 one of the most powerful steam engines ever to run in Britain - having to suffer the indignity of its freight train being banked by English Electric Type "4" diesel, D395.

The use of diesel power on the line steadily increased as 1966 progressed. It was painful to realise that old favourites were being ousted by this, but now and again a rearguard action was mounted. Ash Wednesday, 23rd February, was one such occasion, when from Lee Street School I watched no fewer than three of the almost extinct "Jubilee" class, introduced by the LMS in 1935, climb past with northbound freights. All three, 45562 "ALBERTA", 45647 "STURDEE" and 45694 "BELLEROPHON", were in a pristine state that was most uncommon by this time.

Despite such occasional glories I sensed that the Loop was doomed. There were many signs of this, such as the previously unheard-of rerouting of some freight trains onto the main line between Stalybridge and Diggle. One event that struck me as particularly ominous at the time was the appearance on Wednesday 13th April of Ivatt "2MT" 2-6-0 46449 with an inspection saloon, the ensemble pausing at Uppermill whilst its load of grim-faced officials examined the crumbling state of the bridge spanning Church Road.

There had been rumours of closure for a number of years, in part because of the condition of the line's brick bridges and viaducts, but although the goods yards at Uppermill and Friezland were abandoned around the end of 1964, the line clung on as a through route. (The claim of official sources that it closed on 7th September 1964 is <u>not</u> correct). As 1966 wore on a portentous quiet descended and I would watch each of the now-infrequent trains with the growing consciousness that it might be the last. Finally, after an unusually busy week which had falsely raised my hopes, the end came. My diary entry for Sunday 30th October reads simply "LINE CLOSED TODAY". The last train I recorded on the Loop was the morning Stockport - Leeds parcels, which had passed by on the previous Friday behind "Britannia" Pacific 70026 "POLAR STAR".

Demolition of the line was not slow in coming. Around the summer of 1967 a class "08" diesel shunter appeared unexpectedly with a track-lifting train which it hauled as far as Ryefields. Over the next couple of days some of the southbound line in Uppermill was taken away. Then all was quiet until 23rd September 1969, on which date contractors started to rip up the remaining lines in earnest; by the 25th their work in Uppermill was almost done, the signalbox at Rush Hill disappearing with the track and signals. The bridge over Pickhill Brook was also demolished around this time, other structures following piecemeal. For example the goods shed at Uppermill was knocked down in mid-July 1973, a swimming baths being erected on the site of the adjacent goods yard two years later. In 1971 the southernmost of the pair of mighty brick viaducts at Greenfield disappeared, its companion

over Greenbridge Lane following in the summer of 1975. The last surviving building on the Loop in Saddleworth, the goods shed at Friezland, ultimately succumbed in February 1983, after several years' limbo during which an attempt was made to turn it into a haven for preserved buses.

Today the Micklehurst Loop survives only as the route of, in modern jargon, a 'linear park', that extends with one or two breaks from Stalybridge to Ryefields in Uppermill, finishing at the point where in 1985 the southern entrance to Butterhouse Tunnel was buried under tons of earth removed from bulldozed embankments elsewhere. It is a fine amenity, much-used by walkers and horse-riders, and is a model of good landscaping. However, I am glad I knew what came before it ....

Michael Fox

The Warehouse at Uppermill taken about 1910 from the bridge carrying Rush Hill Road over the railway.
(Peter Fox Collection)

"FAIRBOTTOM BOBS"

I would never dignify what I do with oil paints in order to say "I paint". "Dabble" perhaps: "paint" never. But it was this interest that first brought me to an acquaintance with Fairbottom Bobs.

In the old schoolroom at the Fairbottom Methodist Chapel I saw an original painting of all that was left standing of a Newcomen pumping engine after it had been out of use for many years. My father was a textile engineer and it was therefore not unexpected that I should find an interest, that has lasted over many years, in that wonderful piece of machinery.

If I told all I know about Fairbottom Bobs there would still be many words to say, and I shall try only to arouse an interest that some of our readers may wish to pursue. And there is indeed quite a lot to be discovered. Mrs Bowman's book on the history of Ashton-under-Lyne refers to it, and there has been some correspondence and a number of articles in our local newspapers, the "Reporter" and the "Oldham Chronicle", over many years.

The engine was one of the earliest steam engines to be in full industrial use, and there are varying dates given for its creation. Some sources say that it was made in 1705, but others say it could not have been before 1712 since that was the year in which Thomas Newcomen made his first steam engine.

At one time the engine was attributed to Watt, but his first engine was not patented before 1769, and by that time there were many Newcomen engines in service, especially in the North of England. An article in the Oldham Chronicle of July 1929 refers to 1829 as the year when the engine ceased to perform its task of pumping water out of the coal mine, which provided coal for the Parkbridge Iron Works owned by Samuel and Hannah Lees.

The engine is referred to as being an "Atmospheric" engine, part of the power coming from atmospheric pressure. For those of our readers who may have engineering interests the principle may be simply described as follows. Steam entered the cylinder, pushing the piston upwards: water was then poured into the cylinder, condensing the steam and creating a vacuum below the piston; the top of the cylinder was open, allowing atmospheric pressure to push the piston down. This was the complete cycle of piston movement. A large wooden beam, balanced on a central stone pillar, was connected to the piston, being forced up and down. This beam was connected at the other end to the pump at the bottom of the mine, which drew the flood water out. Thus the two ends of the beam were 'bobbing' up and down, hence the name, Fairbottom Bobs. Our forbears were not keen on wasting energy, so the 'bobbing' action was connected to a line which operated a bird scarer, known as a 'ricker', in a nearby corn field. After being in use for about 100 years, more modern machinery came into use and "Bobs" was allowed to fall into ruin.

However, after another 100 years rescue came, in the person of another famous engineer, Henry Ford, who, on a visit to England, bought the engine, and had it transported in 1929, lock, stock and barrel, to his engineering museum in Detroit, Michigan, USA, where it proudly resides to this day.

Before its transportation to Detroit the engine was offered to the local council, who declined the offer. In 1993 our present council discussed the possibility of trying to get it restored to England, but the cost was thought to be prohibitive. In that same year, the Curator of the Detroit museum, on his honeymoon in England, visited the original site. The possibility of a replica being constructed for display in Ashton town centre is being considered.

The site of the engine, now overgrown, can be visited from the Medlock Valley Visitor Centre, whose warden Paul Walker, has been very helpful in supplying material for these notes. I am also indebted to Miss Peggy Laister, who lives at Fairbottom, and knew the engine as a child; Mr David Searle; Miss Sally Furness, Ashton's Tourism Development Officer; Mrs Bowman's history of Ashton-under-Lyne; the "Reporter"; and the "Oldham Chronicle".

Gerald Royle

THE PEOPLE OF BRIDGE HOUSE

Dannie Wright has combed the parish and non-conformist registers to find out about some of the people who lived at Bridge House in Dobcross, many years before he himself was born there. He emphasises that his researches have not been systematic or ever intended for publication, but feels that family historians in particular will find interest in his notes. The references to the famous Platt family, of textile machinery manufacturing fame, will be noted.

CHILD	BAPTISED	BORN	PARENT/S
Matty Winterbottom	1.7.1787	-	Ann and Robert Winterbottom (clothier)
Samuel Ogden	19.4.1789	-	Betty and James Ogden (clothier)
Henry Platt	?.4.1793	-	Alice and John Platt
Mary Winterbottom	29.5.1795	-	Betty and James Winterbottom
Abraham Winterbottom	3.6.1796	-	" " "
Joseph Platt	6.2.1798	-	Alice and John Platt
Mary Kershaw	14.3.1800	11.1.1800	Eliza and John Kershaw
?	?. 1806	-	John Hall (blacksmith)
?	11.11.1810	-	? Broadbent (blacksmith)
?	8.12.1811	-	John Mallalieu (joiner)
?	30.8.1812	-	Nancy and John Platt (blacksmith)
Jesse Buckley	12.3.1814	6.1.1814	Alice Buckley (nee Turner) and Robert Buckley (stonemason)
John Platt	10.4.1814	-	Nancy and John Platt (blacksmith)
?	22.11.1814	-	Henry Shrigley
?	?. 1814	-	John Hall (blacksmith)

CHILD	BAPTISED	BORN	PARENT/S
Thomas Platt	5.5.1815	-	Sarah and William Platt (clothier)
David Buckley	30.11.1815	27.9.1815	(as Jesse Buckley above)
?	10.3.1816	-	Abraham Hall (blacksmith)
Joseph Platt	10.3.1816	-	Sarah and Henry Platt (machine maker)
James Platt	31.3.1816	-	Nancy and John Platt (blacksmith)
?	?. 1817	-	John Hall (blacksmith)
?	12.7.1818	-	Betty and James Mallalieu (cordwainer)
?	?.5.1819	-	Isaac Hall (machine maker)
?	?. 1820	-	Betty and James Mallalieu (cordwainer)
?	7.10.1821	-	John Hall (blacksmith)
?	16.6.1822	-	Nancy and John Platt (blacksmith)
Selina	18.8.1822	-	—
?	23.10.1822	-	Irad Gartside
?	13.4.1823	-	Julia and James Schofield (clothier)
?	8.2.1824	-	Alice and John Schofield
?	22.2.1824	-	Ann and Joseph Platt (joiner)
?	18.4.1824	-	John Platt (blacksmith)
?	18.4.24	-	Ann and Irad Gartside (clothier)
?	?. 1824	-	Samuel Hall (labourer)
?	5.3.1825	-	John Greave
?	19.6.1825	-	Hugh Ryan (machine-maker)
?	28.10.1826	-	James Buckley

CHILD	BAPTISED	BORN	PARENTS
?	?. 1827	-	Irad Gartside
?	?. 1829	-	Hugh Ryan (machine maker)
?	7.6.1835	-	Isaac Hall (machine maker)

* * * * * * * * *

Mr Wright adds that his family lived at Bridge House for at least fifty years. Just how many others have done so is suggested by the Census enumerator's returns for 1851: at that date there were fifty-seven individuals here in fourteen households. (For more information on the inhabitants of this building, see the "Bulletin", Volume 24, Number 1.)

Dannie is keen to help others who would like to research the parish registers but are unable to do so in person. Please contact him about this at: 127 Norman Street, Middleton, Manchester, M24 2JL.

Bridge House

Saddleworth in Wartime - Part Two

Further information has come to hand since the article in the last Bulletin, Vol 24 No 2, thanks mainly to people who contacted me. Further information is essential!

Rifle Ranges

1. One contact recalls the target bunker on Wharmton being built around April 1945, and it was not therefore used in the war.
2. The rifle range in Springhead Community Centre is still used by private clubs.

Home Guard Bases

There was a base at Saddleworth Golf Club where one room and a telephone extension were made available.

Air Raid Shelters

1. One contact tells me that the concrete slab in St Chad's playing fields was a Bandstand, and not a shelter or the decontamination building.
2. The children from Friezland School used a cellar in the soap works at Charlotte, High Grove Road, until brick walls were built in the corridors at each end of the school.
3. The air raid shelter in Springhead was at the corner of Woodend Street and Greenwood Street.
4. Two other shelters which apparently still exist, are at Slackcote - bottom of Horest Lane, and alongside the Denshaw Vale Mill.

Air Defence

1. The ARP central office was initially in the Council Offices and then the Mechanics Hall, Uppermill.
2. There was an ARP post in the cellar of 12, Mossley Road, Grasscroft, and a sandbagged observation post nearby in the angle where Mossley Road meets Oldham Road.

Prisoners of War

One contact has questioned whether Prisoners of War were actually housed at Ashway Gap. He recalls Italian POWs being billeted at Greenfield Paper Mill where they also worked. Other contacts have told me that the POWs from Ashway Gap were used to clear snow from the roads.

Evacuees

1. Evacuees also came to Saddleworth from Brighton, London and the Channel Islands.
2. Evacuated families were housed in the property currently known as 'Brookdale', Oldham Road, Grasscroft (a large house at Summershades corner).

General

1. There was a First Aid Post in the Chemist Shop, High Street, Uppermill.
2. The Home Guard guarded the Standedge railway tunnels and ventilation shafts.
3. There was a Churchill Restaurant (Food Kitchen) in the Uppermill Methodist Sunday School.
4. Wellington Mill, Greenfield, was a naval store depot.

Anecdotes

1. Apparently one of the guards on the Standedge Tunnel, on hearing a noise, twice made the challenge to halt and identify themselves, but got no response. He was just preparing to shoot when he realised that it was a sheep!
2. One winter's night the Springhead Detachment of the Home Guard was, as usual, playing cards in the base at 1267 Huddersfield Road, Scouthead, when a report was received that two young men with foreign accents were on Platting Road and were asking directions. The two youngest guards were sent to investigate but could not find anyone. A more thorough search was made with the corporal, and two men were spotted sleeping under a wall near Scouthead Church. The corporal ordered "fix bayonets" and the two were woken. No one could understand their accent and in the fracas that followed, one of the men was bayoneted in the backside. The two men were marched back to the base and handed over to the Police. It later transpired that the two young men were Geordies walking to Liverpool to seek work on a ship!

Kevin Lawton
7 Woodhead Close
Lees
Oldham
OL4 3 JS

Tel: 061 624 0010 (evenings)

Postscript

Two other aspects of wartime have come to my attention, the first during a visit in September to Eden Camp, Malton, North Yorkshire. Eden Camp is a Modern History Theme Museum covering 'The People's War 1939-1945', and is housed in huts actually used during the war as a POW camp. The first inmates are recorded as having been escorted from Oldham! There could have been a link with the Glen Mill featured in the last Bulletin, but the Museum Director of Eden Camp has no information at all regarding this. Can anyone help?

The second aspect concerns an article in the Sunday Telegraph on the 2nd October 1994, when it was announced that there is to be a national survey to identify all wartime installations. The survey will start in April 1995, and it is hoped that local organisations will assist.

LETTERS

Dear Mr Fox

The account of "Glen Mill - A Prisoner of War Camp" in the Summer Bulletin 1994 brought back memories to me.

During 1944/45 I lived in Lees and occasionally saw large groups of German prisoners arrogantly marching through the streets of Lees singing marching songs.

Up to 1944 I had spent the whole of my life between Mossley and Saddleworth. On the 14th May 1940 (I was eighteen years old), in response to Winston Churchill's appeal, I was among the first to register at Mossley Police Station for the 35th Cheshire Regiment's Local Defence Volunteers (later Home Guard). I was gradually promoted to the rank of sergeant. Although I later moved to Lees and Oldham, I still remained in Mossley Home Guard, cycling there several times a week.

Late one evening I was on duty in Upper Mossley when a message came through from the police that two prisoners had escaped from the Glen Mill. We immediately started to patrol Lees Road. Shortly afterwards we received a further message that there had been a mass break out from the prison. I then decided to alert our company commander, Captain Tanner, who immediately called out the platoon. At dawn, after spending all night combing the whole area between Mossley and Grotton, another message came through to say that the prisoners had been found hiding within the prison compound in the mill chimney awaiting a chance to escape.

Yours sincerely

W Donald Kershaw

* * * * * * * * * * *

GLEN MILL POW CAMP - SOME NOTES FROM "THE TIMES"

The most fascinating article on 176 German Prisoner of War Camp, Glen Mill in Lees (Saddleworth Historical Society Bulletin Vol 24 No 2) by Walter James, prompted me to look through the index of "The Times" to see if any items were included under the conditions of war-time censorship and secrecy then in operation. The following are of interest:

Tuesday 16 January 1945

"Two German prisoners, members of the Luftwaffe, who escaped from a camp in Lancashire on Saturday, were recaptured on Sunday night at Ripponden, near Halifax."

The prevailing weather conditions might be judged from a

paragraph lower down the same column,

"Snowdrifts up to 15 feet deep were recorded on the Yorkshire moors and the Pennine range last Wednesday after heavy falls. In the North Yorkshire dales a depth of 14 inches was registered and the village of Barden in Wensleydale was isolated by deep drifts for the fourth day."

The next mention probably refers to the aftermath of the above escapes and certainly refers to the events mentioned by Walter James.

Monday 12 February 1945

"Prisoner of War Camp Disturbance
One Man Killed and Four Wounded"

"The War Office announces that on February 7th, after the escape of seven German prisoners of war from a camp in the north-west of England, there was a disturbance in the camp, during which, after due warning had been given, it became necessary to use firearms, with the result that one prisoner was killed and four others were wounded. A court of inquiry is being held to investigate the facts."

"An inquest was held in camera at Oldham and representatives of the Press were not allowed to attend. There were, however, present, the chief constable, deputy chief constable and other police officers, besides military officers of the camps and a small party of German prisoners of war who were under armed escort. Evidence of identification was given so that the funeral could take place, and the proceedings were then adjourned. The camp where the trouble occurred is a disused cotton spinning mill, accommodating about 5,000 prisoners. "Many of them, in their early twenties, are the worst and most fanatical type of Nazi," the Press were told, "and hardly a week passes without some kind of trouble." "

Some of the escapees managed, in the vocabulary of books and films of the period (but usually referring to the other side!), 'a home run.'

Wednesday 21 August 1946

"Prisoners Recaptured in Germany"

Two former German naval ratings who escaped from a camp in Oldham have been recaptured in Germany. Oldham police have been notified; but no information has been given about the methods they used. When last seen in the camp they were wearing German naval uniforms. It is not known whether they can speak English."

Were these escapees ones that got away in January 1945? Or did they escape at a later date after the end of the war?

If the latter, it is not surprising that the POWs were becoming frustrated by their continuing detention. The war in Europe ended with VE Day on May 8 1945, not on what must have been a typing error in the account by James, March 8 1946, and many voices were being raised against the need to continue to hold German prisoners in the UK. In the same issued (21 August 1946) of "The Times" we can read a letter from the Bishop of Chichester calling for a Government plan to speed up the repatriation of German prisoners still in Britain, which were said to still number some 388,000. The Government was said to be reluctant because some 212,000 had been employed in gathering in the 1946 harvest, so how was it to be done next year?

My mother recalls having a table lamp reputedly made by the prisoners at Glen Mill. Do other readers remember such items? Does anyone still have one? I am in contact with a former prisoner at the Camp, now very much a friend of Saddleworth, and will try to obtain an account from his point of view.

Roderick A Smith

HEWKIN MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION AT UPPERMILL LIBRARY

WITHDRAWAL FOR MICROFILMING

The locally important I G Hewkin manuscript collection, held at Uppermill Library, is to be microfilmed. This will enable its content to be made more widely available to scholars, and reduce wear on the original material. A recent conservation survey has revealed that some items in the collection are becoming seriously affected both by handling damage, and by embrittlement of the highly acidic paper commonly found in collections of this date. It was therefore decided that urgent action was necessary to safeguard the collection from further deterioration and damage.

Between October 1994 and April 1995, items will be temporarily removed for microfilming. It is not anticipated that more than six items will be removed at one time, nor should any item be unavailable for more than two weeks. Potential users are therefore advised to contact Uppermill Library (0457 872777) in advance of a visit, to check availability of items. For more detailed information about the project, please contact Oldham's Archives Officer, Paul Sillitoe (061 911 4655).

Any temporary inconvenience is of course regretted, but we are sure that users will appreciate the necessity of this project.

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
Shaw Hall Bank Road
Greenfield
Oldham
OL3 7LF

Contributions

The "Bulletin's" aim is to reflect and encourage interest in all aspects of the history of Saddleworth. It relies on a regular supply of articles, letters, short reviews etc from members and others. Fresh material is required constantly and should be sent to the Editor, who is prepared to discuss ideas for articles with anyone considering preparing one. Articles need not be confined to subjects within Saddleworth's borders, but preferably should have some connection with the district.

The Winter "Bulletin" is due for publication on 31st January 1995. All material to the Editor by 15th January please.

Saddleworth Historical Society

PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS

SADDLEWORTH BUILDINGS
by W. John Smith
A comprehensive illustrated guide to the vernacular architecture of the district £15.00

CHERRY VALLEY CHRONICLES
transcribed by Maurice Dennett
Letters from Thomas Buckley & Family. Immigrants to Cherry Valley & Millbury. Massachusetts. USA. to his son Ralph Buckley & Family of Dobcross & Delph. Saddleworth. £16.50

PASSAGE THROUGH TIME
A History of Saddleworth Roads & Trackways
by Bernard Barnes £5.95

ST. ANNE'S, LYDGATE
The Story of a Pennine Parish
by Canon C. C. W. Airne £5.50

WITH AMMON WRIGLEY IN SADDLEWORTH
by Sam Seville
son-in-law and companion of the Saddleworth writer & poet £2.95

THE PROCESS OF ENCLOSURES IN SADDLEWORTH
1625 - 1834
by Alan J. Petford £2.40

THE SADDLEWORTH STORY
A WEA Publication
A collection of historical essays £1.80

LOCAL INTEREST TRAILS

Walks around Saddleworth; illustrated with notes on local history and landscape

1. DELPH, HEIGHTS & GRANGE	2. UPPERMILL
3. GREENFIELD	4. HUDDERSFIELD NARROW CANAL
5. GRASSCOFT	6. DENSHAW
7. DELPH	8. LYDGATE & GROTTON
9. DOBCROSS	

£0.75

MAPS

COUNTRYSIDE GUIDES
Large scale maps of the District showing public footpaths. amenities. and features of special interest: with notes on the local and naural history of Saddleworth.

SADDLEWORTH NORTH	£2.40
SADDLEWORTH SOUTH	£2.40

CHURCHYARD PLAN
A Plan of the Old Graveyard at Saddleworth Church £1.80

PAMPHLETS

ADDRESS TO THE VARIOUS CLASSES OF MEN IN SADDLEWORTH
by Daniel Nield
Shewing the necessity of supporting the Plan laid down for Augmenting the Price of Labour in the Woollen Manufactory - describing the Distressed situation of the Parish in 1795. £0.75

BOOKS

HUDDERSFIELD NARROW CANAL £3.60
A compendium of articles from the Saddleworth Historical Society Bulletins on the construction of the Canal.
Published for the Bicentenary 1794-1994.

Cheques made payable to Saddleworth Historical Society and forwarded to Mrs. E. Broadbent, 30 Beechfield, Grasscroft, Oldham. OL4 4EL

Please add 20% postal charges for deliveries outside Saddleworth.
U.K. Only.

SADDLEWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 1994

"On the Pennine hills in autumn,
When harvest winds are spent.
When the gold is on the bracken,
And silver on the bent." Ammon Wrigley.

The Society Revisited Brideshead on their Autumn Trip to Castle Howard and Scarborough during September. To remind our Overseas Members the castle is not really a castle in the historical sense, but a very large and very beautiful mansion. The lady guides were both charming and well informed. The great hall held a splendid log fire and the cafe with good coffee and cakes were equally well patronised .... And so to Scarborough where the weather was bracing. When you think about it the weather is almost always bracing on the East Coast. In fact, a cynic would say that it is travel brochure language for distinctly cool. Even so the South Bay was quite spectacular and watching the surf boarders demonstrating their skills helped pass the afternoon all too soon.

All in all a most popular and enjoyable outing for which our thanks are due to Audrey and James Carr for arranging this excellent event.

The opening lecture of the Winter Programme, 'The Work of the Greater Manchester Record Office', was given by its Curator, Maureen Patch. It turned out to be a treasure trove of random material selected from four miles of shelving. This ranged from a unique reference to the start of the Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester, the stained glass windows from St. Mary's Church, Oldham and the Archdeacon of Chester delineating the route of the Rochdale Canal in 1797. In 1898 came the Oldham Corporation Waterworks Plan whilst 1937 produced a planning application for the Black Horse Inn at Denshaw. It was a fine professional talk high lighted by a striking photograph of High Kinders at Greenfield and fully illustrated the strength of the Record Office established in 1976.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

The next lecture will be on Wednesday, 23rd November, 1994, 7.30 p.m., at the Museum, 'The Oldham Local Militia', by John Cleverley a Society Member and past Honorary Secretary of the Saddleworth Museum, who should prove to be a most popular speaker on the subject of which he has great personal knowledge.

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday, 7th December, 1994, at the Museum, 7.30 p.m. Nominations to the Committee are invited to be forwarded to the Secretary, Neil Barrow, Carr Farm Cottage, Diggle, Oldham. OL3 5ND, at least 10 days before the AGM.

The AGM will be followed by members' slides and if any member wishes to show their slides of interest, please contact Neil Barrow on 0457 876381. Mince pies and wine will follow as refreshments.

Another Society Member will produce the first lecture in the New Year on Monday 20th February, 1995 at the Museum, Uppermill, 7.30 p.m. 'Saddleworth to Marsden Packhorse Ways, Trade and Packmen', by Norman Peart of Grotton.

ARCHEAOLOGY MEETINGS.

7.45 for 8.0 p.m., at the Cross Keys Inn, Uppermill.

Wednesday 14th December, 1994. Wednesday 4th January, 1995.
Wednesday 1st February, 1995. Wednesday 1st March, 1995.
Wednesday 5th April, 1995.

Telephone Jim Carr 0457 873612 for details.

EVENTS AT THE MUSEUM.

Art Exhibitions.

5th November - 31st December.	Jeff Beaumont, Yorkshire Landscapes.

Temporary Displays.

1st October - 20th November.	Your Life & Teeth in Their Hands.
3rd December - January, 1995.	A Saddleworth Christmas.
Saturday 3rd & Sunday 4th December, 1994.	A Victorian Christmas Weekend.
Every second Wednesday of the month.	Coffee Morning and Bric a brac. 10.0 a.m. to noon.

W.E.A.

Lantern Slide Lecture by Peter Fox on Thursday 8th December, 1994, 7.15.p.m., at the Old School, Lee Street, Uppermill. Admission Free.

Saddleworth WEA Evening Lectures.

The W.E.A., is proposing to run a course of lectures on Monday evenings 7.15 p.m. to 9.15 p.m., from the 9th January, 1995. The six meetings at Saddleworth School will be conducted by Peter Fox on the subject of 'IMAGES OF THE PAST', This will be a survey of visual records from postcards to cinema film and paintings to the family snapshot. The aim of the course is to explore the rich variety of these images of the past and discover how they help us understand Local History. For further details telephone 061-633-3205.

MEMBERSHIP SECTION.

We welcome the following new members to the Society.

Mr. M. Parry & Maggie Davies of Mossley.
Mr. A. Wood, of Denshaw.

We are also able to announce that Mrs. Joan Chaloner has removed to warmer climes and now lives in Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire. We wish her well in this Cotswold world.

THE HISTORY OF PLATT BROTHERS.

Further news of Society member Reg. Eastham who has published his new book, gained from a working life with the firm of Platt Brothers., and entitled :- PLATTS TEXTILE MACHINERY MAKERS, Civic Leaders in Oldham, Country Squires in North Wales. The front cover features the landmark clock on the new offices in Featherstall Road, and John Platt's house Bryn-y-Neuadd at Llanfairfechan. This well written book tells the Platt story from Bridge House in Dobcross to becoming the World's Largest Textile Machinery Manufacturers at Hartford Works, Werneth, Oldham and their life in North Wales. It is a well illustrated book and at £9.95 a bargain. Obtainable from The Oldham Chronicle, Union Street, Oldham, The Craft Shop, King Street, Delph and the Saddleworth Museum Shop, Uppermill. Oldham Local Studies Library, Union Street, Oldham and Hammicks Bookshop in The Spindles, Oldham, are stocking this history of Oldham's largest employer which at its peak gave a livelihood to 15,000 workers.

SADDLEWORTH FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS 1995.

It would now seem timely to issue a trailer on the coming 1995 Saddleworth Festival of the Arts, which will take place from Saturday, 27th May, 1995, until Sunday 4th June, 1995. The theme of this Festival will be the Tricentenary of the English Composer Purcell 1658-1695 and the events are to be awaited with great expectation.

Obituary.

We are sorry to record the passing during October of Mr. James Raymond Carpenter of Manor House, Quick, who had been a long standing member of the Society and extremely interested in supporting its objectives over the years.

J. Hindle. November, 1994.