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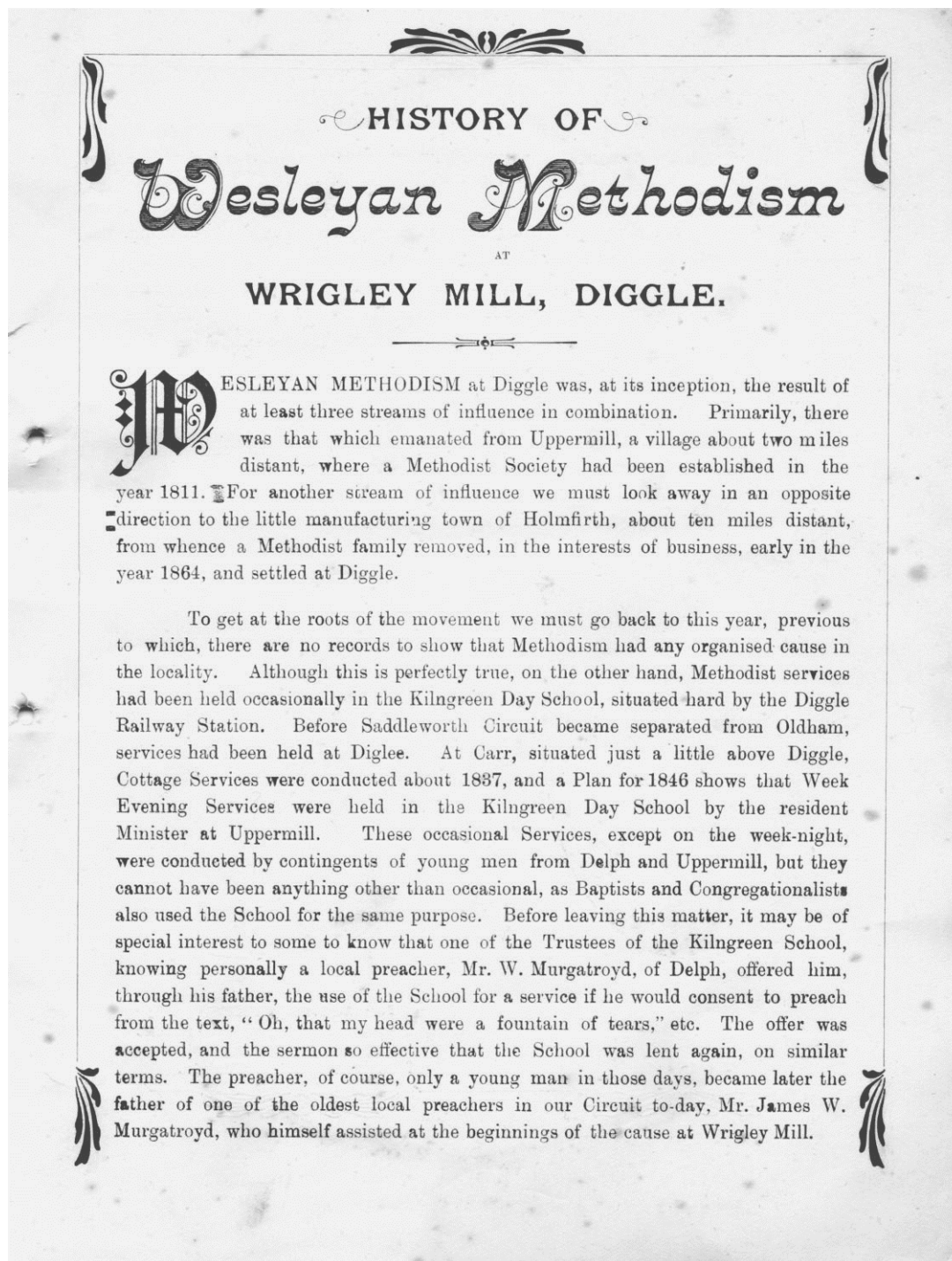
Cover Illustration: Wrigley Mill Wesleyan Chapel and Sunday School, Diggle.
(Saddleworth Museum Collection.)

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HISTORY OF WESLEYAN METHODISM AT WRIGLEY MILL, DIGGLE

Rev. C.F. Burdon Hunter

This history, by the then minister, was originally published in the *History and Silver Jubilee Souvenir 1864 1914 brochure*. A copy is in the Saddleworth Museum Archives and is reproduced below.



Still another factor must be mentioned as contributing to the birth of Methodism in this locality, for powerful as were the influences from Uppermill and Holmfirth, if it had not been for the active sympathy of the late Mr. John Sykes and his wife, it is highly probable that Methodism would never have taken the hold it did. Mr. John Sykes was a manufacturer, in residence at Holly Grove, and a man widely known throughout Saddleworth, and his business would make him known much further afield also. About the year 1864, his wife, calling upon some friends at Uppermill, had her attention directed to the announcement of some special preacher at the local Wesleyan Chapel. She was invited to the service and went, and whilst there she was profoundly impressed by what she heard. She went home to tell her husband, and the result was that Mr. John Sykes himself was ultimately persuaded to attend a service. He went, was impressed, and soundly converted to



Mr. JOHN SYKES,
one of the Founders of Methodism
in Diggle.



Mrs. JOHN SYKES,
whose influence was the result
of the founding
of Methodism in Diggle.



God. There does not seem to have been the least doubt about the genuineness of the change in his life ; he had the " real article," as Methodist people sometimes call it, and his employees were not slow to mark the alteration in his conduct.

Synchronizing with the conversion of Mr. John Sykes, we have the removal of Mr. James Bailey and his family from Holmfirth to Diggle, as stated above. They came purely as a matter of business convenience, Mr. James Bailey to be the manager of the mill known as Wrigley Mill, owned by Mr. Sykes ; and his son, Mr. Matthew Bailey, was employed at the same mill.

The exact site of Wrigley Mill cannot be determined with absolute certainty, but it stood somewhere on the ground now bearing some of the latest extensions to the premises of the Dobercross Loom Works. It is quite certain, however, that some of the stone foundation, either of the mill itself, or of some of the cottages attached to it, can be seen to-day, as forming part of the foundation of some of the new machine shops of the above-mentioned Company.

Now for a moment we must revert to the story of Mr. John Sykes. Flushed with the gladness of the new peace that had become his, his heart enthused by love for God, he, like many others in the history of the Methodist Church, felt strongly the constraint of Christ's love upon him to bring others under the spell of the same love. The call that came to the Apostles of old, the call to begin at Jerusalem, to begin at home, came home to his heart with powerful insistence. What can be done for the immediate neighbourhood ? was the question uppermost in his mind. It is almost certain that the family of Mr. James Bailey would have attached themselves to the Society at Uppermill ; but Mr. Sykes felt that Uppermill was too far away, and this feeling, coupled with his passionate desire to evangelise his own immediate neighbourhood, decided for him what course to take. But the population was very sparse indeed, with scarcely a house to be seen on the Huddersfield Road with the exception of the present old cottages at Weakey, also those dotted here and there on the sides of the neighbouring hills, and those lying around and near the railway station. Still it is the very genius of Methodism to find an opportunity where others cannot, and furthermore, to make the fullest use of the opportunity found, and thus it was with the pioneers of Diggle Methodism.



Attaching to Wrigley Mill was a cottage, the upper room of which Mr. Sykes used as a flannel warehouse. He took into his council Mr. Matthew Bailey, at this time a young man about twenty-five years old, and a Methodist local preacher, to whom he proposed having this room cleaned out and furnished for services. Mr. Sykes was to provide the room, and Mr. Bailey was to be responsible for the preaching,—so seems to have been the agreement between them. The little room was forthwith made the scene of an active renovating process, and in due time it was



Mr. MATTHEW BAILEY,
who conducted the First Service.

suitably furnished (we will not say sumptuously, for no one connected with the cause was wealthy), and opened for Services and Sunday School on the second Sunday in July, 1864. It is quite reasonable to suppose that at first the cause would number among its adherents those who were employed by Mr. Sykes at the mill, to whom he would give a personal invitation to attend the services. As there does not seem to have been any other Methodist people in the vicinity, it must have been that the first adherents were, nominally, Anglicans before.



**Building in which First Service was held
and Sunday School Established.**

On the opening Sunday, 17 scholars were enrolled, and it is interesting to bear in mind that some of those who were connected with the School and Chapel in the earliest years are still with us to-day ; and, much more, some are still on the lists of effective workers. Of these, we can mention the names of Mr. Thomas Lord, Mr. William Hunt, Mrs. Jonathan Wrigley, Mrs. John F. Broadbent, Mrs. Joseph Bradbury, Mrs. James Wood, Mr. Edward Dunlop, Mr. Robert Hunt, Mr. Ben Brierley (the present Junior Society Steward), and Mrs. J.W. Brindley. Splendid assistance was rendered by devoted workers from Uppermill and elsewhere, amongst others being Mr. Richard Platt and Mr. Joseph Swann. The latter held the position of Superintendent for many years in conjunction with Mr. Sykes, after Mr. Matthew Bailey, the first Superintendent—who was also associated with Mr. Sykes in the same office—left the district in 1867. Those who still remember the days when the services were held in the upper room of the little cottage testify that it was veritably an “upper room.” The glow of hearts afire for God ; the serious, profound devotion and consecration of earnest men, the supreme passion to save others, which constituted the inspiring and

initial impulse of the cause, contributed to give the services and work the distinctive features characteristic of the beginnings of almost every Methodist Society, and to impress even the most evilly-disposed persons that religion is a very real thing.



Mr. RICHARD PLATT,
The First Class Leader.



Mr. JOSEPH SWANN,
Superintendent and Leader
in the Early Days.

At first there was no Evening Service held. There was Morning School, Afternoon School, followed by service. The Sunday evenings were given up to the conducting of services in the homes and cottages of the people. This was all in perfect accord with what we have seen to have been the original purpose of Mr. Sykes, and the workers knew that the only effective way to build up a cause is to go out to seek the people from "the highways and the hedges," and not to wait for the people to come. Thus they went out in this way, even to as far as Standedge, the very border of the Parish, to Rock or Rough, and to Bleakhey Nook. A certain Mrs. Betty Rhodes, living at Near Spring, Bleakhey Nook, lent a room in her cottage for services. Mention must be made of the splendid service Mrs. Sykes rendered to the infant cause. She sought personal contact with all around, visiting from house to house, and there is not the slightest doubt that her perseverance and devotion helped very materially the establishment of Methodism in this part of the Saddleworth Circuit. Four other names, Mr. Richard Platt, Mr. Eli Broadbent, Mr. Hervey Broadbent and Mr. John Hall, must be included here, for the history of these early days would be quite incomplete without them. They rendered liberal service to the infant cause, in the matter of counsel and financial aid.



Mr. THOMAS LORD,
Teacher in the Old School,
and Office Bearer
from the commencement.



Mr. WILLIAM HUNT,
one of the First Scholars, and has
a record of over
forty years continuous service.

The time came round for the celebration of the First Anniversary, and it was felt that the little upper room was too small, so Mr. Sykes offered the use of the attic over his house at Holly Grove. On this occasion the special preacher was a Mr. John Hobson, of Holmfirth, and the singing was led by a String Band, of which the following were members: Mr. Cornelius Wood, first violin; Mr. John Whitehead, bass; Mr. Henry Kenworthy, flute; and Mr. John Roberts, cornet. Mr. James Bailey, himself a musician, was the conductor on this occasion, and at other subsequent Anniversaries, for we understand that the string orchestra came up to the time of the building of the present organ in 1886, when they were each presented with a Medal to commemorate their long services. At the Anniversary of 1866, the Club-room on Woolroad was engaged, and packed out. The preacher was Mr. A. Goodare, of Ashton; and in the following year, 1867, the Rev. M. C. Pennington, the stationed Minister at Uppermill, conducted the services in the same Club-room.

Another very interesting point was the composing of the tune, 'Wrigley Mill.' It is not known with certainty whether this took place at the first or second Anniversary. However, be that as it may, on one of these occasions the orchestra and musicians were gathered together for tea. Naturally the conversation would turn upon the music of the day, and it was generally felt that one of the tunes in particular was not up to the standard, and someone suggested he could write a better



Mr. HERVEY BROADBENT,
Superintendent & Office Bearer
for many years.



Mr. JOHN HALL,
Superintendent.
The First Chapel Steward.

himself. With this, they all set to work composing, and on examination, the composition of Mr. William Roberts was judged to be the best. It was forthwith named "Wrigley Mill," and has been played and sung at the close of each Anniversary since

At the ordinary services, held Sunday by Sunday, there was no instrumental music whatever, but someone was appointed from time to time to act as Precentor. The story is told that at the week-night Meetings the firebeater employed at the local Mill used to set the tunes with shovel and poker in hand. His name was Mr. James Haigh, and he could be seen moving between the Meeting room and his work several times in the course of a service. A well authenticated tradition has it that four gentlemen, namely: Matthew Bailey, Joseph Swann, John Lowe, and Thomas Hartley, each had four tunes which, in course of time, came to be known as their tunes, and at the services someone would call for Matthew Bailey's tune, or John Lowe's tune, as the case might be. Students from Didsbury College were sometimes appointed to preach, and it was customary for them to stay at the house of Mr. Sykes. His habit was to give to each who came sufficient flannel to make a shirt. The late E. Lloyd Jones had, what came to be known amongst the students in College at that time, a "flannel sermon," and it seems to have been in great demand.

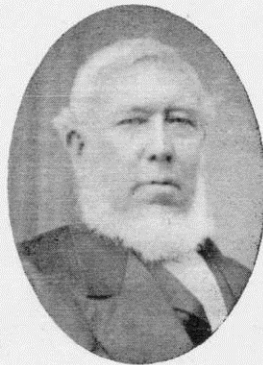
So the little cause went forward, gradually making additions to its membership. By the year 1868, four years after the commencement, there seems to have been at least two Society Classes, and very probably more, Mr. Platt's and Mrs. Sykes' names appearing as Class Leaders. Some splendid evangelistic work was accomplished, and notable conversions took place. Drunkards were reclaimed, and the lives of others influenced towards God and holy conduct. The School witnessed much success from Sunday to Sunday, new names were added to the roll of scholars, and in time it became necessary to find extended accommodation. Mr. James Bailey was living next door to the cottage where the services were held, and he kindly offered the use of some of his rooms, accordingly the Girls' Class met in



EXTERIOR OF PRESENT BUILDING.

his parlour on Sunday afternoons. We also understand that some of the other rooms of his house were used for a similar purpose. The success of the work embarrassed the workers. In order to make room for the afternoon congregation it was found necessary to turn the School out of doors and open the windows in order that those outside might hear and be able to participate in what was proceeding inside. Fortunately the Preachers of those days, certainly those who ministered at Wrigley Mill, were possessed of good voices, and Mr. Matthew Bailey was especially noted for the strength of his vocal powers, and also for the vigour and eloquence of his speech. But it became very evident that before long something would have to

be done to adequately house the growing School and congregation, the premises being now far too small and inefficient. There were fears lest the good work being done might be crippled for want of better accommodation, and there would also be a desire in the hearts of the workers to have a School and Chapel worthy of Methodism and of God. Such pride is perfectly legitimate and praiseworthy, and whenever it has been found it has always led to a noble fruitage.



MR. BENJAMIN SYKES,
who laid the foundation stone.

A site was secured on the Huddersfield Road, about five minutes' walk away from the cottage, a scheme was launched for the erection of suitable buildings, and on Saturday, September 26th, 1868, the foundation stone of the present Chapel was laid by Mr. Benjamin Sykes, the father of John Sykes, one of the pioneers of the cause. It was a very large financial undertaking, and the resources of the people connected with it were very slender, but they believed in God and in their work, and trusted for the future, in God's hands, to provide the means for carrying on His work. In the evening of the day when this stone was laid a great Circuit gathering was held in the Uppermill Mechanics' Hall; there was no building at Diggle large enough, and Uppermill was near and very central for the whole Circuit. Each School—Delph, Uppermill, Greenfield, as well as Wrigley Mill—sent its scholars to this Meeting, all the School Superintendents were on the platform in addition to the Circuit Stewards, other Officials, and Ministers.

In about eleven months the building operations were completed, and the Chapel was formally opened and dedicated in August, 1869. The special Preacher at this noteworthy event was the Rev. John Rattenbury, who had been President of the Conference held at Newcastle, 1861. Throughout the Connexion he was known as the "weeping prophet," a kind of second Jeremiah. The service was held in the evening, his text being "These shall be mine when I make up my Jewels." The first hymn sung at this service was "There is a land of pure delight," to the tune "Mount Pleasant." Those who are with us to-day, and who attended this service, say that the Preacher was at his best, his word was with power, and the effect was wonderful. It took just 10 years from the opening of the Chapel to clear off the whole cost of the new premises, which amounted to £1184. Although the cause was removed on to the Huddersfield Road the old name was retained, and so it is still known by its old designation, "Wrigley Mill Wesleyan Chapel and School."



Mr. THOMAS RAW,
Superintendent,
and Local Preacher.



Mr. THOMAS CLEGG,
Twenty-five Years as Superintendent
and Local Preacher.

From the opening of the new premises up to the year 1872 the Anniversary was held in April, but in that year the fearful weather conditions just at that time made the friends pause, to consider whether it was not too early in the year for an Anniversary. The Rev. James Etchells, the second Minister in the Circuit, had been invited to preach the Sermons, and snow lay thick on the ground. The bad weather kept many away, so it was decided to prevent this, if possible, in the future,



by having the Anniversary in June, and so ever since it has been a fixture on the third Sunday of that month. Looking up the records for this year, we discover the fact that some apparatus for heating the Chapel was installed ; we don't know exactly what kind of apparatus it was, in all probability it consisted of a coke burning stove, but we do wonder how the congregation managed to keep themselves warm during the two or three years when there was nothing whatever to warm the building. We do know, however, that they were warm-hearted, and that they sang vigorously. It may be that they were able to maintain themselves at a moderate temperature in this way.

When the Chapel was building, some discussion took place as to what width the pews should be. Anyone going into the Chapel cannot help noticing how wide the pews are, and the reason for this lies just here. After the discussion just referred to, one of the biggest of the men connected with the Chapel knelt down, his measurements were taken, and the pews were made wide enough so as to admit of his exercising himself with comfort in every necessary position. It was considered if the pews were made so as to suit his requirements they would be adequate and convenient enough for anyone else.

In the year 1875 it became necessary to make some internal alterations to the Chapel. The Choir had hitherto occupied some side pews on the floor, but it was considered an improvement to erect special sittings for them. So the present singers' gallery was made, and at the same time a vestry for the Minister and some infant class rooms were constructed. At the Anniversary of this year it is very interesting to recount that those who figured prominently were members of the same family, for Mr. Matthew Bailey was the preacher, Mr. Walker Bailey, his brother, officiated at the harmonium, Miss Emma Bailey, sister to the foregoing, was the special soloist, whilst their father, Mr. James Bailey, conducted.

It is not known quite when the School at Wrigley Mill adopted the Yorkshire and Lancashire custom of "walking out" on Whit-Friday, probably it was observed from the very beginning. However, on one of these occasions, it rained so hard that the Scholars were unable to line up in procession, and the programme for the day had, perforce, to be abandoned. In that particular year, to make up for what they had not been able to have at Whitsuntide, a procession was arranged on the Christmas Day. It was preceded by a "band," consisting of two Concertinas, one of which was pitched for the hymn "Christians, awake," and the other for "While Shepherds watched their flocks by night."



About the year 1883 there was quite a large influx to the Church. Mr. Matthew Bailey, who left the district in 1867, returned for a short period in 1875, leaving the district again in 1876, coming back once more in 1883: other local preachers also had come to reside at Diggle, amongst whom were Mr. Thomas Clegg, Mr. Francis Eeles, and Mr. Thomas Raw. Revival was in the air, and many were gathered in. The membership at this time would be much more than it is now, but the leakage of later years is accountable for, quite easily, on the ground of removals. Mr. Walker Bailey, who had been a scholar in the School from the time when the movement began in the cottage, and when the cause removed on to Huddersfield Road had been choirmaster and had officiated at the harmonium, left for Upper-mill in 1887, and about the same time others and their families had to leave also; amongst these were Mr. Hadfield Holden and Mrs. B. Heaton. Some are to be found at Uppermill and elsewhere in the Circuit, and many who were trained at the Wrigley Mill School are proving themselves worthy citizens and staunch supporters of the cause of God in various places. Two men have been sent out into the ministry, namely, the Rev. J. B. Brindley (who is to-day the Chairman of the Honduras District) and the Rev. Edward Barraclough.



Mr. WALKER BAILEY,
who has occupied every position in the
School and Chapel,
and been present at every Anniversary
and taken part in every
Annual Scholars Party from the commencement.

During the latter part of the year 1886 the present organ was placed in the Chapel. Up to this period a harmonium had been used, played by Mr. Walker

Bailey, who had as his assistant Mr. Ben Brierley. It was felt that something better and more powerful was necessary, and a scheme was inaugurated in October, 1886, and on January 29th, 1887, the new organ was opened by Mr. Albert Hudson, Mus. Bac., of Uppermill (now of Oldham). The Rev. R. Wilberforce Starr preached in the afternoon, and in the evening lectured on "The Wedding Ring." The most remarkable thing about this effort was the expeditious way in which the whole cost of £276 7s. 2½d. was cleared off, and the wonderful manner in which the workers captured the practical sympathy of the community, despite creed or trade. On the opening day the Saddleworth Vocal Society were present and rendered selections from "The Messiah," and on succeeding Sundays the choirs of the Circuit came and rendered attractive services; not only did the Circuit help, but Dobercross and Saddleworth Churches lent their choirs. Special Preachers from Manchester and the district officiated on three succeeding Sundays, viz.: Rev. Richard Platt, Rev. J. Hothersall and the Rev. T. Demerick. The kindly feeling was very general, the Dobercross Loom Works Company, through Mr. Jonathan Wrigley, the manager, providing a public tea in aid of the scheme, and even the proprietors of the public house at Weakey, known as the "Hanging Gate," gave a tea which realised about £8. So wholeheartedly and unitedly did everyone work, that within three months the total cost was raised, and the organ paid for.



INTERIOR OF PRESENT CHAPEL.

From about 1892 to 1898, a great deal was done to the School premises. The history of the School from its foundation has been one of steady growth, and in January 1893, the books showed the total number of scholars to be 210. Extensions became necessary, the ground for the extension was given by the late Mr. James Hollingworth, so towards the end of 1892 the enlargement of the School was commenced. It was re-opened on the 4th of March, 1893, but in 1895 further improvements were made in the shape a cloak room, and a partition was erected to make the building more compact, and two years later in 1897, the Schoolroom was fitted up with new forms. Whilst mentioning the School furniture, it will be of interest to many to know that the present Superintendent's desk was the pulpit used in the old Wrigley Mill. Previous to 1864, Mr. Sykes had used it for business purposes. Further room was also needed for the Young Men's Class, so in 1898 the upper Schoolroom was adapted for their purpose.



Mr. JAMES HOLROYD,
Superintendent
and Chapel Official.



Mr. HERBERT BUCKLEY,
Superintendent,
Secretary, and Chapel Official.

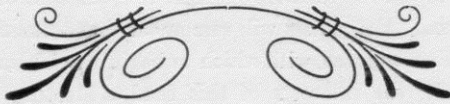
The year 1899 witnessed a very remarkable outburst of enthusiasm for the Twentieth Century Fund. Methodists will remember that tremendous and successful effort to raise one million guineas, with which to begin the labour of the new century just about to dawn. In the interests of this fund, a Meeting was held at Wrigley Mill on March 7th, and eighty-five guineas were promised by the members.



On one side of the Chapel a stream runs, and for some years it was gradually widening its bed and encroaching upon the property of the Trust. To prevent any further loss from this cause, a very substantial boundary wall was built and the yard was asphalted. At the same time, the present outbuildings were erected. New lights were fixed in the Chapel, numerous other external and internal improvements were effected, and at the Bazaar held at Easter, 1904, the magnificent sum of nearly £415 was raised, enabling the officials to once more feel free from debt.

Time and space forbid much more being said in connection with this Sketch of the History of Wrigley Mill. The whole story is one of effort, and struggle, and achievement, and although it has not been possible to mention the names of all who have at any time and in any way served this Church, the omission will be made up for by the long lists of office bearers appended. As for the present celebration, and the effort associated with it, all that can be said is this, that the claims of the School at present are such as to render such an effort vitally necessary. In addition to some debt that must be cleared off, we want suitable rooms for our Young Men's Class, and also for the Young Ladies. The Young Men's Class has grown wonderfully, but is at present accommodated in the comfortless and altogether inefficient upper School, whilst the Young Ladies have really no room at all, and have to meet in the Chapel.

The workers of the present day are possessed of the spirit that animated the pioneers of the cause. They are working in splendid harmony, and look forward with hope that this effort to put their house in order will be abundantly successful. The whole community are in debt to this work of God carried on for so many years, therefore let us labour together in this noble enterprise for the Master. And now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.



THE HOME FRONT IN SADDLEWORTH – 3

Peter Fox & Alice Sheead

This is another in the series looking at the home front in Saddleworth during the Second World War and recounts the memories of Alice Sheead (nee Wilson) who came to Saddleworth from Brighton as an evacuee and many thanks to Alice for sharing her memories and photographs. Peter Fox

A Brighton Evacuee

We were living in Brighton and had to leave due to the threat of bombing on the south coast. We departed from Brighton Station on the 21st March, 1941. The date I can't really forget as it was my 5th birthday. I left with my two sisters, Joyce who was the older of us aged 13 and Pam who was 7 and we were lucky we were accompanied by our mum. I don't remember much about it apart from the fact that the journey was split and I remember 'us lot' staying over night in a hospital and my bed being next to my sister Joyce, Pam's bed was opposite near a door. In the morning I remember the door opened and the matron (I believe) came in followed by a cat, which jumped on Pam's bed.



Portrait of the three of us, Pam on the left, Joyce in the centre and me on the right. photographed outside Mrs and Mrs Wood's cottage at Heathfields, Uppermill

I don't remember arriving in Uppermill or what really happened afterwards. I have been told that we were split up and Joyce and I went to someone else before going to the Wood's, I don't think we stayed long because it wasn't very nice and my mum came and took us away.

We were fortunate after this as we were moved into the care of Julius and Alice Wood who lived at Heathfields Cottages, off Church Road in a house that overlooked Springmeadow. The neighbours were Fred Wood who was brother to Julius and Fred's wife Bessie; they had in their care an evacuee Paulette Goddard who I think came from London.



Portrait of Julius, Bessie, Alice and Fred Wood at the back and at the front on the left front Paulette (another evacuee) and myself on the on the left and myself on the right taken in the garden at Heathfields cottages, Uppermill

I attended Pickhill School (Uppermill Council School) and I remember one of my teachers was a Miss Longbottom. The headmaster at the time was Mr Peat. I remember the dentist visiting the school and I believe the 'dental chair' would be in a room which was off the main hall, I also remember sitting in that chair and the nurse holding my legs down.

Every day after school I would go to Kenworthy's Mill which was near the school and meet Mrs Wood where she operated the looms (two or three - I really cannot be that accurate). I also used to some days walk across the fields ('Springmeadow') wearing Mrs Wood's high heeled shoes, though this must have only been during the summer months to meet Mr Wood who always wore clogs as I am sure that most of them would have in those days.

I did of course go to school and attended Uppermill Council School but don't remember much of it apart from having a copy of my School Report from December 1943 when I was aged 7 which under 'Conduct and General Remarks' says "Alice is a

very neat and careful worker. She always does her best” so that wasn’t too bad. I remember for play after school having a hoop and running down Church Road with it.

On a Sunday I had to go to the Methodist Church, twice to attend Sunday school and once in the evening with Mr and Mrs Wood – during the sermon I would suck mint imperials, I was bored stiff!!! I did receive a bible from the Chapel, presented on the 18th October 1942; I still have the bible today.

Being involved the church I do remember walking in the Whitsuntide processions but I can’t say that I was in every one. I also remember that there also used to be a parade where the girls would be dressed in white and some would carry baskets of flowers (May Day).

I don’t remember anything in particular about the war except that one night there was a crowd of people in the cottage and I remember Mrs Wood wearing a pair of trousers. I was very excited because it seemed to very late at night, there was a lot of talking going on, I was still up and dressed and not in bed. The only other thing I remember is Ration Books when I came back to Brighton, in fact, I still have mine!!!



Heathfields Cottages as they were in around 1960 little changed from when Alice had stayed in the one on the right. Photograph by Colin Fox.

I was nine when I returned to Brighton in 1945 having stayed in Saddleworth for four years. There was a time in 1942 when I thought I was going back home but it didn’t happen. I do have a portrait that was taken for the supposed event when in March 1942 I was taken to the photographers, F. Brierley, 96 Union Street, Oldham for a studio portrait with myself and Mr and Mrs Wood.



Mr and Mrs Wood photographed on the seafront at Brighton on one of their visits to see us after we had returned, yes that's me (Alice) in the middle – but don't say anything about the hat!

After we had all returned to Brighton Mr and Mrs Kenworthy spent a couple of holidays with us, Pam and I loved them coming because they would take us to an ice cream shop on the sea front where they introduced us to an ice cream called 'knicker-bocker glory' – something we had never had before and only had when they visited. They also came to my eldest sister's 21st birthday party and they must have come in advance as Mrs Kenworthy iced the birthday cake.

The family stayed in touch with Mrs and Mrs Wood until they sadly passed away.

What happened to my other sister's and mum whilst I was with the Wood's? Well my mum did come up with us and stayed in Saddleworth for a period, I think it was in Dobcross but I can't remember how long she stayed, all I can remember is visiting her

and going up a very long steep slope with a railing on one side (probably Nicker Brow). Joyce, who was my older sister stayed with Mr and Mrs Wood for about three months and then went to Doncaster. My other sister, Pam in December 1941 was staying nearby to me with Mr and Mrs Ward at 7 Heathfields Cottages, Uppermill but I don't know where she had stayed before this. She left Mr and Mrs Ward and went to live in Dobcross but, again, can't remember who with. In December 1942 she was staying with Mr and Mrs Bennett at Hawthorn Terrace, by December 1943 they were living at 1 Buckley Street, Uppermill and Pam lived with them until her return to Brighton in 1945. Pam had been aged 7¾ when she had been evacuated from Brighton and was twelve when she returned home.



A beautiful portrait of the three of us – Pam on the left, Joyce in the centre and me (Alice) on the right, it may be that this should have started the article as this photograph was taken in Brighton prior to us leaving for Yorkshire.

I did keep a link with the area in that I still have friends and also I married a man from over the hill, from Skelmanthorpe, a village near Huddersfield, and come back every year to visit the 'in-laws'.

Alice Sheead (née Wilson) - 2010

EARLY SADDLEWORTH RECORDS - 6

The Peak Forest Eyre c.1250-1

Victor Khadem

Transcription and translation Mike Buckley

The rolls of a forest eyre relating to Derbyshire, recording offences contrary to the Forest Law in the Peak Forest, shed some light on the history of Saddleworth's people in the mid-thirteenth century, a period for which there is little documentation.

Amongst the convictions for poaching deer are two separate records of men with Saddleworth connections. The first record relates to Robert de Stapleton, lord of the manor of Saddleworth, who took six harts from the forest, and the second describes three members of the de Saddleworth family as 'evildoers' to the venison. The primary purpose of this article is to examine who these men were, and to highlight the importance of those men who served as pledges for Stapleton and his associate, John de Smetheton. Firstly, however, the Saddleworth references will be put into some context by looking at the importance of royal forests and the Forest Law which governed them, and the motivations for poaching in these vast game reserves.

I – The Forest Law

In our time, king Henry II., in reply to the inquires of Emanuel, emperor of Constantinople concerning the situation, nature, and striking peculiarities of the British island, among other remarkable circumstances mentioned the following: [inter alia] The wild animals, and particularly the stags and hinds, are so abundant, owing to the little molestation they receive, that in our time, in the northern parts of the island towards the Peak, when pursued by the hounds and hunters, they contributed, by their numbers, to their own destruction¹.

Ensuring that the 'wild animals' of the realm suffered from 'little molestation' was a matter of importance for the medieval kings of England. This was so much so that after the Conquest, 'forests' were created across the Normans' newly acquired land for the specific purpose of protecting the 'venison' (the wild animals) and the 'vert' (the flora which both nourished and provided a habitat for the venison).² The term 'forest' did not necessarily imply heavily wooded land, but land subject to the jurisdiction of the Forest Law, which operated in parallel to the Common Law and which was directly accountable to the king. This land was strictly managed, ensuring it was well stocked with all the beasts of the chase for the hunting of the king. There were further economic benefits that the Crown could accrue from forests: valuable stocks of timber were maintained, and natural resources such as nuts and honey were harvested.³ For those living within the bounds of the Forest, new enclosures were

¹ This letter is quoted by Gerald of Wales in his 'Description of Wales' written in 1183-5. For a printed edition, see Gerald of Wales (ed. E. Rhys), *Description of Wales*, (London, 1908), pp. 167-8.

² It has been argued that though it is the Normans who are most famous for controlling hunting, there was certainly an element of continuity with their Anglo-Saxon predecessors, G. Jones, 'A Common of Hunting'? Forests, Lordship, and Community Before and After the Conquest', in J. Langton and G. Jones (Eds.), *Forests and Chases of Medieval England and Wales, c. 1000 – c.1500*, (Oxford, 2010), pp. 54-61.

³ *ibid.*, pp. 39-41 and C.R. Young, *The Royal Forests of Medieval England*, (Pennsylvania Press, 1979), pp. 123-127.

punished by fines and the amount of livestock that could be pastured in the open country was strictly regulated. The Forest Law was subject to widespread discontentment due to the severity of the fines imposed for contravening regulations. Indeed, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle wrote that King William 'loved the stags as much as if he were their father.'⁴ The Charter of the Forests (1217) went some way to remedying this, ensuring, for example, that no one would be subject to mutilation or execution as a result of a trespass, though substantial fines were still levied against those who flouted the Forest Law. However, these punishments failed to deter people from illegally enclosing land and poaching. Popular legends such as Robin Hood vented dissatisfaction at the Forest Law, and court records show that acts of open defiance were not unheard of – on the death of Henry III, poachers in Cannock Forest celebrated by hunting there 'almost all day with clamour and tumult.'⁵

A distinct administration developed regulating royal forests. From 1239 overall responsibility was vested in two justices, one who dealt with the forests north of the Trent, and another who dealt with the forests south of the Trent.⁶ Each royal forest had its own warden as well as four verderers who were accountable to the king. Responsible for particular localities within each forest were hereditary foresters and riding foresters who reacted to crimes on the ground.⁷ They attached (arrested) offenders, and presented them to local forest courts. Attachment Courts, which sat every six weeks, tried and amerced offenders of lesser crimes against the vert, however, for crimes against the venison they had no jurisdiction. Instead, as soon an offence had occurred, a Special Inquisition was undertaken by the four neighbouring townships, and the guilty party was attached to appear before the justices of the forest when they visited the county at the next eyre. The most important function of the eyre was to decide upon the extent to which convicted individuals were to be amerced, leading Turner to argue 'it was almost as much a financial assembly as a court of law'.⁸ Technically, an eyre was to hear pleas in any one forest every three years, though in practice they were considerably less thorough than this. There is evidence for the justices visiting the Peak Forest on only three occasions during the thirteenth century. It was this infrequency that led to many feeling that the Forest Law was 'capricious and arbitrary', being used to raise huge sums in amercements, especially when the king was in need of money.⁹

In his letter to the emperor of Constantinople, Henry II was justified in describing the abundance of stags and hinds in his kingdom, largely because of the conducive habitats which land under Forest Law afforded them. But it was their great numbers that that attracted all strata of society to hunt in the royal forests, despite the fact this was expressly forbidden without royal warrant. In part, this was due to the fact that venison was deemed to be the most luxurious of all meats and was thus highly sought after - it was regularly hunted in anticipation of special occasions such as significant

⁴ Quoted in Young, *The Royal Forests*, p. 3.

⁵ J. Birrell, 'Families and Friendships: Hunting in the Medieval English Forest', in J. Langton and G. Jones, *Forests and Chases*, p. 82.

⁶ Young, *The Royal Forests*, p. 74.

⁷ For a discussion of the role of each forest of these forest officials and the various local forest courts see G.J. Turner, *Select Pleas of the Forest*, Publications of the Selden Society 13 (vol. for 1899), (London, 1901), pp. xiv-l; and Young, *The Royal Forests*, pp. 77-85.

⁸ Turner, *Select Pleas of the Forest*, p. lx.

⁹ Young, *The Royal Forests*, p. 88

Feast Days and weddings.¹⁰ Hungry peasants, whose primary objective was to stock their larders, set snares and traps to catch the deer in the most efficacious manner possible.¹¹ However, poaching was not merely about opportunism. For members of the gentry and aristocracy hunting was both theatre and sport; to outwit a hart, perceived as the most noble of all the beasts of the chase, was an assertion of masculinity which exhibited both physical prowess and a strategic mind. It has also been argued that there the illegality of poaching added an exciting extra dimension to hunting.¹² The poachers were part of a game in which they aimed to outmanoeuvre not only their quarry, but also the foresters, defenders of the king's interest.

II – The Peak Forest and the Dating of the Eyre

The most significant royal forest in Derbyshire was the Peak Forest. It covered an area of some 40½ square miles, stretching from the vast parish of Glossop in the north to parts of Bakewell in the south.¹³ Administratively it was divided into three districts: Campana (the 'open country') in the south, Hopedale to the east, and Longdendale to the north and north-west. The Peak Forest's northern most boundary was the River Etherow which also served as the parish boundary of Glossop and Mottram, and the county boundary severing Derbyshire from Cheshire. Thus, the Peak Forest was relatively easy to access from Saddleworth, lying just over a mile distant from its moorland border with Mottram.

It had been assumed by John Pym Yeatman, the first to transcribe the roll, that the eyre dated from 36th Henry III (1251-2) due to a Commission in the Patent Rolls.¹⁴ However, this commission only relates to investigating purprestures in Derbyshire (the illegal construction of houses in the forest) and not to pleas against the venison and vert. Furthermore, evidence from the Fine Rolls shows that a number of men convicted for offences in the eyre arranged payments of their debts with the Exchequer in 35th Henry III (1250-1), thus the section of the roll concerned with pleas of venison, must date before this.¹⁵ It should be borne in mind that the amercement of those convicted was a slow process; the last eyre to visit the Peak Forest was in 1216, meaning that Stapleton and the de Saddleworths may have committed their offences at any time between 1216 and 1250-1.¹⁶

¹⁰ B. A. Hanawalt, 'Men's Games, King's Deer: Poaching in Medieval England' in B. A. Hanawalt, *Of Good and Ill Repute*, (Oxford 1998), p. 146.

¹¹ For further detail see on the experience of the peasantry, see J. Birrell, 'Forest Law and the Peasantry in the Later Thirteenth Century', in P. R. Coss and S. D. Lloyd (eds), *Thirteenth Century England II: Proceedings of the Newcastle Upon Tyne Conference 1987* (Woodbridge, 1988), pp. 149-64.

¹² Hanawalt, 'Men's Games', p. 143.

¹³ J.C. Cox, *The Royal Forests of England* (London, 1905), pp. 150-1.

¹⁴ J. P. Yeatman, *The Feudal History of the County of Derby*, Vol. III, Sec. V (Kingston on Thames), p. 193 and *Calendar of the Patent Rolls*, Henry III, Vol. 3 (London, HMSO, 1906), p. 161.

¹⁵ It is on the Fine Rolls that the English royal Chancery recorded, amongst other things, how amerced individuals were going to pay fines they had incurred. The earliest Fine made as a direct result of the pleas of the Peak Forest is that of Thomas Grelley on 9th January 35 Henry III (1250), The National Archives (TNA) C 60/48 m. 20. This can be found online at http://frh3.org.uk/content/calendar/roll_048.html#it643_011 accessed 30th August 2011.

¹⁶ The eyre records a conviction relating to Willim de Ferrers, earl of Derby, who took 2,000 beasts when he was bailiff (1216-1222). TNA, DL 39/1/3. m. 1.

III – The de Saddleworths

Being bountifully stocked, the Peak forest clearly proved a temptation for three members of the de Saddleworth family, William de Saddleworth, Adam de Saddleworth, and William nephew of William de Saddleworth. The three men failed to appear before the justices in Nottingham as instructed, and they therefore seem to have avoided amercement. Nothing is known of the two William de Saddleworths, however Adam appears in contemporary documents frequently. He was pardoned for the murder of John son of Herbert and William de Doddewurth in 1254 and may well be the Adam son of Richard de Saddleworth who bore witness to a couple of Saddleworth charters in the latter half of the century.¹⁷ Undoubtedly the first mentioned William and Adam were related, but how is not made clear. The eyre is consistent in detailing filial and fraternal relationships, so they must have been more distantly related, possibly as cousins.

Hunting as a family was common. Birrell has shown that in Feckenham Forest fathers and sons regularly hunted together, as did brothers, even after they had established their own households.¹⁸ Although the Saddleworths appear to be more disparately related than this, the hunt undoubtedly drew them together, acting as a social glue, unifying them through a shared love of the sport. The importance of this has been widely acknowledged and led Barbara Hanawalt to observe ‘the family that slays together stays together.’¹⁹

IV – Robert de Stapleton and John de Smetheton

Robert de Stapleton, one of the more serious offenders recorded in the eyre, hunted in the Peak Forest with a member of his household, John de Smetheton, his clerk. Being convicted of taking six harts, he must have made a significant number of forays into the forest. Unlike many of the gentry convicted in the eyre, he had the privilege of free chase in his manor of Saddleworth, giving him similar rights there as the king enjoyed over the royal forest. It seems most unlikely that the harts he took from the Peak represent animals he had chased into the forest from his own manor owing to the boggy, rock-strewn terrain between Saddleworth and Derbyshire. More probably, the Saddleworth stocks of venison were low because of disease or over zealous hunting necessitating Stapleton to venture further afield. Clearly, Stapleton had consciously flaunted the Forest Law in order to access the King’s venison.

Unlike the de Saddleworths, Robert de Stapleton did appear before the justices at Nottingham. There he was detained in prison and amerced the substantial sum of 60 marks, a punishment which took into consideration not only the scale of his offence, but also his socially superior status.²⁰ The Fine Rolls record that his amercement was to be paid in several instalments: 100s. in Michaelmas 1251, a further 100s. at Easter

¹⁷ *Calendar of the Patent Rolls*, Henry III, Vol. 4, (London, HMSO, 1908), p. 353; Grant of land from Richard de Staveley to Ralph his brother, in M. Buckley and V. Khadem, ‘Miscellaneous Charters in the Raines MSS’, *Saddleworth Historical Society Bulletin (SHSB)*, Vol. 40, No. 3, (Autumn 2010), pp. 76-77; Entail of William Welfed to the Staveleys, 1293, OD/WBD/X/63, Beaumont of Whitley Collection, West Yorkshire Archive Service (Kirklees).

¹⁸ Birrell, ‘Families and Friendships’, p. 83.

¹⁹ Hanawalt, ‘Men’s Games’, p. 150.

²⁰ Young, *The Royal Forests*, p. 104.

1252 and then £10 per annum (leaving four years of repayment).²¹ The Crown clearly took little if no offence at his abuse of the Forest Law, for in 1255 he was granted Free Warren, that is, the exclusive right to hunt hares and foxes, over his demesne lands at Stapleton, Thorpe and Cudworth.²²

Most amercements recorded in the eyre, especially when they refer to members of the local gentry and aristocracy, describe the whole party of hunters engaged in a specific misdemeanour, but in the case of Stapleton only John de Smetheton, his clerk, is referred to. Indeed, Smetheton's name was not included until Stapleton appeared before the justices at Nottingham, when it was added to the conviction. In reality Stapleton probably had several other companions who managed to escape detection.

It is not clear whether Smetheton, as Stapleton's clerk, performed ecclesiastical or administrative duties, or both. Being literate he could draw up and inspect charters and other important documentation, whilst at the same time he could have served as chaplain in Stapleton's private chapels at Darrington and Thorpe Stapleton. That he acted as attorney for one Emma son of Philip in a Fine concerning land at Bramley and Armley, is certainly suggestive of his administrative abilities.²³ He is recorded witnessing a large number of charters with Stapleton relating to land across Yorkshire, including all but one of the 1247 quitclaims relating to the lands of Roche Abbey in Friarmere, implying he had been a member of Stapleton's household several years before his conviction in 1250-1.²⁴

V – The Pledges of Robert de Stapleton and John de Smetheton

Although Stapleton's hunting party is not recorded, the pledges Smetheton and he found to vouch for their future behaviour help reveal a network of trusted men, who were kinsmen, tenants and servants. Because of his socially superior status, Stapleton only required three pledges. One of these men, Walter Clerk, Citizen of York, has not been identified, but the two others, Adam de Everingham and Matthew de Shepley were both men of importance, with whom Stapleton can be associated with through contemporary documentation. Adam de Everingham was the son of Robert, whose patrimony lay at Everingham in the East Riding of Yorkshire. On Robert's marriage with Isabel, the sister and heiress of Thomas de Birkin, the Everinghams inherited substantial estates in Nottinghamshire as well as the office of warden of Sherwood Forest, a position through which the family were able to exert considerable influence and patronage.²⁵ Like Stapleton, Adam de Everingham held manors in the Honour of Pontefract, and the pair of them headed the list of witnesses to two charters relating to

²¹ TNA, C 60/48 m. 12. This can be found online at <http://frh3.org.uk/content/calendar/roll_048.html#it643_011> accessed 30th August 2011.

²² *Calendar of the Charter Rolls*, Vol. I, (London, HMSO, 1903), p. 443.

²³ Col. J. Parker (ed), *Feet of Fines for the County of York, from 1232 to 1246*, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, Vol. 67 (Printed for the Society 1925), p. 101.

²⁴ For example, R. Holmes (ed), *The Chartulary of St. John of Pontefract*, Volume I, (CSJPI), Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, Vol. 20, (Printed for the Society, 1899) pp. 181, 287 for the Friarmere quitclaims, see, M. Buckley, 'Early Saddleworth Record – 3', *SHSB*, Vol. 39, No. 4 (Winter 2009), pp. 95-98.

²⁵ For a pedigree of the Everinghams, see Holmes, *CSJPI*, pp. 254-5; for the IPM of Isabel see *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem*, Vol. I (London, HMSO, 1904), p. 65; for Adam's IPM see W. Brown (ed), *Yorkshire Inquisitions of the Reigns of Henry III and Edward I*, Vol. 2, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, Vol. 23 (Printed for the Society, 1891), pp.216-7.

the land of the Priory of St. John, Pontefract, one of which was dated 1248, clearly showing that the men shared an earlier connection.²⁶

Matthew de Shepley was an undertenant on the manor of Wakefield, holding the manor of Shepley in the parish of Kirkburton. There is some evidence that his father, another Matthew, had been steward to the earls Warrene in Wakefield, and furthermore, like Stapleton, he was a benefactor of Roche Abbey.²⁷ In 1247, he witnessed one of the Friarmere quitclaims along with Robert de Stapleton, and a close association between the two men may be inferred from the fact that Stapleton was a pledge for Shepley, who himself was convicted for poaching in the same eyre.²⁸

In contrast to the small number of important pledges which Stapleton required, the future behaviour of John de Smetheton was pledged for by thirteen individuals, five of whom are described as being from Saddleworth. An examination of printed Yorkshire sources from the thirteenth century reveals that these men can be closely associated with both Stapleton and each other, confirming that they represent something of a social grouping. Robert de Veylley was one of the knights who appointed a jury of twelve (which included Robert de Stapleton) in a grand assize of 1246.²⁹ He frequently appointed and served on Yorkshire juries up until 1268.³⁰ In addition, along with the abovementioned Adam de Saddleworth and Eudo de Sutton (see below), he was pardoned for two murders in 1254.³¹ John de Curtenay is described as being 'of Thorp', one of Stapleton's manors.³² In 1240, Stapleton quitclaimed land at Thorpe to him, and in 1280, Curtenay's daughter is described as holding a messuage there.³³ Alan son of Robert de Smetheton may have been the father of John, and can probably be identified as the Alan son of Robert son of Oliver de Smetheton who granted lands to St. John, Pontefract in c.1220.³⁴ He witnessed one of the 1247 Friarmere charters along with Robert de Stapleton and John de Smetheton and presumably resided at Smetheton, a manor nearby two of Stapleton's holdings, Darrington and Stapleton.³⁵ He served with two of Stapleton's other pledges, William Scortebaf (Scorchebeef) and Eudo (Giles) de Sutton, on a jury to investigate the

²⁶ R. Holmes (ed), *The Chartulary of St. John of Pontefract*, Volume 2 (CSJPII), Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, Vol. 30, (Printed for the Society, 1902), pp. 370-2 and p. 461.

²⁷ H.J. Morehouse, *The History and Topography of the Parish of Kirkburton*, (Huddersfield, 1861), pp. 99-101.

²⁸ Although the witness is actually given as 'Martin de Sepelay', it seems most likely this was a misreading by the seventeenth-century transcriber, M. Buckley, 'Early Saddleworth Records – 3', p. 97; TNA, DL 39/1/3, m. 3.

²⁹ Parker, *Feet of Fines, 1232 to 1246*, p. 144n.

³⁰ *ibid.* pp. 131-2n.; and Col. J. Parker, *Feet of Fines for the County of York, from 1246 to 1272*, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, Volume 82, (Printed for the Society, 1932), p. 169n.

³¹ *Calendar of the Patent Rolls*, Henry III, Vol. 4, (London, HMSO, 1908), p. 353.

³² Thorpe Stapleton in the parish of Whitkirk.

³³ Parker, *Feet of Fines, 1232 to 1246*, p. 62; and F.H. Slingsby, *Feet of Fines for the County of York, from 1272 to 1300*, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, Vol. 121 (1956), p. 45.

³⁴ When he witnessed the one of the Friarmere quitclaims he is described as 'Alan son of Robert de Smetheton' and John is described as 'John son of Alan de Smetheton', M. Buckley, 'Early Saddleworth Records – 3', p. 96; Holmes, *CSJPII*, p. 351.

³⁵ M. Buckley, 'Early Saddleworth Records – 3'.

extent of damages done to Edmund de Lacy's land at Snaith and Cowick in 1251.³⁶ Scorchebeef and Sutton served as witnesses, along with Smetheton and Stapleton, to an undated charter relating to the Lincolnshire lands of the Reinviles, a Yorkshire family with kinship ties to Stapleton.³⁷ Sutton also served on another jury with John de Smetheton relating to the lands of Ralph de Fetherstan.³⁸ Stapleton held a significant estate at Swillington and it seems likely that William de Leghes was a tenant of his there. Thus, a preliminary examination of mid-thirteenth century evidence reveals that Smetheton's pledges were neighbours, tenants and administratively connected, serving together as witnesses and jurors.

That Smetheton should have five pledges from Saddleworth indicates that the men of Stapleton's manor had a reasonably close relationship with their superior lord. Furthermore their names help confirm that the thirteenth century was a period when members of the landholding classes from elsewhere were immigrating into the district. It has already been established that a member of the Platt family of Withington (Lancashire) settled at Hollingreave, and that early in the century a junior branch of the Staveleys of Staveley (Cheshire) settled in Shawmere.³⁹ It is now clear that a younger son of the senior branch of the Staveleys, Alexander, had settled in Saddleworth by the mid-century, possibly occupying one of his father's estates there. Men were coming to Saddleworth from further afield – the presence of a William 'de Alferton' indicates his origins over 50 miles away, in the Derbyshire manor of Alferton. The most intriguing Saddleworth pledge is Hugh son of Robert de Horton. He was not a landless younger son, but the inheritor of his father's estates at Great Horton, Little Horton and Clayton (near Bradford).⁴⁰ His paternal grandfather was Hugh de Stapleton, brother of William de Stapleton, lord of Saddleworth, making him Robert de Stapleton's cousin. Thus, families were being attracted to Saddleworth from many miles away. There must have been a number of factors influencing this, but these pledges prove that one motive could be familial connections.

The two remaining Saddleworth pledges are members of families who had been established for longer in the district. As is evidenced above, Richard de Saddleworth was a member of a family of which there were many members by middle of the thirteenth century. Where exactly they lived is unclear, but in 1322 one Robert de Saddleworth held a messuage and land on the manor for life.⁴¹ Robert son of Gilbert de Quick may well have held the sub-manor of Quick, which had no direct connection with the manor of Saddleworth. He witnessed one of the 1247 quitclaims with Stapleton and Smetheton, as well as Stapleton's last grant of land in Shawmere to

³⁶ W. Brown, *Yorkshire Inquisitions of the Reigns of Henry II and Edward I*, Vol. 1, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, Vol. 12 (1892), p. 24.

³⁷ Lincolnshire Archives, MON 3/27/23.

³⁸ Brown, *Yorkshire Inquisitions*, Vol. I, p. 2.

³⁹ J. Booker, *A History of the Ancient Chapel of Birch*, Chetham Society, Vol. 47 (1859), p. 191 and M. Buckley, 'Seeing Through a Glass Darkly', *SHSB*, Vol. 36, No. 2, p. 36.

⁴⁰ His grandfather Hugh had been granted the lands by Robert de Lacy in c. 1200, W. Farrer, *Early Yorkshire Charters*, Vol. 3 (Edinburgh, 1916), p. 204. This Hugh's son Robert died prior to July 1240, though the writ for his IPM is dated 18th May 1246. He was seised of 54 acres of demesne, 25 acres in villeinage and had 11 bovates and five score acres in the hands of freemen. Hugh, his heir, was of full age. Brown, *Yorkshire Inquisitions*, Vol. I, p. 5.

⁴¹ TNA, SC 6/1145/21.

Richard de Staveley.⁴² If, as it seems most probable, Quick held the manor of Quick, it is noteworthy that he too is described as ‘of Saddleworth’, this being the earliest description of Quick being a part of Saddleworth.

VI - Conclusion

The two Saddleworth related references in the Peak Forest eyre add significantly to our knowledge of the district in the thirteenth century. It has always been assumed that Robert de Stapleton hunted in the Pennines because of the status of Saddleworth as a free chase, however it can now be proved that in the first half of the century this was in fact the case. Furthermore, hunting was not only the preserve of the manorial lord, the de Saddleworths exemplify the fact that free tenants and manorial tenants also hunted. There must have been dozens of other instances of illegal hunting, both in the Peak Forest and in Saddleworth, which were never brought to trial.

The most valuable insight afforded by the references is in respect of settlement trends in Saddleworth during a period when contemporary evidence is rather lacking. Whilst there were families who must have been settled in Saddleworth for many generations, it is now clear that during the thirteenth century there was a pattern of immigration from districts many miles away. Those settling in Saddleworth were not just craftsmen and subsistence farmers, but members of the landholding classes. Indeed, not all of them, as might be expected, were younger sons who had suffered as a result of primogeniture – some owned estates in their own right. A comparative study with other Pennine manors, where documentary evidence for this period is more complete, may help elucidate some of the main reasons for this trend. Nevertheless, in the case of two of the pledges, family ties seem to have been a contributory factor. The implications of this immigration are significant. It suggests that the Saddleworth was a far more outward looking place than one might initially think – in the mid thirteenth-century, individuals from Saddleworth would have had close associations with families from across the North and possibly further afield. It is therefore in this context that we should begin to understand the early history of the township.

Pleas of the Peak Forest c.1250-1⁴³

Present[atun] e[st] & con[victum] p[er] p[re]d[ic]tos q[uo]d Rob[ertus] de Stapelton’ {& Joh[annes] de Smetheton’ cl[er]icus suus}⁴⁴ de Com[itatis] Ebor[acensis] cep[ivit] i[n] ead[am] for[est]a vj c[er]vos s[i]n[e] War[ento] Qui no[n] venit n[e]c fuit attach[iatus] &

⁴² M. Buckley, ‘Early Saddleworth Records – 3’, p. 97; and Grant by Robert de Stapleton to Richard fil Robert de Staveley, University of Leeds, Brotherton Library, Special Collections, Wentworth of Woolley Papers, MS [Deposits] 1946/1/Box 4.

⁴³ TNA, DL 39/1/3 m2d and m4d. m1 is headed “Pleas of Venison of the county of Derby” and is followed by the following preamble: “It is presented and proved by the foresters and verderers and 36 jurors, both knights and other free men, that is to say, by Richard de Fering’ Roger Folechambe Richard de Herthull Robert de Aldewrthe Henry de Berd’ Samson de Estretl’ William de la rode Peter del Hurst Richard le Raggede Roger de staphord Adam de Langesdon’ Henry de Alsope John de Offidecote Robert de Torp Robert de Wodnesleg’ Alexander de Lee Thomas de Hopton Walter his brother Hugo de Benetleg’ John son of Nicholas de Bucstanes Peter Gobald de Hertingdon’ Henry brother of Elis de Benteleg’ Ralph de Sitenhale William de Osgareston’ Roger de Eyncurt Walter de Linacre Peter de Wulketorp William de Sutton’ Robert de Heriz of the same Nigel de Langphord William de Meissam Peter de Brunnington’ Richard de Hamel’ Roger de Sytenhale Oliver de Ekenton’ Henry de Flagge.”

⁴⁴ This text in curly brackets indicates inter-lined text.

manet i[n] Com[itu] Ebor[acensis] I[de]o mand[at] Vic[ecomiti] Ebor[acensis] q[uo]d fac[iat] ip[su]m venire ap[u]d Noti[n]gh[am] in c[ra]sti[n]o S[an]c[t]i Martin[i] {Et p[ost]ea ven[erunt] d[i]c[t]i Rob[ertus] & Joh[ann]es & de h[oc] [con]victi det[e]nti sunt in p[ri]sona. Et d[i]c[t]u[s] Rob[ertus] fine[m] fec[it] per se & d[i]c[t]o Joh[ann]e per lx mar[cas] per pl[evinam] Ad[a] de Everingham Walt[ero] cl[er]ici civis Ebor[acensis] & Mathi[o] de Scepeleg' pl[eggi] eiusd[em] Rob[er]ti q[uo]d de c[eter]o &c. Rob[erto] de Veylly de Hoyton' Joh[anne] de Curtenay de Torp. Alan[o] fil[ius] Rob[er]ti de Smytheton' Will[ielmo] de Scortebaf de ead[em] Eudo fil[ius] Rob[er]ti de Sutton' Will[ielmo] fil[ius] Will[ielmi] de Leges de Suinli[n]gton' R[ober]to fil[ius] Rob[er]ti de Sadelwrthe Hug[o] fil[ius] Rob[er]ti de Horton' de ead[em] Rob[erto] fil[ius] Rob[er]ti de Lege' de Wudehus' Alex[andro] fil[ius] Rob[er]ti Ruffi de Stavel' de Sadelwrthe Will[ielmo] fil[ius] Alex[andre] de Alferton' de ead[em] & Rob[er]ti fil[ius] Gilb[er]ti de Quike de eade[m] Idem pl[egii] sunt pl[egii] pred[i]c[t]i Joh[ann]is q[uo]d de c[eter]o &c}⁴⁵

P[resentatum] e[st] & con[victum] p[er] eosd[em] q[uo]d Will[ielmus] de Sadelwrthe Ad[am] de Sadelwrthe & Will[ielmus] f[ilius] fr[at]ris Willi[elm]i de eade[m] sunt malef[act]ores i[n] ead[em] for[est]a de ven[acione] Qui n[on] venit n[e]c fu[er]unt attach[iatus] & manet in Com[itu] Ebor[acensis] I[de]o mand[at] e[st] vic[ecomiti] q[uo]d fac[iat] ip[s]os &c apud Notingham' i[n] c[ra]sti[n]o S[an]c[t]i Martin[i]

It is presented and proved by the aforesaid⁴⁶ that Robert of Stapelton' & John of Smetheton', his clerk, of the County of York, took 6 harts in the same forest, without warrant, and he did not come, nor was attached, & remains in the County of York. Therefore an order was sent to the Sherriff of York to make them come to Nottingham on the morrow of St Martin. And afterwards the said Robert and John came and by this conviction are detained in prison. And the said Robert made a fine of 40 marks for himself & the said John by the pledge of Adam of Everingham; Walter, clerk, citizen of York; and Mathew of Scepeleg' pledges of the same Robert that hereafter &c. Robert of Veylly of Hoyton'; John of Curtenay of Torp; Alan son of Robert of Smytheton'; William of Scortebaf of the same; Giles, son of Robert de Sutton'; William son of William of Leges of Suinlington'; Robert son of Robert of Sadelwrthe; Hugo son of Robert de Horton' of the same; Robert son of Robert of Lege' of Wudehus'; Alexander son of Robert Ruffi of Stavel' of Sadelwrthe; William son of Alexander of Alferton' of the same; & Robert son of Gilbert of Quike of the same. The same pledges are pledges of the said John that hereafter &c.

It is presented and proved by the same that William of Sadelwrthe, Adam of Sadelwrthe and William, son of the brother of William, of the same, are evil doers to the venison in the same forest. They did not come nor were attached and remain in the County of York. Therefore an order is sent to the sheriff to make them &c at Notingham on the morrow of St Martin.

⁴⁵ This text in curly brackets is in a different hand and presumably was written when Stapleton and Smetheton appeared before the Justices at Nottingham.

⁴⁶ This phrase refers to the officers and jurors listed in the preamble. See footnote 43.

LETTERS

Dear Editor,

I was surprised to see in the SHS Winter 2009 Bulletin, one of the two enclosed photographs (Knitters (2)), apparently sourced from Freda Millett's "Saddleworth and Its People", apparently depicting staff and children at the workhouse circa 1910. I'm sure my great-aunt, Amy Barrell (née Kenworthy), would be even more surprised, since she is in this photo, kneeling third from right at the front. While the Kenworthys (Amy, her mother and two sisters, also in this photo) didn't have much brass, they weren't workhouse inmates! In fact this photo was taken she recalls in the summer of 1919 when Amy was about nine, and was one of at least two taken that day of a group of women and girls who had knitted garments for soldiers during the war, and who were celebrating with a tea on the lawn at the workhouse. The group was organised by Mrs Daniels (centre of the second row in the first photo (Knitters (1)) who was the wife of the police inspector at Woolroad.

From her recollection, here are the names of those she can recall in both photos:

Knitters (1):-

Back row: Jessie Shaw?; Annie Hall; Edith Percival; Annie Fielding; ? ; ? ; Addie Hall; Ethel Burnes; ?; Miss Jubb; Hilda Burnes; Vida Thornton; Elsie Kenworthy.

Middle row: Marjorie Woolands; Bessie Hall; Jessie Hurst; Phyllis Newton; Mrs Daniels; Doris Newton; Dorothy Wrigley; Alice Bradbury; Annie Hewkin.

Front row: Myra Wallor; Edith Dyson; Laura Gartside; Amy Kenworthy; Beatrice Hurst; Janey Longley.

Knitters (2):-

Back row: Annie Fielding; Edith Percival; Vida Thornton; ?; ?; ?; ?; Mrs Hall; ?; Miss Jubb; Elsie Kenworthy; Hilda Burns; ?.

Middle row: Beatrice Hurst; Addie Hall; Stella Thornton; ?; ?; Mrs Daniels; Mrs Kenworthy; ?; Annie Kenworthy.

Front row: Dorothy Wrigley; Jessie Hurst; Amy Kenworthy; Rennie Clark; Phyllis Howe; Molly Hall; Laura Gartside; Annie Hall; Alice Bradbury.

Regards

Ian Douthwaite



Knitting Group (1) at Saddleworth Workhouse



Knitting Group (2) at Saddleworth Workhouse

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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.

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The Bulletin aims to reflect and encourage interest in all aspects of Saddleworth history. 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). These 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

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.