

# Saddleworth Historical Society Bulletin



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# Bulletin of the Saddleworth Historical Society

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Cover Illustration: Quickedge United A.F.C. c.1900.  
(Saddleworth Museum Archives M/P/QF)

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## HENRY TAYLOR: BRITAIN'S GREATEST SWIMMER

Jane McCann



Henry Taylor in British  
Swimming Colours

(Photo: Oldham Advertiser –  
[www.oldhamadvertiser.com/community/nostalgia/s/1021934\\_the\\_golden\\_boy\\_town\\_forgot](http://www.oldhamadvertiser.com/community/nostalgia/s/1021934_the_golden_boy_town_forgot))

Like other sportsmen Henry Taylor, the swimmer and multiple Olympic medal-holder was a publican. In his case, for a short time between 1922 and 1924, whilst he was still a competitive swimmer, he was the licensee of The Nudger Inn in Dobcross.

His list of achievements in the sport included:

Athens	1906	1 mile freestyle	gold
		400m freestyle	silver
		4x200m freestyle relay	bronze
London	1908	400m freestyle	gold
		1500m freestyle	gold
		4x200m freestyle	gold
Stockholm	1912	4x200m freestyle relay	bronze
Antwerp	1920	4x200m freestyle relay	bronze

This is still a record for a British Olympian in any sport. His haul of three gold medals would not be repeated by any British participant for a century, until 2008 when Chris Hoy won three gold medals in the cycling events at the Summer Olympics

in Beijing, China. At the same Olympics, Rebecca Adlington became the first British swimmer to win more than one gold medal at a single Olympic Games since Taylor had won three in 1908.

Henry Taylor was the first man to hold world records in the 400-metre, 880-yards, and 1,500-metre freestyle events. His record for the mile was not broken until 1929.

In all, Taylor won 15 Amateur Swimming Association titles, the last being the 5 miles event in 1920 when he was 35 years old. He played twelve times for the England water polo team<sup>1</sup>. Altogether he won 35 trophies, 300 medals & 12 international water polo caps. Even more remarkable when it is remembered that his career was interrupted by naval service during World War I.



A rare photo (left) of Henry with his brother Bill, his trainer, with a gathering of his friends and colleagues when he brought back the Silver Cup he won in Athens in 1906. (Photo. Chadderton Historical Society)

Henry Taylor was born in the Hollinwood area of Oldham in 1885, the second son of a coalminer, James Taylor and his wife Elizabeth who had moved there from Wigan. His mother had died before 1891 and the father died before 1901<sup>2</sup>. Henry was brought up by his older brother, Bill, a cotton spinner and his two elder sisters. Records are very sketchy but it is recorded that he learned to swim in the canal at Hollinwood and also practised in the boating lake of Alexandra Park. No records exist of his swimming ability until he was 7 years old, when he swam his first race at Oldham Baths: a two-length event for school boys, which he won – a sign of the talent he was to further develop as he matured.

Bill became Henry's coach and Henry also trained in the Oldham Baths and from 1894 in the new baths at Chadderton. Taylor was a stocky man 5 feet 5 inches tall

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<sup>1</sup> Billsborough, Peter. Henry Taylor (1885-1951) in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004. and Bancroft, James. *Olympic champions in Manchester*, 1993, give the fullest information on Henry Taylor.

<sup>2</sup> If they died in Oldham the BMD records indicate 1890 as the likely date for Elizabeth and 1896 for James <http://freebmd.rootsweb.com/>.

and about 10½ stone at his peak in his twenties. He used the Trudgen stroke: a type of side crawl but with a scissor kick. During this time he continued to train by swimming in the canal and, after he got his first job as a piecer in a cotton mill, he would spend his lunch breaks in this way. As a member of Chadderton Swimming Club he received more attention and although not yet a national ASA champion, was selected for the 1906 Intercalated Olympic Games in Athens.

Photograph of Taylor at London Olympics 1908 (Photo. British Olympic Association)



Exceeding expectations of his performance he won a gold medal in the one mile freestyle beating Jack Jarvis the double Olympic champion in 1900. He also won silver in the 400 metres freestyle and bronze in the 4 x 250 metres relay freestyle. Later in the same year, Taylor broke the world record for the 880 yards. He was 1906 & 1907 ASA champion for 440, 500, 800 yds & 1 mile, thus an automatic selection



This undated photograph only shows a third of his trophies and medals. There were another two walls full of them. (Photo. Chadderton Historical Society)

and favourite for the 1908 London Olympics. Here, competing in the specially built pool at the White City he set individual world records, winning gold in the 400 metres, and the 1500 metres. In the 4x200 metres relay he made up thirteen yards as the anchor man for the team to win the gold.

Another unusual competition he entered was what was known as the "Through the London Thames swim ". After he accepted a challenge from the French Champion of the time for a similar swim through the Seine, Paris, it became an international challenge; this went on for a number of years. Henry Taylor never lost.

These victories earned him the title of 'Britain's Greatest Amateur Swimmer' in the popular press of the day. Subsequent Olympic Games saw Henry win two more medals. As well as setting more records, in total he won 35 Trophies and 300 medals in his swimming career. He was also a regular swimmer in the 13 mile Morecambe Bay race for more than 20 years, winning it no less than 8 times and establishing the record in 1914.

Henry's swimming was now interrupted by war service. As an able seaman he served on the battleship HMS Vincent seeing action at the battle of Jutland and later on HMS Ramilies<sup>3</sup>.



Swimming Gala at Dobcross c.1922 (Saddleworth Museum Archives M/P/QA/9)

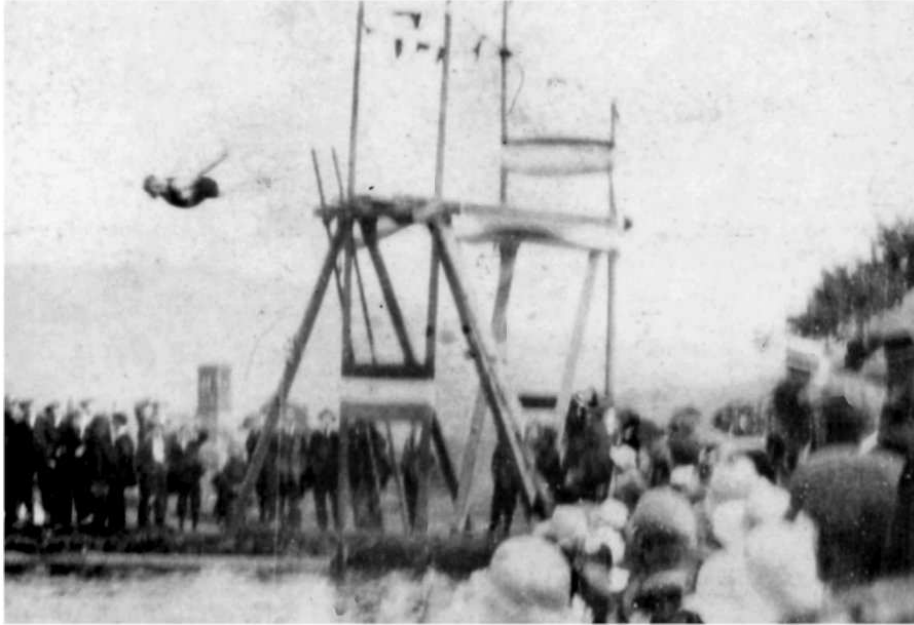
Whilst in the Navy during the First World War, he was the Champion Swimmer. In order to achieve this status he had to swim around the British Fleet which was at anchorage at Scapa Flow, and this he did on a number of occasions. This was no mean feat as our Navy at the time, was the largest in the world.

In 1922 Henry became licensee of the Nudger Inn. He had used his medals and trophies as security to raise funds. It was always his intention to swim the Channel, and whilst he lived at the Nudger Inn he went into training in a mill dam just above the pub. He received local sponsorship and a gala was held at the Platt Lane dam of Liversedge & Cox. Being spring water the dam was extremely cold, "not more than

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<sup>3</sup> Oldham Observer, 8/3/2007. Unfortunately this article repeats the erroneous story that HMS Vincent was sunk at the Battle of Jutland.

53 degrees” but Henry spent over an hour in the water training as the races were held<sup>4</sup>. Sadly, this was one goal that was never realized. It was a year when no swimmer crossed the Channel and in late August because of “the abnormally low temperature and the heavy seas” Taylor gave up the attempt<sup>5</sup>.



Swimming Gala at Dobcross c.1922 (Saddleworth Museum Archives M/P/QA/11)

Whilst at the Nudger Inn, Henry was usually surrounded by an enthusiastic coterie of sportsmen, but his role as a landlord didn't work out. He was poorly educated, in fact barely literate. At The Nudger Lizzie Mc Callum recalled “...While he was there many of his trophies and prizes were raffled over the bar<sup>6</sup>”. He won the Morecambe Bay race<sup>7</sup> for the eighth time in 1926 and then retired from swimming although he continued playing water polo for a further two years<sup>8</sup>.

Finding it difficult to find work he spent a time at sea then returned to Oldham and unemployment before he was offered a job as senior attendant at Chadderton Baths. Having sold all his medals and trophies, Henry Taylor died penniless, leaving only £259, and to some extent a forgotten man, in his lodgings at Brierley Street in Chadderton in February 1951 at the age of 65.

Henry was cremated and his ashes scattered, without great ceremony, at Rochdale Cemetery. After his death, some of his trophies were brought together and displayed for a short while at Chadderton Baths. In 2002 a blue plaque in his honour was unveiled at these baths following a campaign by a past president and secretary of Chadderton Swimming Club, Bernard Edge, who had known Henry in his later years

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<sup>4</sup> Oldham Chronicle, 22/7/1922 & 23/6/1922.

<sup>5</sup> Oldham Chronicle, 25/8/1922.

<sup>6</sup> Herself a Morecambe Bay competitor, she knew him as a member of Chadderton S.C. Oldham Chronicle. 12/11/1968.

<sup>7</sup> Manchester Guardian, 6/9/1926.

<sup>8</sup> Manchester Guardian, 19/10/1928.

and was taught to swim by him, and was keen to see him receive some much belated recognition in his own area.

Many years earlier, in 1969, Taylor, one of the greatest all British Olympians, had been posthumously inducted into the Swimming Hall of Fame at Fort Lauderdale, Florida in the United States.

There have been several attempts by the local press to locate Henry's medals. It was known that the money for the pub was put up by Mr Herbert Wolstencroft J.P. of Chadderton A.S.C. with Olympic medals as security and that he subsequently moved to Blackpool. But Taylor also disposed of other items piecemeal as Lizzie Mc Callum said and it was said that he accepted offers for prizes before he had even raced! Some of his medals were found to be owned by former friends but the whereabouts of the bulk of them remains unknown.



Henry Taylor at the Mill Dam below Platt Lane  
(Saddleworth Museum Archives M/P/QA)

## SPORT IN THE SADDLEWORTH ARCHIVES

### Neil Barrow

Sport has always been a major part of Saddleworth life. In early times we are told that men would leave the loom at the sound of the hunting horn and perhaps Ammon Wrigley is not expressing too much poetic licence when he writes:

*A weeding pair, fr'th' Castleshay,  
To Rachda' Church wur going,  
But when thi' yerd the mellow hurn -  
It proved the groom's undoing;  
He ran deawn th' fields, un streyght throat bruck,  
Un op o'er Moorcroft fences;  
"When th' heaunds ur eaut," his mother sed,  
"Thi're o eaut o' ther senses."<sup>1</sup>*

The Archives' collection includes other early sports. There is a copy of a warrant, issued in 1849, for the arrest of William Moores, Manchester and John Hopwood, Salford for prize fighting on Highmoor. No doubt this location was chosen as it was outside the Lancashire police force's jurisdiction. National newspapers give accounts of "pedestrianism".

**NEILSON WRIGLEY of Saddleworth, and JAMES GRIMSHAW of Oldham, 100 yards, £10 a side.—The disparity betwixt the two was not so striking as in the previous match, nevertheless Wrigley, who was the favourite at 5 to 4, was considerably better than his adversary. Wrigley was trained by Mellor of Delph, and Fitton, the ex-pedestrian—Jack o' Dicks, of Crompton, did the amiable for Grimshaw, both appearing in excellent condition. Wrigley, from his previous success, having won eleven matches or more, was booked as the winner to a dead certainty, the only drawback being that the distance would be too short for him, and not being deemed quick at getting to his running, that Grimshaw might steal a march upon him and possibly arrive at the goal first. These conjectures proved erroneous, Wrigley at the eighth attempt getting off with at least five or six yards' start, which he increased as the race progressed, finally winning in the easiest manner possible by ten yards.**

The Era (London.), Sunday, January 2, 1853; Issue 745.

Ammon Wrigley gives an account of a "foot race (in 1867) over the moors from Fidler's Green, near Langsett to Diggle Hotel between Christopher Sykes of Slaithwaite and John Mellor, weaver of Greenfield"<sup>2</sup> This would be locally organised

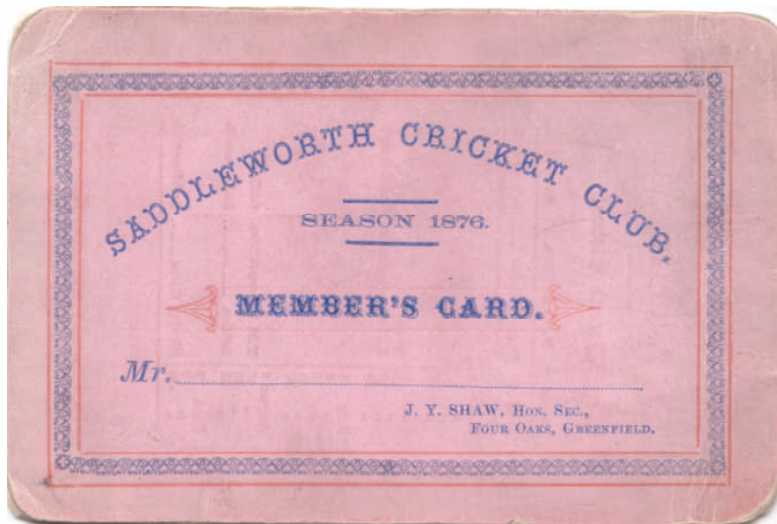
<sup>1</sup> Wrigley, Ammon. An Old Friarmere Hunting Day in Songs of a Moorland Parish, 1912.

<sup>2</sup> Wrigley, Ammon. Annals of Saddleworth, 1979 edition.

event with ad hoc rules, the main attraction being the “£25 prize and the associated betting”.

During the later nineteenth century the modern individual and team sports developed with standard sets of rules and the focus switched to sport as a respectable and healthy activity. The first Saddleworth cricket club, Friarmere, was founded, as a church club, in 1864 by the Rev Thomas Openshaw vicar of St Thomas, Heights and John Edward Buckley of Linfitts<sup>3</sup>.

It is from this period that the bulk of the Archives’ collection begins and there is a substantial cricket collection, (listed under M/SCK). The bulk of this was donated by W. Clayton the secretary of the Saddleworth & District League which was founded in 1898 and a substantial addition was made when Geoff Woodhead donated material in 2004. The Archives have the League minute books for the period 1898-1951 and the annual Handbooks for 1924-73, which contain the fixture lists. Turning to the member clubs the collection includes: for Saddleworth minute books 1869-1967 and fixture cards 1876-1972 and list of professionals 1873-1930 and officials 1850-1993, for Greenfield minute books 1926-94. There are also (listed under M/P/QC) over forty photographs of both teams and individual players. Unfortunately many of these are unnamed and undated.



Saddleworth Museum  
Archives  
M/SCK/S/13-76

Most of the clubs have produced histories and we have those for Delph & Dobcross, Friarmere, Greenfield, Saddleworth and Uppermill. The history of the League was written by Philip Taylor and published in 1998 with the title “Over the Hill by way of High Moor”.

The internet is now a major source of information and the Archives include digital records. The Austerlands’ club site has provided a brief club history, which fills the gap in the published material. There is also information on the sport’s major players. Three Saddleworth men have played for Yorkshire: John Lewis Byrom (1851-1931), Lees Whitehead (1864-1913) and John Parkin Whitehead, and their career records,

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<sup>3</sup> Whitehead, Becket & Goddard, Stanley. Friarmere Cricket Club, 1864-1964, One hundred Glorious years, 1964.

are online<sup>4</sup>, along with Sonny Ramadhin who lived in Delph as landlord of the White Lion.

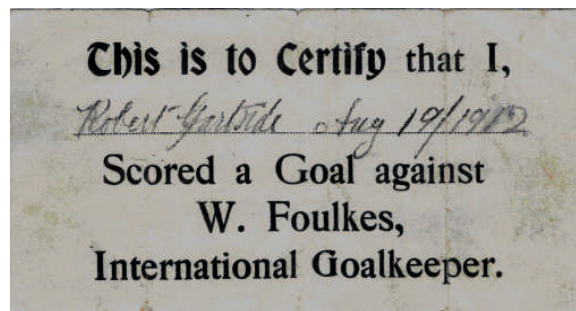
Perhaps the greatest local sportsman was Henry Taylor, the swimmer. He is one of the few people, associated with Saddleworth, with an entry in the Dictionary of National Biography. The Archives have this and a small number of cuttings and scans of photographs on him. He lived in Dobcross, for a short time, as a landlord of the Nudger Inn, and is and subject of the accompanying article.



Greenfield AFC 1928-9 (Saddleworth Museum Archives M/P/QF5)

The Archive items for other sports are listed under M/GX/Q. Compared to cricket the amount of material on the two other major team sports football and rugby is sparse. There are newspaper accounts of well attended football matches between village teams in the nineteenth century. But unlike cricket, which had the support of the wealthier members of local society, most clubs did not have a clubhouse, use being made of local pubs, or a long history. Springhead AFC originated in 1922 as Lees F.C., Uppermill AFC in 1923 and Diggle AFC was reformed in 1959. There are no items for any of these clubs nor for the Saddleworth League, which existed until 1962. There are a small number of team photographs.

Private collection



<sup>4</sup> [www.cricinfo.com](http://www.cricinfo.com).

The idea of footballers as celebrities is not new: amongst the personal effects of Robert Gartside of Denshaw who was to die at Passchendaele is a simple certificate recording a goal scored against W Foulkes<sup>5</sup>. This must have been on a visit to Blackpool where the retired goalkeeper had a stall.

Saddleworth's rugby league club was founded in 1930, although there had been an earlier club, also called Saddleworth Rangers, which was a founder member of the Oldham & District Junior League. It seems that some players were disillusioned with the set-up at the rugby union club. After a shaky start: "...They were also handicapped by their lack of knowledge of the rules" reports an account of their first match, the club became well established. This information comes from a club history published in 1980. The Archives has a copy along with a set of fixture lists from 1931-34.

A rugby union club was founded in 1913<sup>6</sup> but the Archives have no records and the sport is represented by individual players such as the digital file on Robert Porisse (1928-2002) the Sale and Yorkshire prop forward. The web has also been used to gather information on Clem Beckett (1906-1937). Before joining the International Brigade to die in the Spanish Civil War he was a top speedway rider. This new sport quickly became immensely popular in the 1920s and 30s. Beckett became a professional, rode for England and was active in the Dirt Track Rider' Association, the riders' trade union. A short brochure "Clem Beckett Hero and Sportsman" produced following his death is in the Archives.



Speedway Rider Clem Beckett (Saddleworth Museum Archives M/P/Q)

Saddleworth & District Amateur Bowling League published a Golden Jubilee brochure in 1974 which contains brief histories of the members clubs and there are also several photographs of players. Golf is perhaps the most thoroughly documented sport being subject of a full book treatment: "The History of Saddleworth Golf" Club by Geoff Woodhead.

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<sup>5</sup> William "Fatty" Foulkes, 6ft 3in & reputedly 24st, had retired in 1907. There is a short video clip of him playing for Sheffield United at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WrwI1AVrSa4>.

<sup>6</sup> Manchester Guardian, 5/4/1913

The collection continues to grow adding recent events such as the Saddleworth Village Games programmes starting 1985. We welcome new material on clubs and players, not only original items but loans of documents or photographs for scanning.



Lees Whitehead, Yorkshire County Cricket Club. 1903.  
(Saddleworth Museum Archives M/P/QC)



Uppermill Cricket Club Presidents  
(Saddleworth Museum Archives M/P/QC/28)  
The Club was set up by the Uppermill Wesleyan Church.

## **THE HOME FRONT IN SADDLEWORTH - 2.** *An Evacuee in Saddleworth.*

**Peter Fox & Jeannie Sawkins**

This is the second article in a series that is looking at aspects of the home front in Saddleworth during the Second World War. The article records the memories of Jeannie Sawkins who came to Saddleworth as an evacuee.



Portrait of Jeannie Sawkins taken at the gateway to Number 8, Moorgate, Uppermill, c1940.

At the start of the war I was four and a half years old and living in Eltham, London SE9, with my Aunt and Uncle, and their three children, Rosie 14, Sylvia 9, and Alan 6 years old.

As far as I understand about the evacuation process, cases had to be packed ready together with a gas mask, (mine was a Mickey Mouse one) to leave as soon as notified. We left very hurriedly one morning, and were sent by train to West Yorkshire. I can't remember arriving at our destination but I knew my Aunt was given two addresses for us to be billeted with families in the district of Saddleworth.

When we arrived at the first address in the village of Uppermill, the lady of the house had been allocated to take just one child and could have chosen any one of us.

However, on hearing that the three other children belonged to my Aunt chose me rather than break up a family, although ideally, they would have preferred someone old enough to run a few errands.

That turned out to be very fortunate for me, as my cousin's billet was a remote cottage in another village. There, they found life very hard and lonely and returned home in less than a year.

When my Aunt and cousins had left, "Aunty Nancy" sat me in her favourite rocking chair, with a tray of coloured beads and some thread and suggested I try and make a necklace. She said, "Her daughter Kathleen would be in from work soon and she would know what to do with me". Aunty Nancy was partially deaf and I'm sure it must have been a bit daunting for her at first, to have a shy and rather bewildered small child to cope with, now that her own family had grown up.

My first sight of Kathleen was when she poked her head round the dining room door, with a beaming smile and a cheery "Hello Luv". I knew I liked her straight away. Kathleen was twenty-three, the same age as my mother, and she took on that role in lots of ways. It was Kathleen who supervised bath nights, and while bathing me, would ease my fear of school, by helping me chant my tables, and sing rhymes to help me remember them. Whenever possible she would take me with her on errands to the village, or visiting friends. She also did all the correspondence, keeping my mother in touch with all our news.

Aunty Nancy's husband was "uncle Kenneth, a kindly soft spoken man, and after I had been with them for some while, he would laugh and say he had a new name since I arrived because when he came in from work, I would eagerly want to show him all I had been doing during the day, with cries of "uncle look!" which in my now Yorkshire accent sounded like "uncle Luke".

Aunty Nancy and Uncle Kenneth had two daughters, Betty was about seven years younger than Kathleen, and was training to be a tailoress. She made me a very smart top coat, which I know didn't use any of my clothes coupons. Another time, I remember loving a pretty print dress with hand smocking across front, which she made ready for May Day celebrations.

May Day was a lovely occasion, when all the children wore their best dresses, and pretty straw bonnets, decorated with small flowers. I remember excitedly watching as the procession went by complete with a Maypole.

Betty was courting husband-to-be Jack and I used to enjoy going for walks with them. Jack was always playful and used to tease me, and I loved the rough and tumble. Both daughters married while I was there, Betty left to set up home with Jack, but Kathleen stayed on at the family home until after the war, as her husband Reg, was posted away in the army.

I spent about five years with the family and recall so many happy memories of my time with them. Picnics by Chew Valley River on hot summer days, whimberry picking on the nearby moors and when we had a paper bag full, taking them home for Aunty Nancy to make a whimberry pie. Aunty Nancy was a good cook, and I still recall the lovely aroma of her apple puddings and ginger parkin, and tasty potted meat sandwiches, which she used to make for Uncle Kenneth's lunch. On rainy days, when too wet to play outside, I was sometimes allowed to rummage through the deep

At the seaside on the sand at  
Prestatyn with Aunty Nancy  
Leech



drawers of the kitchen dresser, and old dolls from Kathleen and Betty's childhood. My excuse was always; "I will tidy them for you Aunty".

Uppermill was a lovely place in which to grow up and I know my love of the countryside stems from the many walks, which the family took me on in the surrounding area. Kathleen told my mother that if she had been killed in the Blitz, they would adopt me, and my mother was assured I couldn't have a better home.

I returned home to my mother, by now living in Teddington and until I left school I used to go back to spend my summer holidays in Uppermill. One year, the father of my best friend at that time was editor of the local paper, and he wrote an article about the fact of an evacuee still returning for holidays.

My mother and I still correspond with Kathleen, which has been for over fifty years now, exchanging news of each other's families. We have managed to visit the family a few times over the years, and I will always be grateful, for my very good fortune, all those years ago, when Aunty Nancy took me in.

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With many thanks to Jeannie Sawkins (who wrote the article) and Betty Mills for lending the photographs.

If you have any memories / photographs of Saddleworth in Wartime I would love to hear from you as it is an area of Saddleworth's history that is fairly unrecorded.

Please contact me at Saddleworth Museum, 01457 874093, or e-mail [curator@saddleworthmuseum.co.uk](mailto:curator@saddleworthmuseum.co.uk). Many thanks – Peter Fox

## EARLY SADDLEWORTH RECORDS - 2

### Mike Buckley

Two Saddleworth grants by Robert de Stapleton to the Augustinian Priory at Nostell are recorded in the Nostell Coucher Book<sup>1</sup>; a manuscript 13th century volume containing copies of the deeds of the priory. The coucher, together with the original deeds, found its way into St Mary's Tower, York, after the Dissolution and was seen by Roger Dodsworth and Richard Gascoigne, seventeenth century antiquarians. Dodsworth made full transcripts of some of charters but only brief notes on others<sup>2</sup>. He also had sight of Gascoigne's own transcripts and copied some of these into his notes. Dodsworth's notes cover both grants, his notes on the first are from the Coucher book<sup>3</sup>. Gascoigne briefly noted the second of the two charters, apparently having seen the original, his interest being focussed on the seal which was attached. The originals are now unfortunately lost, the tower having been destroyed during the Civil War, so a drawing of the seal by Gascoigne, copied by Dodsworth into his notes<sup>4</sup>, is now its only record, and in fact is the only record of any Stapleton seal. It is published here for the first time by permission of the Bodlean Library, Oxford. The coucher luckily survives and is now part of the Cotton MSS in the British Library. Unfortunately it omits the names of witnesses to the charters making it difficult to accurately date the undated grants. As the description of the boundaries of the common pasture is almost identical to other Stapleton grants<sup>5,6</sup> however, a date of c.1250 for both seems probable.

The grants themselves raise a number of issues. Firstly, the second grant appears to repeat the first grant with the addition of 3 acres of land in Swintiaker and the rights of the occupants of the 3 acres to have additional pasture rights for ten animals and their young. The first grant, therefore, would appear to pre-date the second and was rather limiting in that the priory was being granted pasture rights in an area where they had no tenants or accommodation. Perhaps the second grant was aimed at remedying this by providing land for a keeper of the priory's cattle. The grant of additional pasture rights for ten animals of the keeper would support this.

The second issue raised is the location of Swintiaker. Its whereabouts now is unknown, and the name has not survived, but as Harrop is mentioned in the grant it

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<sup>1</sup> Nostell Priory Coucher, British Library. Cotton MS. Vespasian E xix, f22v & f65v-66r.

<sup>2</sup> Other Stapleton grants to Nostell Priory and other parties are referenced by Farrer in *Early Yorkshire Charters*. Vol. III. pg. 222. These were recorded by Dodsworth (Bodleian Library, Oxford, Dodsworth MSS. xcv, f.79 and viii, pp. 218d, 178d) and apparently were copies of the original charters seen by Dodsworth.

<sup>3</sup> These are referenced as MM. 15.63 in transcripts of the Dodsworth MSS published in *Yorkshire Archaeological & Topographical Journal*. Vol 13. 1895.

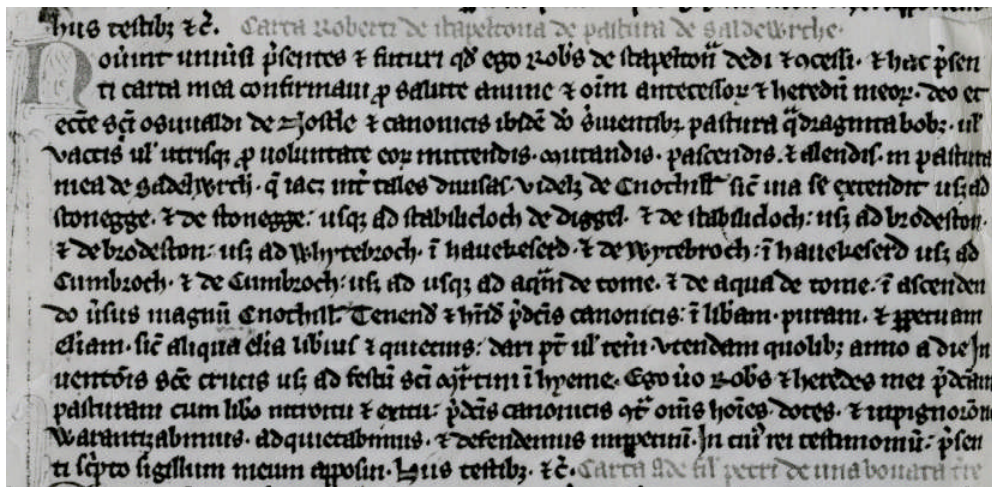
<sup>4</sup> Bodleian Library, Oxford, Dodsworth MSS. 117. 8r. Dodsworth notes are from Gascoigne's Book M, f7. which contains notes "Ex Carta porat... sci oswaldi in turre Sce Marie apud Ebor".

<sup>5</sup> Agreement between the Lord Abbot and Convent of the blessed place of Stanlawe and Lord Robert de Stapylton. Undated. *Whalley Abbey Coucher Book* Vol. 1. Chetham Society, Vol. X. p.148. & *SHS Bulletin* Vol. 39 No 2 pp 53-54.

<sup>6</sup> Grant by Robert de Stapleton to Richard, son of Robert de Staveley. Undated. *Wentworth of Wooley papers*. University of Leeds, Brotherton Library, Special Collections MS [Deposits] 1946/1/Box 4.

seems likely it was in the vicinity of Diggle. There is no mention of any holdings in Saddleworth in the list of possessions of the priory at the time of dissolution so apparently both the 3 acres and pasture rights had been disposed of by the priory in the intervening years. There is a puzzle here however, as there is no record of a rent payment to the priory and no freehold occurs in later Saddleworth records to account for this property. It is just possible that the land had been transferred to Kirklees Nunnery and added to their holdings in Diggle, possibly in exchange for land elsewhere.

Dr Judith Frost of York University has recently completed a study of the Nostell Coucher Book, including a full transcription and calendar of all the 1328 documents contained within it<sup>7</sup>. Her help and advice is gratefully acknowledged.



Text from the Nostell Priory Coucher Book recording Robert de Stapelton's grant of Pasture Rights in Sadelwrth.

### Carta Roberti de stapeltona de pastura de saldewrthe<sup>1</sup>.

Nov[er]int univ[er]si p[re]sentes et futuri q[uo]d ego Rob[ert]us de stapelton[a] dedi et concessi et hac p[re]senti carta mea confirmavi p[ro] salute anime [mee] et o[mn]i[u]m antecesso[rum] et heredu[m] meo[rum] deo et ecc[lesi]e s[an]ct[i] osuualdi de Nostle et canonicis ibide[m] deo s[er]vientibus pastura q[ua]draginta bobus v[e]l vaccis v[e]l utrisq[ue] p[ro] voluntate eor[um] mittendis mutandis pascendis et alendis in pastura mea de sadelwrth' q[ue] iac[et] int[er] tales divisas videl[icet] de Cnothill sic[ut] via se extendit us[que] ad stonegge et de stonegge us[que] ad stabulicloth de diggel et de stabulicloth us[que] ad brodeston et de brodeston us[que] ad whytebroch i[n] hauekeserd et de whytebroch in hauekeserd us[que] ad Cumbroch et de Cumbroch us[que] ad us[que] ad aq[ua]m de tome et de aqua de tome i[n] ascendendo v[er]sus magnu[m] Cnothill Tenend[um] et h[abe]nd[um] p[re]d[ic]tis canonicis in lib[er]am puram et p[er]petuam el[emos]i[n]am sic[ut] aliqua el[emos]i[n]a lib[er]ius et quietius dari pot[est] vel ten[eri] utendam quolib[et] anno a die Invent[i]o[n]is s[anc]te crucis us[que] ad festu[m] s[an]c[t]i m[ar]tini i[n] hyeme Ego v[er]o Rob[ert]us et heredes mei p[re]dictam pasturam cum lib[er]o introitu et exitu p[re]d[ic]tis canonicis cont[ra] om[n]es ho[m]i[n]es dotes et inpignor[ati]ones warrantizabimus adquietabimus et defendimus imp[er]petuu[m] In cui[us] rei testimoniu[m] p[re]senti sc[ri]pto sigillum meum apposui Hiis testib[us] &c

<sup>7</sup> An edition of the Nostell Priory Cartulary (Cotton Vespasian E xix). Judith Frost, York Ph.D., 2005.

## Charter of Robert de Stapelton of the Pasture of Saldewrthe<sup>1</sup>

Know all men, present and future, that I Robert de Stapelton have given, granted, and, by this my present charter, confirmed, for the health of my soul and the souls of all my ancestors and heirs, to God and the church of St Oswald of Nostle and the canons who serve God there, pasture for forty oxen or cows or, whichever they wish, to feed and nourish in my pasture of Sadelwrth which lies within these divisions, that is to say, from Cnothill along the way to Stonegge and from Stonegge to Stabilicloth of Diggel and from Stabilicloth to Brodeston and from Brodeston to Whytebrock in Haukeserd and from Whytebrock in Haukeserd to Cumbrock and from Cumbrock to the Water of Tame and from the Water of Tame ascending to the Great Cnothill; to have and to hold to the aforesaid canons in free pure and perpetual alms just as freely and quietly as any alms, to give possession or to hold and to use whenever they please, yearly from the day of the Invention of the Holy Cross [May 3rd] to the Feast of St Martin in Winter [November 11th]. Truly, I, Robert, and my heirs will warrant, discharge and defend, against all men, dowers and pledges, the said pasture with free entry and exit, to the said canons for ever. In witness whereof I have affixed my seal to this present writing. These being witnesses &c



Seal of Robert de Stapelton on his grant of 3 acres and Pasture Rights in Saddleworth to Nostell Priory.

## Carta Rob[er]ti de stapeltona

Sciunt p[re]sentes et fut[ur]i q[uo]d ego Rob[er]tus de stapelton[a] dedi concessi et hac p[re]senti carta mea confirmavi p[ro] salute a[n]i[m]e mee et o[mn]i[u]m antecessor[um] et heredu[m] meor[um] d[e]o et ecc[lesi]e S[an]c[t]i oswaldi de Nostl et cononicis ibid[em] d[e]o servientib[us] tres ac[ra]s t[er]re i[n] swintiaker p[er]pinq[ui]ores t[er]re Ric[ardi] de bingelay salva una via int[er] p[re]d[ic]tas tres ac[ra]s t[er]re et t[er]ra[m] p[re]d[ic]tis

Ric[ardi] cu[m] p[er]tinent[iis] ad i[n]cludendu[m] et ad sartandu[m] et o[mn]e comodu[m] suu[m] faciend[um] et ad capiend[um] et ad edificand[um] et ardu[m] et ad sepes suas faciend[um] i[n] bosco meo de haropp p[er] visu[m] forestar[um] mei salvis m[er]iti et heredib[us] meis feris bestiis et avib[us] alias capientib[us] et piscib[us] aq[uarum] mea[rum] et aliis dignitatib[us] et l[ib]ertatib[us] foreste mee sp[ec]tantib[us] p[re]t[er]ea dedi concessi eis[em] canonicis pastura[m] q[ua]draginta bobus v[e]l vaccis v[e]l utrisq[ue] p[er] voluntate eor[um] mutendis [f66r] pascendis alendis i[n] communa pastura de sadelwrth' q[ue] iacet int[er] tales divisas videlic[et] de Cnothill' sicut via se extendit usq[ue] ad stonegge Et de stonegge usq[ue] ad stabilicloth' de dighill' et de stabilicloth' usq[ue] ad brodeston et de brodeston usq[ue] ad wytibrok i[n] haukeserd' et de wytibrok i[n] haukeserd' usque ad cumbrok Et de cumbrok usq[ue] ad aqua[m] de tame Et de aqua de tame i[n] ascendendo v[er]sus magnu[m] Cnothill' Tenend[um] et habend[um] p[re]d[i]c[t]is cano[n]icis in lib[er]am puram et pe[r]petua[m] el[emos]i[n]am sic[ut] aliqua el[emos]i[n]a liberius aut quieti[us] dari pot[est] vel ten[er]i utenda[m] quolibet anno a die i[n]vent[i]o[n]is s[an]c[t]e c[ru]cis usq[ue] ad festu[m] s[an]c[t]i m[ar]tini i[n] yeme Ego v[er]o Rob[ertus] et heredes mei p[re]d[i]c[t]am pastura[m] cu[m] lib[er]o introitu et exitu p[re]d[i]c[t]is canonicis con[tra] om[n]es ho[m]i[n]es dotes et impignorat[i]o[n]es warrantizabim[us] adquietabim[us] et defendem[us] im[pe]rpetuu[m] Concedo et[iam] p[re]d[i]c[t]is canonicis v[e]l illi qui p[re]d[i]c[t]as tres ac[ra]s t[er]re de p[re]d[i]c[t]is canonicis tenuer[un]t v[e]l et[iam] loco ip[s]o[rum] custodierit p[re]dicta[m] pastura[m] infra p[re]d[i]c[t]as divisas dece[m] averiis cu[m] seq[ue]la sua uni[us] anni s[i]n[e] molestia mea v[e]l heredu[m] meo[rum] una cu[m] lib[er]tate p[re]d[i]c[t]ar[um] condit[i]o[n]u[m] In hui[us] r[ei] testi[mon]i[u]m p[re]senti sc[ri]pto sigillu[m] meu[m] apposui hiis testib[us]

### **Charter of Robert de Stapelton**

Know all men, present and future, that I Robert de Stapelton have given, granted, and by this my present charter, confirmed, for the health of my soul and the souls of all my ancestors and heirs, to God and the church of St Oswald of Nostle and the canons who serve God there, three acres of land in Swintiaker next to the land of Richard de Bingelay, excepting a way between the said three acres of land and the land of the said Richard, with appurtenances, to enclose and assart, to his total advantage, and to take [wood] for building, burning and making fences from my wood of Haropp, by view of my forester, saving to me and my heirs beasts of the chase, birds, other game, and the fish of my waters and other dignities and liberties of my forest, moreover I give, grant and confirm to the said canons pasture for forty oxen or cows, whichever they wish, to feed and nourish in my pasture of Sadelwrth which lies within these divisions, that is to say, from Cnothill along the way to Stonegge and from Stonegge to Stabilicloth of Dighill and from Stabilicloth to Brodeston and from Brodeston to Wytibrok in Haukeserd and from Wytibrok in Haukeserd to Cumbrok and from Cumbrok to the Water of Tame and from the Water of Tame ascending to the Great Cnothill; to have and to hold to the aforesaid canons in free pure and perpetual alms, just as freely and quietly as any alms, to give possession or to hold and to use whenever they please, yearly, from the day of the Invention of the Holy Cross [May 3rd] to the Feast of St Martin in Winter [November 11th]. Truly, I, Robert, and my heirs will warrant, discharge and defend, against all men, dowers and pledges, the said pasture, with free entry and exit, to the said canons for ever. I grant to the said canons, or to them that may hold the said three acres of land from the said canons, or may be keepers of the same, pasture within the said divisions for ten cattle with their young of one year, without interference from me or my heirs, together with the freedoms of the aforesaid grant. In witness whereof I have affixed my seal to this present writing. These being witnesses &c.

## A GRIM DIARY OF SADDLEWORTH - 2

**Paul Fryar**

### MAY

May 1 1940 - Told by the Chairman that it was a disgraceful thing altogether and might cause any kind of trouble among beasts, Gordon Walmsley, Slackhead Farm, Greenfield, was fined £2 at Saddleworth Police Court for failing to cause offal to be boiled before feeding it to animals, and not keeping it out of the reach of animals. Insp Nicholson said that on April 1 he went to the farm along with other officers and saw a heap of slaughterhouse offal over a wall in a field. It had been thrown from the road. It was spread over an area of 9 or 10 square feet, and it was plain to see it had been trodden into the ground by pigs. Walmsley claimed that his boiler was out of action and so he could not boil the offal. He also claimed that it must have been the dogs who had trodden in it as the pigs had not been out. Walmsley had taken 110 intestines and other offal from the slaughterhouse in Dobcross, but there was nothing like that number in the field according to Nicholson.

May 2 1939 - Dr E.A.Ramsden, Medical Officer of Health, reported to Saddleworth Health Committee that during the month there were 10 births and 11 deaths. Of the births 7 were males and 3 were females, and of the deaths 4 were males, and 7 were females. There was a death of a male child which only lived half an hour, but there were no other deaths under the age of 30. Of infectious cases, 2 were of tuberculosis, 1 of scarlet fever, and 1 of primary pneumonia. He reported a small epidemic of mumps, particularly in Greenfield.

May 3 1944 - At Saddleworth Police Court two soldiers, Harold Yates, 19, and Frederick Wynne, 19, pleaded guilty to stealing 13s 8d, the property of Nora O'Keefe, of Queen Street, Springhead. O'Keefe left her rent money in the living room of her house before going to work and told her 13 year old son where it was. He was alone in the house when the 2 soldiers came in. One of them was his cousin. They stayed about half an hour then left. When the rent man arrived the boy found the money had gone. When caught, the 2 soldiers handed back 5s 6d, all that was left. Yates was bound over for 12 months and ordered to pay costs. Wynne was fined £2 and costs.

May 4 1945 - At Saddleworth Juvenile Court a Springhead boy, aged 11, and a Lees boy, aged 13, were charged with breaking into a garage on Cooper Street, Springhead, and stealing a car and petrol. They drove it to a place beyond Huddersfield, where they abandoned it. The pair were also accused of breaking into Austerlands Cricket Club and stealing 8 cricket balls and some tools. The total value of the goods stolen was estimated at £100. Another Springhead boy, aged 11, was also involved in the theft from the garage. All 3 boys were bound over and placed under the care of the Probation Officer, and ordered to pay costs totalling £13.

May 5 1878 - The peacefulness that usually invests the Sabbath in Delph was much disturbed by a large number of lads of the hobbledehoy genus, who were in noisy

pursuit of a supposed mad dog. Report had it that the dog in question had exhibited signs of canine madness, and had bitten several other dogs and a cat. This being reported to the young roughs they armed themselves with sticks and stones, and chased the animal through the village and along the road as far as the Cross Keys, where they gave up the pursuit.

May 6 1949 - A verdict of death from shock and laceration of the brain, following a road accident due to a defective bicycle, was returned by a jury at Oldham Town Hall on Frank Cropper, 19, of Stockport Road, Lydgate, who died at Oldham Infirmary. The Coroner said that a faulty mudguard seemed the only possible cause of the accident. Leonard Cropper, Frank's father, said that his son had been in good health and that as far as he knew the bicycle was in good condition. Frank had ridden it for years. Norman Read said he had arranged to meet Frank at Grotton Farm. He saw Frank cycling along Oldham Road at a fair speed, but not recklessly. When he was about 200 yards away Read saw Frank do a complete somersault over the front of the bicycle, and skid a short distance. Read found that the front mudguard was loose.

May 7 1908 - During the night the shop of the Greenfield Co-operative Society was broken into and 30s was stolen from the tills. The windows at the rear of the premises had bars across, but on 2 of them the bars had been bent so that someone could squeeze through.

May 8 1939 - At Oldham Police Court Wilfred Clegg of Stockport Road, Lydgate, was fined 10s for failing to conform to a halt sign in Ashton Road at the top of Copsterhill Road, Coppice, on March 20. When pulled up, Clegg had asked how long the halt sign had been there. Clegg told the magistrates that the road had been reasonably clear, and he had slowed down, but not to a standstill.

May 9 1945 - 'These cases are getting too common' said the Chairman of the Saddleworth Bench, Cllr J.E.Gartside, when a number of cyclists were summoned for failing to conform to traffic signs. 'If anybody gets injured there will be no insurance as there would be in the case of a motorist.' A fine of 10s was imposed in each of 4 cases - Albert Ashton, apprentice joiner, of Shaw; Sadie Wragg, typist, of Delph; Joan Bristow, machinist, of Delph; and Kenneth Lee, millhand, of Oldham.

May 10 1944 - At Saddleworth Police Court James Coch of London Road, Oldham, was fined £1 and costs for being drunk and disorderly in Uppermill on Monday May 8. Supt. Dunn said Coch boarded a bus at Saddleworth Station and when it got to the Square, Uppermill, the conductoress saw that Coch was drunk and requested him to leave. He refused, and the police were called.

May 11 1948 - A verdict of death from natural causes was recorded by the Acting County Coroner at the inquest at the former Springhead council offices on Annie Burgess, 66, widow of the late Cllr. Harry Burgess, of Huddersfield Road, Austerlands, who died on May 7. She lived alone and had been in good health. Alice Newton, her sister in law, had gone for a walk with Annie on the Friday evening. After passing Scouthead war memorial Annie asked Newton to stop. They entered 98, Heywood Lane, and Annie sat down. She was given some hot water and a cup of tea. Newton tried in vain to get the services of a doctor, but Annie died at 8.30 pm. Dr H

Guest of Huddersfield Infirmary said that Annie had died due to the rupture of the left ventricle of the wall of the heart, associated with atheroma.

May 12 1878 - An accident happened to Mrs Wrigley of Range, near Denshaw. Wrigley was on horseback, in the company of her husband, when near to Badger Clough the horse took fright at a passing carriage, and threw its rider. Fortunately, although she fell on her face she sustained no broken bones, the only injuries being the loss of 2 front teeth. She was unconscious for some time, even after the 'usual restorative' had been applied.

May 13 1942 - 5 Oldham boys, ranging in age from 14 to 17, 2 employed as piecers, 2 as apprentice bakers, and one as a packer, went before Saddleworth Police Court for unlawfully and maliciously setting fire to a plantation of trees in Chew Valley. Harry Bingley, of Kinder Intake, gamekeeper-farmer, said that on April 26 he saw smoke from the hillside, higher up than the plantation, and saw the boys coming down the hillside. They set the hedgerow on fire, causing damage to the trees. They also lit 2 other fires. All of the fires were successfully extinguished. Police War Reserve Armitage said that at about 5.30 pm he and Insp Nicholson went up to Greenfield Farm and saw the 5 defendants. One of them had an axe and was wearing Government-issued ARP eyeshields. Others had boxes of matches. They admitted setting off the fires and said they had been very foolish to do so. The Chairman, Mr H Whitehead, wondered whether the boys realised the seriousness of the offence. In ordering the boys to pay £1 4s 6d each he expressed the hope the parents would take it out of the boys' pocket money.

May 14 1908 - At Austerlands School an inquest was held into the death of Betty Winterbottom, who was found dead in bed 2 days before. Betty was 61 years old and had been a cotton weaver, although she had not been able to work for the previous 2 years because of ill health. This had mainly been bad headaches and poor breathing. She had last been seen by a doctor the evening before her death, and she had not complained about anything. Just after 5 am Thomas Lees, Betty's brother-in-law, went into her bedroom and found her as if asleep. On touching her he found her body stone cold. Her doctor said that she had always been a 'delicate' woman, and there had been signs of progressive affectation of the heart. When he had arrived at the house Betty had probably been dead for over 3 hours. He had found no evidence of violence and the expression on her face was quite placid. He believed her death was due to heart failure. The jury returned a verdict of death by natural causes.

May 15 1940 - At Saddleworth Police Court Edward Docherty, 23, a labourer, of Oldham, was charged with begging at Lydgate at 10.15 pm on May 11. A constable said he had received complaints, and found that Docherty had been going to back as well as front doors of houses asking for money. When he spoke to him about it Docherty replied, 'I am asking for gardening work and coppers. I am sorry it has happened.' Docherty said that he had been out of work for 2 years and was married with a child. Jobs were being given to older men because he was waiting to be called up. The Chairman, in fining him 5s, told him he was sure he could find work in these days if he really tried.

May 16 1890 - At Saddleworth County Court Mary Hollingworth claimed for her share of £61 15s 10d, which was left in the hands of the Registrar to divide between

herself and her brother, Joe, on their coming of age. The amount of £100 was originally invested in the Post Office Savings Bank, and there was a dispute as to whether the grandmother or the father of the children should have possession of the bank book. When the mother came before the court in 1881 it was ordered that the registrar should keep it until the children came of age. Henry Burgess said the claimant was his niece, and had come of age on March 1. An order was made for half the amount, the costs of the proceedings having been taken out of the original sum.

May 17 1889 - Shortly after 11 am the body of Ellen Milne, 20, was discovered in the lodge of Austerlands Mill. She lived with her mother at Knowsley, and it is stated that a family dispute had occurred on the previous night. Ellen had left home just after dusk and was not seen alive again. Suicide is suspected.

May 18 1944 - Harold Saville of Grove Road, Uppermill, had been scalded in a vat at Messrs G Cox Ltd, Dyeworks, Dobcross, the day before, and died on this day at Oldham Infirmary.

May 19 1938 - Norman Mitchell, 11, of Alma Terrace, Diggle, was removed to the Oldham Infirmary in the Mossley ambulance at around 9 pm. He was suffering from lacerated wounds on the left foot caused when climbing down a water spout at Diggle Sunday School. The spout gave way and caught his foot.

May 20 1942 - About 3 am the National Fire Service from Mossley was summoned to a fire in a large greenhouse and heating boiler shed belonging to Roland Humphreys of Oldham Road, Grasscroft. The fire was under control when the Service arrived and was soon extinguished. Damage was done to a number of tomato plants and a vine.

May 21 1908 - Just before 11 pm Richard Schofield, butcher, of Knarr, Delph, was standing with some friends outside the White Lion, when he accidentally slipped from the footpath and broke his left leg. Dr Stonehouse was sent for and he bandaged up the injured limb. Schofield was then carried home on a stretcher obtained from the new ambulance box in the village.

May 22 1940 - James Gartside, 70, a Denshaw farmer, was charged with stealing a sheep, the property of his brother-in-law, John Highley, also of Denshaw. The sheep was valued at 50s. William Wharton said that on the day in question he was crossing Oxhey and saw Gartside with a dog. He saw the dog drive a sheep over into a quarry. He later found the sheep just off the main road, about 250 yards from where he had seen it last. He could not identify the sheep as both ears had been cut off, and the horn marks obliterated. Another witness, Joseph McLintock, water bailiff, confirmed Wharton's evidence about the quarry. He then spoke to Gartside, who said the sheep was dead, and it was his. McLintock gave Gartside a hand to lift the sheep on his back, and at that time the ears were intact.

PC Davies said that at 1.40 pm on April 9 he saw the sheep lying in a field with both ears cut off. Gartside later said that when he saw the sheep he knew it belonged to his brother-in-law. He had told McLintock the sheep was his and cut off the ears so that it could not be identified. Gartside's lawyer said he had an unblemished record and that in this case there had been no evidence of criminal intent. It had been an accident, and Gartside had intended to take the sheep away and bury it. He had no

intention of stealing it. Simon Highley, nephew of Gartside, who looked after his father's sheep, said that his uncle had probably acted as he did because he did not want his young nephew to find out and castigate him. Gartside did not like to admit being in the wrong. Simon said he would not have prosecuted. The Chairman of the Bench said that the magistrates found the case proved but had decided to dismiss it under the Probation of Offenders Act. Gartside would have to pay £3 10s costs.

May 23 1945 - The Medical Officer of Health, Dr Wood, reported to the Saddleworth Health Committee that during the past month there had been 35 cases of infectious diseases, which included 21 cases of measles at Dobcross, 5 at Uppermill, 1 at Delph, and 5 at Diggle; and 2 cases of scarlet fever at Springhead and 1 at Greenfield.

May 24 1939 - Derby day was marked at Saddleworth Police Court by the appearance of Harold Tither, bookmaker's runner, who was fined £2 for loitering for the purpose of street betting in Huddersfield Road, Austerlands, on May 22. His automatic betting clock and betting slips were confiscated. When it was announced that there had been a previous conviction at the Court for a similar offence in 1937, when Tither had been fined £2, Capt Bagnall, presiding, said they would make the fine the same again. Evidence was given by PC Morris that he and Sgt. Rycroft were keeping watch in a motor car. They were in plain clothes. They saw Tither receive a piece of paper and something else from another man. Then Tither disappeared to his house. Soon after they saw him again, and another man handed him something. When the police arrested Tither he had 16 betting slips recording bets ranging from 3d to 5s.

May 25 1942 - Alice Phythian, wife of Arthur, confectioner, of Chew Valley Road, Greenfield, slipped and fell in the garden. She badly injured her eye and sprained his wrist. After her injuries had been treated she was put to bed, but she was later conveyed to Oldham Infirmary,

May 26 1948 - William Crow of Hill End Farm, Delph, was fined £1 in each of 2 cases at Oldham Magistrates for not having an efficient brake and an identification mark on a trailer in the High Street, Oldham, on April 22.

May 27 1867 - Mark Uttley, gamekeeper, of Standedge, was accidentally shot dead by William Waddington of Sowerby Bridge. His son, William Utterly, was to be murdered by poachers in September 1903, along with Robert Kenyon.

May 28 1947 - At Oldham Magistrates William Holmes of Dumfries Ave, Denshaw, admitted 3 motoring offences - having an inefficient handbrake on a van, not having a mirror, and being an unlicensed driver. He was fined 5s each for the last 2 offences, and 20s for the first.

May 29 1907 - At the Saddleworth Board of Guardians it was reported that the funeral of Joseph Wroe, who was found dead in the Delph lodging house, had cost the parish 28s 6d, he having no friends or family.

May 30 1937 - Answering Cllr. Hopkinson, Mr A Barker, sewage works manager at the Saddleworth Council said police were supervising the works in regard to acts of vandalism which had been committed there.

May 31 1933 - For retaining hold of a motor van for the purpose of being drawn along Oldham Road, Grasscroft, on May 4, Jack Gowers, an errand boy, of Oldham, was fined 5s by Saddleworth magistrates.

## JUNE

June 1 1932 - 'I didn't know it had to be signed' declared Leonard Gooseman, an Oldham hairdresser, when pulled up in Saddleworth and told he would be reported for not having his motor driving licence signed. PC Salter, at Saddleworth Court, said, 'He signed it in my presence.' Gooseman was fined 10s.

June 2 1929 - Friends of the Hey Top Mission, Greenfield, heard with regret of a serious accident that befell their superintendent, John Battrick, of Chew Valley Road. He was walking along the road in the direction of his home when he was struck by a passing motor car and knocked down. He was very badly cut and bruised about the head, and suffered from severe shock.

June 3 1873 - Woodhouse Mill, off King Street, Delph, was destroyed by fire.

June 4 1899 - Mr W.D. Hall of Wool Road, Dobcross, went for a Sunday afternoon stroll round by Saddleworth Church, but on his return home he fell down a steep embankment near a brook. He was found sometime after in an unconscious state by some young ladies who carried the news to Mr Brierley, shoemaker, also of Wool Road. Hall was carried to the house of Mr E. Buckley, and then on to his lodgings. He was examined by Dr Ramsden, who found that he was suffering from concussion and had received a severe cut to the forehead.

June 5 1929 - John Wigglesworth of Linthwaite was fined £2 by Saddleworth magistrates for disorderly conduct at Greenfield Station. Smith Norminton, a ticket collector, said that he had protested about Wigglesworth's conduct, to which he had replied, 'Tha' wants a stripe on thy arm,' and refused to show his ticket.

June 6 1932 - Urging Saddleworth Council to press the county for a by-law to stop the plucking of wild flowers, Cllr. Dransfield pictured people coming out of the Chew Valley with armfuls of dying bluebells. They are plucked on the hillsides, he said, and often left strewn about Greenfield in their hundreds. He said there was a by-law to prevent uprooting flowers but not plucking. Cllr. Corner said that if the press publicised the problem that would be enough. Cllr. Tanner said, 'Have you a by-law to stop young children plucking a daisy?' This caused laughter. Cllr. Watson said that May blossom suffered too, and people pulled the trees to pieces. The Council decided to take no action.

June 7 1917 - Pte. James Kenworthy, 22, was killed in action. He lived at Dobcross. Also, Capt Archibald Taylor, 35, was killed in action. He was the son of Rev Bowes-Taylor of Friarmere Vicarage.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### **Riversdale Hall The Story of a Victorian Country House**

Richard Unwin. Failsworth Historical Society Publication, 2007. 40pp.

A lost country house in Bardsley and the promoting of the study of Egyptology are just two of the interesting aspects of this booklet. The two gateposts on the Oldham-Ashton road in the Medlock valley would, today, be passed unnoticed. But they were the entrance and virtually the only remains of Riversdale Hall, a grand Victorian mansion in extensive grounds which is the subject of this study. Built around 1847 and extended later the various photographs that the author has collected show how substantial a house it was and hint at the wealth of its owners.

The Saddleworth interest lies in the fact that the third owner was Charles Timothy Bradbury who was born in Delph in 1827. He moved into the Hall around 1882 with his wife and daughter. By this time he was wealthy man being managing director of J.H. Gartside & Co. Ltd. a calico printing and cotton manufacturing firm employing over 2,450 hands at mills in Ashton, Dukinfield and Carrbrook. His father had died when he was a boy and he was brought up by relatives, the Buckleys of Ryecroft Hall, Ashton-under-Lyne. They had started him on a business career that was to take him to be a director of the Calico Printers Association when it was set up in 1899 and the fortune to buy Riversdale and, via his will, to endow the Griffith Institute (for the study of Egyptology) at Oxford University. For Kate, his only surviving child, herself a keen student of Ancient Egypt had married the future Oxford professor Francis Llewelyn Griffith and he received the bulk of the considerable Bradbury wealth.

This is a simple but well-produced booklet, well-researched it illuminates the lives of the residents of this grand house. It shows, (although Unwin does not focus on this aspect) the importance of family and church networks. The Gartside's were also married into the Buckleys and all three families were Congregationalists, originally at the Independent Chapel at Delph.



Timothy Bradbury of Delph, Shopkeeper (1781-1829) the father of Charles Timothy, William Henry and Frederic Bradbury. (Source: [www.civilwarsoldiers.com/civilwar\\_photos/bradbury\\_family.htm](http://www.civilwarsoldiers.com/civilwar_photos/bradbury_family.htm))

## **While Father is Away: The Civil War Letters of William H Bradbury.**

Ed. Jennifer Cain Bohrnstedt. University Press, Kentucky, 2003. pp386.

When William Bradbury went off to fight in the American Civil War he wrote between 1862 and 1865 a steady flow of letters to his “dearest wife”. The bulk of the book contains the letters not only detailing his wartime experiences but also about managing their business in Dwight, Illinois.

William, as his surname hints, is an immigrant from Saddleworth along with his brother Frederic. He is “...an example of the mid-nineteenth-century entrepreneur, one who was inspired to conquer some section of the new West in America; in this aim he was resoundingly successful, owning land in multiple states at different times”. They were born in Delph the younger brothers of Charles Timothy.

Although the focus of the book is the Civil War the editor, in her introduction, sets out the family background. They already had strong links with America, their uncle and grandfather already being manufacturers in New England. Like his brother Charles, William was brought up by (probably his mother’s) Buckley relatives and received a legal training in the practice of Henry Gartside of Ashton. This led to a clerical role after he enlisted at the age of thirty-three in the local 129<sup>th</sup> Illinois Infantry.

The letters themselves make fascinating reading. They are one of the few records we have of a Saddleworth emigrant’s life in America. His background and experience was quite different to that of Thomas Buckley revealed in the “Cherry Valley Chronicles” and so widens our knowledge. William’s business was not textiles but land speculation and management. After the war his business took him to Topeka, Kansas, where he died in 1900. Some of his land was donated two generations later to become a local; country park.

William’s life reveals, once again, the strength and importance of family ties across the Atlantic, not least in this case because an abstemious Charles seems to have had control of the brothers’ legacy! These ties were not simply the immediate family but the wider networks of Saddleworth kin who were major participants in the Ashton millocracy centred on Albion Chapel.

This is a thorough and well-researched book by an editor who has used the family papers at the University of Kansas to reveal a significant period of a Saddleworth emigrant’s life.

Neil Barrow

## OBITUARY

### Eric Watson

Eric Watson was not a polymath but not far short of being a genius in the disciplines he practised. A modest man, a generous man of and a caring man. Eric was both sociable and solitary.

He followed his father's occupation as a cinema projectionist and worked at the Gaumont in Oldham whilst his friend George Nutter worked at the Kings.

In those days cinemas only closed on Good Friday and projectionists worked long and unsocial hours. Together, Eric and George worked out a new shift system to give projectionists a better quality of life and more time off. This system had a profound effect on the lives of hundreds of projectionists working in the cinema industry in this country and beyond.

Eventually Eric left the Gaumont and moved to Uppermill, opened an electrician's business and started Northern Cinema Supplies, repairing projectors and equipment for schools, industry and private owners.

He finally sold the business, studied horology and began making clocks and orreries - fine works of engineering precision and beauty.

Eric was put in touch with the Antiquarian Horological Society by John Warren, an international architect and member of the Manchester Pedestrian Club. His expertise in making orreries and clocks was thus brought to a wider audience and he became well known throughout the world of horology. One of his orreries is in the Horological Museum of Canada. Eric lectured on his work to the Manchester Horological Society and he wrote articles for learned journals.

Eric Watson is perhaps best known to members of the AHS for his two papers on the Richard of Wallingford clock which were inspired by Dr J.D. North's book "Richard of Wallingford" published in 1974. Eric studied the book carefully and then made two reproductions of the medieval clock with different striking mechanisms. His first paper "The St Alban's Clock" published in the Summer 1979 issue was quickly followed up by a second (Winter 1979) with a reproduction of the astronomical sections of the clock. Dr North's book and Eric Watson's reproductions inspired a number of further studies and models of this very important early clock.

Eric loved walking and he was great walking companion and the Manchester Pedestrian Club was a great part of his life. He wrote a history of the club in 1971 and he also compiled a book of walks in the Yorks, Lancs and Derbyshire area.

His ingenuity, skills, patience application and generosity mark out a man who never realised his own genius but modestly got on with it and shared it. To have known him has been a privilege and many will affirm that Eric touched their lives and made a difference.

Canon John Sykes  
from Antiquarian Horology June 2009

## SADDLEWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

### FORTHCOMING LECTURES

All will take place at Saddleworth Museum, Uppermill, at 7.30 p.m.

Thursday, 26th November

*Darwin's voyage of 'The Beagle'*

Speaker: Ian McInnes

Thursday, 17th December\*

*14th Century Saddleworth*

Speaker: Victor Khadem.

This lecture will be preceded by the Society's Annual General Meeting.

\* **Please note the change from the original date of Wednesday, 16th December.**

Thursday, 21st January

**The Bernard Barnes Memorial Lecture**

*Water, Industry and Society in Saddleworth - a historical survey*

Speaker: Michael Fox

Thursday, 18th February

*Oldham Treasures*

Speaker: Sean Baggaley.

### SADDLEWORTH CIVIC TRUST

Wednesday 9th December

*Winter trip: Lancaster & visit to Leighton Hall & Estate, Carnforth*

Thursday 28th January

*Church and well known Public Clocks throughout the UK*

Keith Scoby-Youngs

For further information contact [charles.baumann@sky.com](mailto:charles.baumann@sky.com)

### SADDLEWORTH ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

Tuesday 8th December.

*Recent Excavations at Buckton Castle*

A slide lecture by Norman Redhead. County Archaeologist for Greater Manchester.

Tuesday 12th January

*A.G.M.* followed by *A Miscellany of Archaeological Sites*

An illustrated talk by David Chadderton and Ken Booth, Saddleworth Arch. Trust.

Tuesday 16th February

***Coccium reconsidered: Recent Excavations of Roman Wigan***

A slide lecture by Ian Miller, Oxford Archaeology North.

Tuesday, 16th March

**The John Buckley Memorial Lecture**

*Lentworth Hall Mill, Wyresdale*

A slide lecture by Ben Edwards, Former County Archaeologist, Lancashire.

Unless indicated all meetings are at the Masonic Hall, 138 High Street, Uppermill.  
7:30 pm for 8:00 pm. For further information see [www.sadd-arch.org.uk/index.htm](http://www.sadd-arch.org.uk/index.htm)

**SADDLEWORTH W.E.A.**

The class programme for the winter term, 2010, is as follows. All classes are held at Saddleworth School, High Street, Uppermill. Please enrol at the first class.

***Art Appreciation***

Tutor: Carmen Walton

7 weekly sessions, 7 p.m. - 9 p.m., starting Tuesday, 12th January, 2010.

***Banned Books***

Tutor: Chris Foley

10 weekly sessions, starting Tuesday, 12th January 2010.

(Prospective learners for this class - which will be a form of reading group - are encouraged to enrol in September 2009, to allow them time to read the novels to be covered.)

For further information please contact the Branch Secretary, Anne Buckley, on 01457- 872881.

**GALLERY OLDHAM**

***Women of Oldham***

12 September 2009 – 10 January 2010

An exhibition that looks at the character, the independence and the achievements of Oldham's women. It tells the story of local women who have won national fame and recognises the many ways women have contributed to the wealth and growth of the area over the last 200 years.

***Oldham Treasures***

5 December 2009 – 12 April 2010

Gallery Oldham's collections have been assembled over a period of 125 years and contain many items of really high quality and significance. These treasures belong to the people of Oldham and are celebrated in this special exhibition. From oil paintings to studio pottery, from cotton cops to grandfather clocks, there should be something here for everyone. The displays chart the progress and fashions of the Gallery's collecting of art and social history. Works by artists such as Lowry and Millais can be seen alongside items that reflect the history of the area and its people.

For further information see [www.galleryoldham.org.uk](http://www.galleryoldham.org.uk).

## MEMBERSHIP SECTION

The following new members have joined the Society since publication of the Summer Bulletin, and we wish to extend a welcome and trust they will enjoy their membership.

Mrs. Mary Rodgers, Delph

Mr. & Mrs. Alan Hartley-Smith, Delph

Mr. & Mrs. Martin Goodyear, Shaw.

Mr A.L. Mouatt, Rutland

Ms. Pat Ashton, Slaithwaite

## SUBSCRIPTIONS 2009

There are still a few members who have not yet renewed their subscriptions to the Society and we shall be pleased to receive remittances as soon as possible.

## SADDLEWORTH WEBSITES

### *Francis Frith*

<http://www.francisfrith.com>

This is a commercial site displaying the firm's archive of photographs taken to produce postcards. There are also old maps. Type: Delph in the search box to bring up twenty-nine 1950s photographs. To find other villages use: select a neighbouring place i.e. do not search using Saddleworth.

## PUBLICATIONS

Members, particularly those outside the area may not be aware that it is not only the Society which is publishing Saddleworth books:

### *The Pre-History of Saddleworth*

WPB Stonehouse

Based upon many years of excavation of sites on the local moors and thorough research, this is a comprehensive and definitive study.

### *Roman Saddleworth The History Archaeology and Visible Remains of the Roman Occupation in an Area of the Pennines.*

Ken Booth

Originally published in 2001 and now back in print this is a full account of the Roman period. It discusses not only the forts and the various excavations and Roman roads but also details the finds within the forts and elsewhere.

Both published by Saddleworth Archaeological Trust and available at Saddleworth Museum bookshop or via [www.sadd-arch.org.uk](http://www.sadd-arch.org.uk).

## FAMILY HISTORY WEEKEND

On Saturday July 4 some thirty members of the family history group assembled at the Museum for the second Family History Weekend and a very full two-day programme of visits, talks and workshops.

After a welcome by Mike Buckley we first set out along the canal towpath towards Frenches, seeing early industrial development (goits) by the river Tame. At Frenches we gazed on the canal wharf noting the additions to the early buildings that had served it. Then, heading along Chew Valley Road we next stopped at the Wellington mill site with its surviving office block and the turnpike toll house (known locally as the Bar House) facing it.

Having passed through the mid-20th century Queensway estate we headed up Arthurs towards Kinders House and then started the climb to Higher Kinders, Fur Lane and up Haw Clough Lane to Knowl Top following the old road to the St Chad's church area. Passing many examples of the early woollen industry the prospect of a well-earned lunch in Uppermill took us back towards the Museum.

The afternoon session took us to Golcar to visit the Colne Valley Museum with its early textile machinery and tools and also a clog making shop.

Mike hosted a most enjoyable social evening at Dobcross with excellent food and musical entertainment. Those of us who had attended the first Family History Weekend three years ago will have had fond memories of the social and this year's did not disappoint!

Sunday morning found us raring to learn from the formal sessions, which began with an interesting talk by Mike on the information on ancestors that can be derived from wills. Subsequent sessions were to show how true this was.

Victor Khadem, had entertained us the previous evening with his recital on Mike's virginal (many of us had had revealed our ignorance by believing it to be a spinet). He now gave us a talk on the Gartside family. Neil Barrow followed, speaking about some of the families whose industrial and commercial activities had shaped Saddleworth paving the way for the enterprises of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

An excellent cold buffet in the Museum gave us an opportunity to chat to folk over lunch – none too long a break as some of us (I confess to being the main offender) had to be dragged back to allow the afternoon's proceedings to start more or less on time.

Alan Petford opened the final session with a talk showing what wills can reveal about the economic activities of our ancestors and about the development of the district in general. Finally and continuing the theme of his talk, Jean Sanders set us to work on copies of early mid-seventeenth century wills (fortunately with transcripts which allowed us to cope with the calligraphy). Then a will and inventory from the end of the century had us concentrating on the archaic spelling and technical vocabulary. Lastly we tackled a will with early seventeenth-century calligraphy.

The Weekend came to a close at 4pm having proved both stimulating and entertaining, as well as astonishingly good value for money.

Congratulations and thanks to those in Saddleworth who worked so hard to make the event so memorable. May we look forward to another one in due course?

Brian Kenworthy

## SADDLEWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

### BOOKS

**“Mapping Saddleworth”**

*Edited by Mike Buckley, David Harrison and Alan Petford.*

Volume I, Printed Maps of the Parish 1771-1894. £19.95

**“A History and Description of the Parochial Chapelry of Saddleworth”**

*by James Butterworth, with introduction by Robert Poole.*

A facsimile reprint of the original edition of 1828. £13.95

**“Saddleworth 1914-1919”**

*by K.W.Mitchinson.*

The Experience of a Pennine Community during the Great War. £10.00

**“Cherry Valley Chronicles”**

*Edited by Maurice Dennett.*

Letters from Thomas Buckley of Millbury, Massachusetts, USA to Ralph Buckley, his son of Dobcross, Saddleworth 1845-1875. £10.00

**“Passage through Time”**

*by Bernard Barnes.*

Saddleworth Roads and Trackways - A History. £6.95

**“With Ammon Wrigley in Saddleworth”**

*by Sam Seville, edited by Bernard Barnes.*

£5.95

**“Saddleworth from the Air”**

*edited by Barri Jones.*

£5.00

**“The Saddleworth-America Connection”**

*by Anne Parry.*

Reprint of the original 1979 Saddleworth Festival Publication. £5.00

**“The Huddersfield Narrow Canal”**

A compilation of essays on the construction and history of the canal. £5.95

### SADDLEWORTH LOCAL INTEREST TRAILS

Ten walks around Saddleworth illustrated with sketches and notes on local history and landscape.

**Uppermill, Greenfield, Huddersfield Narrow Canal, Grasscroft, Denshaw, Delph, Lydgate & Grotton, Dobcross, Diggle, Castleshaw**

each £1.20

### MAPS & PLANS

Churchyard Plan: St Chad’s Church, the old graveyard £1.20

Churchyard Plan: St Chad’s Church, the lower graveyard £3.00

Ordnance Survey 25” Godfrey reprint - Lydgate £1.95

### ORDERS

Graham Griffiths, 6 Slackcote, Delph, Saddleworth OL3 5TW. Cheques should be made payable to Saddleworth Historical Society. Please add 20% for post & packing in the UK.

## SADDLEWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 505074

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**The Bulletin** aims to reflect and encourage interest in all aspects of the history of Saddleworth. It relies on a regular supply of articles, letters, short reviews &c. from members and others. Fresh material is required constantly, and should be sent to the Acting Editor Neil Barrow, who will be happy to discuss ideas for articles (or shorter contributions) from anyone considering preparing one. Articles need not be confined to subjects within Saddleworth's borders, but should have some connection with the district.

**The Society's website** is at: [www.saddleworth-historical-society.org.uk](http://www.saddleworth-historical-society.org.uk)

This has full details of the Society's activities, publications, library and archives, and there is a facility to contact the Society by EMail. An index to Saddleworth place names, a reference map of Saddleworth, and a bibliography of Saddleworth publications are included. There are links to other relevant websites