

Saddleworth Historical Society Bulletin

Volume 7 Number 4

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BULLETIN

OF

THE SADDLEWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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FRIARMERE HIGHWAYS

In the archives of the Saddleworth Museum are the manuscript records of the Vestry meetings of the inhabitants of Friarmere contributing to the Highway Rates. They cover the period from 1857 to 1894 in which year the Local Government Act did away with these local boards. Until this time the rating of each Mere for Highways was a separate matter and so was its legal responsibility for the repair of roads, bridges, etc. Hence these records are interesting in that they provide an insight into the administration of the local highways - not to mention the political in-fighting that went on.

Besides the local farm tracks and roads, the Turnpike Roads were also the responsibility of the ratepayers. There were two which affected Friarmere. The Huddersfield - New Hey turnpike road's repair and upkeep was entirely the responsibility of the townships through which it passed. In the case of the Oldham - Ripponden road, however, including its two branches in Friarmere - from Grains to Delph and from Junction to Dobcross - although the ratepayers were responsible for repairs, the Turnpike Trustees paid between half and two-thirds of the costs (1).

The meetings of the Friarmere ratepayers took place at the Royal Oak Inn near Heights Church, and on one memorable occasion, in 1886, there were over 200 present - so many that the meeting had to be held outside. Each year these ratepayers elected the Surveyor of Highways for the Friarmere district. During the period from 1867 to 1877 two surveyors were elected, for the Darkside and Lightside divisions respectively (see map). The meetings also approved and passed the Surveyor's accounts, and approved (or otherwise) his contesting of any indictments for non-repair of roads, bridges, paths and fences. The ratepayers also administered the income from the rates. The letting of quarries and the superintendence of the extraction of stone for the repair of the roads, etc. was essentially the surveyor's task, but in the late 1850s the Ratepayers' meetings laid down the specifications for this (see below).

The office of surveyor was unpaid at first, but in March 1885 came the first reference to "remuneration for the duty". A meeting in March 1886 determined the salary to be paid for the execution of the duty of surveyor as £30 per annum, and the voting was 225 for and 149 against. In March 1889 the salary was fixed at £25 for the ordinary highways with a further sum of £10 for superintending the main roads of the area.

Friarmere Surveyors 1858-1895

1858-9	James Gartside of Delph Greave
1859-62	No record
1862-3	Robert Byrom of Slackcote Mills

1863-4	G. F. Buckley of Linfitts	
1864-5	John Gartside of Dowry Farm	
1865-7	George Broadbent of Pingle Mill	
1867-8	Thomas Wrigley of Junction	(Darkside)
	Joseph Beesley of Waters	(Lightside)
1869-70	Thomas Whitehead Junior	(Darkside)
	James Schofield	(Lightside)
1870-1	James Wrigley	(Darkside)
	Robert Hall	(Lightside)
1871-2	Moses Shaw	(Darkside)
	John Schofield	(Lightside)
1872-3	William Lees	(Darkside)
	John Shackleton	(Lightside)
1873-4	William Ogden	(Darkside)
	John Shackleton	(Lightside)
1874-5	John Wrigley	(Darkside)
	John Whitehead	(Lightside)
1875-6	James Wrigley	(Darkside)
	John Whitehead	(Lightside)
1876-7	John Shaw	(Darkside)
	Isaac Broadbent	(Lightside)
1877-8	John Shaw	
1878-84	No record	
1884-5	John Shaw	
1885-6	John Shaw of Broadmeadow	
1886-91	John Shaw of Edge Hill	
1891-93	John Shaw of Linfitts Farm	
1893-5	John Shaw of Hr. Linfitts Farm	

Prior to 1885 it would appear that the surveyor was elected unanimously by the ratepayers, but subsequently this was by no means the case and much acrimonious debate ensued. A wide rift developed between those, such as E. J. Butterworth of Denshaw and C. F. Roberts of Linfitts, who regarded John Shaw as a "dummy" surveyor, and Shaw's supporters who were led by G. F. Buckley of Linfitts and H. N. Gartside of Friarmere Lodge. Oddly enough, all these gentlemen were prominent local Tories, besides being millowners in the area. The immediate cause of the rift, however, was the attitude to be taken towards Oldham Corporation which had been engaged in the construction of reservoirs in Friarmere.

By 1878 work on the reservoirs at Denshaw had begun, and a deputation had been elected to "wait upon Oldham Corporation to request them to make some contribution towards the great additional outlay brought upon the district by the traffic connected with the construction of the waterworks". After a request by the Corporation for a statement of the amount of the additional outlay, it had been agreed between the two parties that Oldham should pay £50 annually during the construction of the reservoirs, and that they should also undertake all repairs needed on the road between Dowry Lane and Junction Corner during the same period. At a meeting in April 1878 the surveyor, John Shaw, had been especially thanked for having expended much time and labour

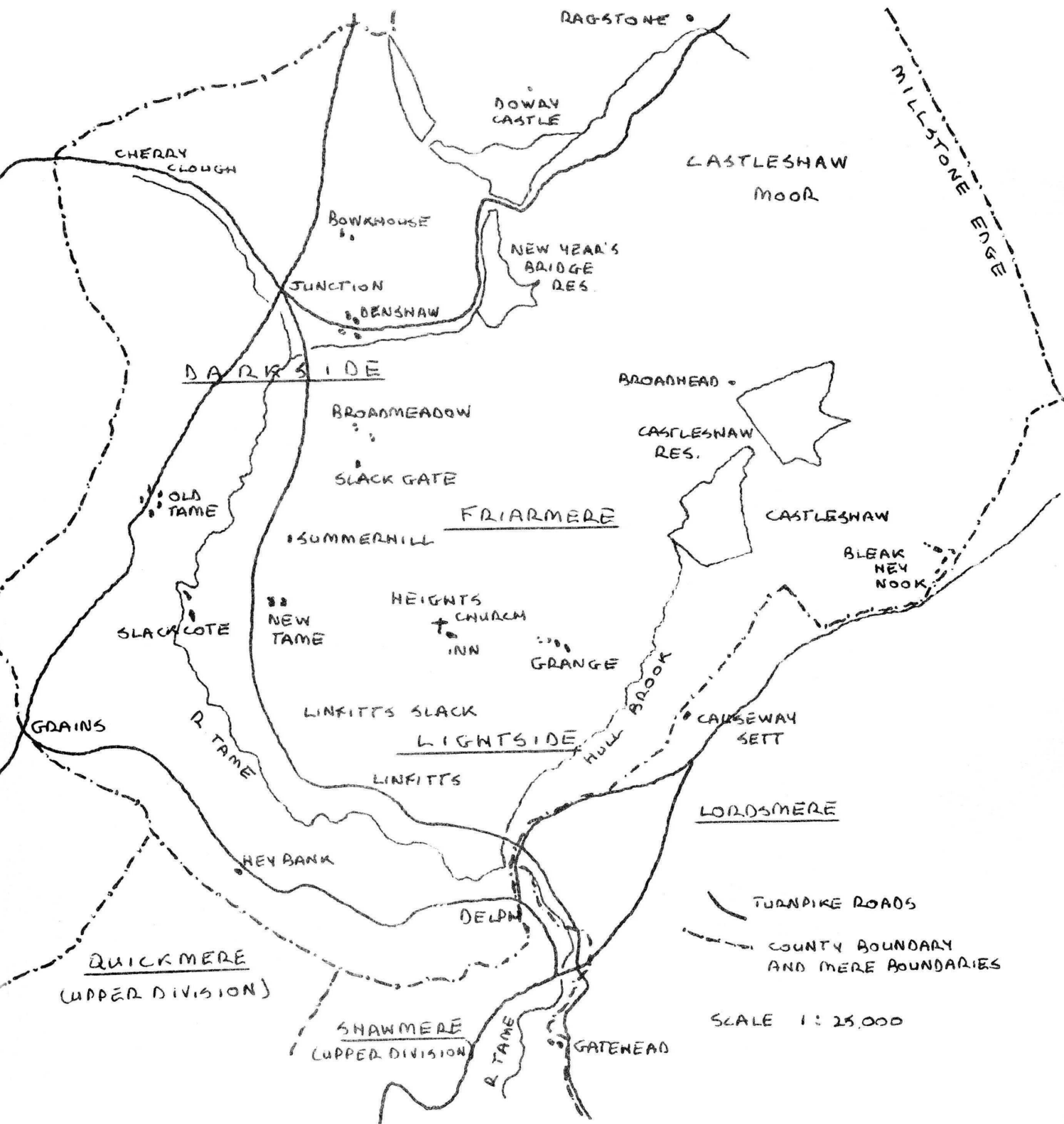
extra to his duties as surveyor, in supervising the Corporation's use of the highways, and he had been awarded £5 for these extra services. The same happened in 1885 (and possibly in the intervening years, for the records of this period are missing).

By 1884, however, Oldham Corporation were refusing to abide by the agreement, and the surveyor of Friarmere incurred a bill of £117-13-2 from Messrs. Learoyd and Piercy of Huddersfield, solicitors, for prosecuting the Corporation, who had had judgement found against them. It was this expensive litigation which caused the final widening of the rift in the ratepayers, and at a meeting in March 1885 they refused to sanction the payment of the bill out of the rates by a small majority. The opponents of John Shaw then put forward their own candidate for the post of surveyor, the election then being imminent. The "Saddleworth Reporter" of March 28 1885 described the events:

"In years gone by there have been some lively scenes in connection with the election of the Surveyor for Friarmere, but few have excelled the doings of Wednesday last... People are beginning to ask if something more is not involved than the salary of £30 a year... One section had gone so far as to engage a 'bus to convey the free and independent electors to the poll'... John Shaw, the Surveyor, called the Friarmere meeting at the Royal Oak instead of Saddleworth Church. The notice convening the meeting was not signed by the Overseers on the grounds that they believed the business should be done at the usual time and place. During the past year Mr. Shaw seems to have given offence to some of the ratepayers, and these determined to test the legality of the Heights meeting by attending a meeting at Saddleworth Church and electing Mr. Thomas Whitehead of Denshaw as Surveyor".

The meeting at Heights was at 10 o'clock in the morning and that at the Church was an hour later. The attendance at Heights was so large (over 80) that the meeting was held in the open air outside the Royal Oak. G. F. Buckley was the Chairman, supported by H. N. Gartside, William Broadbent, Law Armitage and James Butterworth. They were opposed by E. J. Butterworth and Morgan Brierley. As a result of this meeting John Shaw was re-elected as surveyor. Then, many of the ratepayers wishing to be present at the Saddleworth Church meeting, transport was engaged to convey them there. At another well-attended gathering, Shaw was again proposed as surveyor by E. J. Butterworth and H. N. Gartside, but Thomas Whitehead's name was put forward by E. J. Butterworth and Joseph Mather (both of Denshaw) and he was elected as Shaw's supporters refused to vote. Thus the situation arose of Friarmere being fortunate enough to have two rival surveyors.

This situation was resolved at the Petty Sessions held at the Saddleworth Police Court on May 6 1885, when both John Shaw and Thomas Whitehead applied for the highway rate. The Court pronounced that the Heights meeting was the legal one because:



"The practice has been to appoint one surveyor in each mere at a meeting at Saddleworth Church on 25th March, the same meeting at which the Overseers of the Poor are elected. But at these Meetings, the practice has always been that when the surveyor for Friarmere came to be appointed, none but the ratepayers for Friarmere were to vote. Thus Friarmere people had long felt it very inconvenient to attend a meeting at Saddleworth Church outside their district, and considered that the election should be held in Friarmere, and this year had done just that...". ("Reporter" March 9, 1885).

This judgement was followed by another one at the Petty Sessions in Uppermill in June 1885, when "a Memorial was presented to the Justices... signed and representing above one half of the rateable value of the Parish of Friarmere" requesting that the costs of the action against Oldham Corporation be paid out of the Highway Rate. The Bench acceded to this request". ("Reporter" June 6, 1885). This was another indication of the rift within the Friarmere ratepayers, for G. F. Buckley had been the leader of those who wished the bill to be paid - and he won the day. In the Memorial presented to the Justices it was stated that Oldham Corporation had laid out between £1,000 and £1,200 for repairs to roads in the Denshaw area.

This was not the end of the contest, however. A letter to the "Reporter" later that year referred to the "bad feeling engendered between a local J.P. and the 'gentry' concerning the appointment of a 'dummy' as surveyor". The writer described how many of the 'gentry' were members of the Delph Conservative Club and how they had resigned because they refused to be members of "a club where a J.P. exercises his powers of dictation with so happy an effect...". ("Reporter" August 8, 1885). The J.P. referred to was G. F. Buckley.

Further tribulations were laid upon the shoulders of the ratepayers when Oldham Corporation gave notice in January 1886 of their intention to apply to Parliament for an Act "authorising them to construct additional water works, and to divert and alter certain Highways in the Parish of Friarmere". At a meeting at the Royal Oak on January 23, it was moved that

"whereas the Oldham Corporation proposes to stop up the footpath or Public Highway leading from Delph to Ridding Water by at or near the proposed embankment of the lower Castleshaw Reservoir and do not offer to provide any new footpaths or Public Highways in lieu of the portion so stopped up, this meeting resolves that steps be taken to induce the Corporation to make the following footpaths or Public Highways in place of the portion so stopped up: 1. A footpath to connect the one leading from Delph towards the proposed embankment of the Lower Castleshaw Reservoir with a path or Public Highway leading from Wood Mill to Low Bank. 2. A footpath or Public Highway connecting the one leading from Delph towards the proposed embankment with the footpath or Public Highway called Doity Lane".

It was also decided that the diversion of the lane crossing Hull Brook and connecting Low Gate with Doity Lane as proposed by the Corporation was unacceptable, and it was suggested that this diversion should be made along the top of the embankment of the Higher Castleshaw Reservoir and Broadhead Lane into Low Gate, and that this diverted road be kept in good repair by the Corporation until the Higher Reservoir was completed and rated. A further resolution was passed deploring the inconvenience caused to the local inhabitants by the stopping up of the lane which had formerly led past Low Slack and New Year's Bridge to the Huddersfield and New Hey Turnpike near Denshaw, and it was suggested that the Corporation should be induced to make another footpath passing over the top of the New Year's Bridge embankment.

At another meeting in February several further footpath diversions in the Castleshaw area were objected to, and it was passed unanimously that steps should be taken

"to induce the Corporation to assent to the reservation and restriction of rights of sporting, pasturage or other produce, turbary, and right of free passage over the whole area of common land in Friarmere which the Corporation propose to acquire under their Bill..."

The Chairman, G. F. Buckley, pointed out that all these objections would necessitate the presentation of a petition to Parliament, and this was drawn up accordingly.

At this meeting, held on February 6, 1886, G. F. Buckley and Abraham Gartside proposed that Mr. Burgess of the "Ashton and Saddleworth Reporter" "be not allowed to be present at this meeting, by reason of the scurrilous, untruthful and misleading report which followed his attendance at the last meeting". The proposal was carried by 14 votes to 4. This did not prevent the newspaper from continuing its critical stance, and the following report occurred in its issue of February 20, 1886:

"Ratepayers' meetings on Friarmere are getting almost as thick as blackberries in September... A ratepayer has issued a placard calling upon ratepayers to 'rally and oppose the senseless policy which is being pursued by the present surveyor and his backer'. The whole of the ratepayers seem anxious, but many of them foresee disaster if a policy of bullying the Oldham Corporation be persisted in. It is not very long since that the Friarmere ratepayers had to pay law expenses of between £200 and £300 for the luxury of having a quarrelsome contest on the roads question, and they seem to be somewhat chary now..."

A letter from a reader published in the same issue continued upon a similar theme. Signed "Caduceus", it referred to the fact that the Surveyor had been given "unlimited powers" with regard to expenses incurred in his opposition to Oldham. After mentioning that the Friarmere highway rate of 10d. in the pound raised only about £420 each year, the writer went on to remark that "the ratepayers won't have forgotten how much the surveyor paid in lawyers' bills for the £70 obtained from Oldham Corporation". He continued, "I wonder where the gentlemen are who were so busy last 25th March?... It has been very cold weather, perhaps they are hibernating and will shortly come out with renewed vigour".

The opposition to the surveyor did arise again a week later as the following lively account in the "Reporter" (February 27, 1886) illustrates:

"The ratepayers' meeting at Heights on Saturday was a lively affair. It was soon evident that a special 'whip' had been made for the occasion... Some of the scenes between Mr. G. F. Buckley J.P. and Alderman Buckley of Oldham were really amusing... (The newspaper article then referred to 'Linfitts domination'). There was a spirit of opposition to the promoters of the meeting and a placard had been issued calling upon people to 'attend the meeting and vote against the silly opposition with Oldham Corporation...'. So many were there, the meeting was held outside in a constant downfall of sleet accompanied by a cold raw wind... The ratepayers presented objections to 13 footpaths being stopped up by the construction of two reservoirs. G. F. Buckley noted that 'all are aware that the prosperity of the valley had been held back from a lack of good roads'. It seemed to him a very audacious proceeding that the Oldham Corporation had come into that district and propose to take away the rights people had enjoyed from time immemorial without any substitution. The Corporation of Oldham might be enabled to boast as they already had done that they had purchased farms at £17 per acre. He did not think the ratepayers should allow property to be depreciated to that extent... Alderman Buckley pointed out that the prosperity of Denshaw had not been reduced by reservoir construction, and that they were prepared to make better roads and paths in the neighbourhood of the reservoirs than they had today...".

Finally, as it was getting dark, a vote was taken on the motion of Mr. Clifton "that we accept the offer of Oldham Corporation that the disputed points be referred to two Saddleworth gentlemen (Mr. Ralph Thomas Bradbury of Greenfield and Mr. John Hirst of Dobcross) and that we abide to these gentlemen". This motion was carried by 79 votes to 54. A further meeting between the two parties occurred a week later, and the "Reporter" noted that "for once common sense had prevailed, and the ratepayers' pockets have been saved". (March 6, 1886).

In the meantime, however, further controversy had arisen, adding to the opposition against the re-election of John Shaw as surveyor which was due to take place later in March. The "Reporter" of March 6, 1886

referred to heavy snow which had fallen "causing drifts on Grains Road on Tuesday". This road "is much travelled by farmers who take their milk to Oldham. Immediately after the road became blocked, notice was given to the Friarmere surveyor... but he had done nothing to clear away up to Thursday noon... The surveyor might have got any number of snow shifters at an hour's notice from the scores who are now compulsorily idle...".

Once again, therefore, the election of the surveyor in Friarmere did not pass smoothly. John Shaw was again proposed, but E. J. Butterworth and Samuel Virgin proposed rival candidates, John Scholefield of Packhorse Farm and Benjamin Buckley of Turney Bank to serve jointly as surveyors, in a determined effort to defeat Shaw. At the meeting 114 voted for G. F. Buckley to be Chairman and 100 for C. F. Roberts, and then in the election of the surveyor 119 voted for Shaw and 107 for Messrs. Scholefield and Buckley. However, E. J. Butterworth refused to accept this vote, and demanded a poll of all the ratepayers on behalf of the two latter. The "Reporter" commented,

"It is a long time since the Surveyor's meeting on Friarmere caused so much bitterness as this year, and now that a poll is demanded we are afraid that we have not seen the worst. The wrangling that took place at Heights on Thursday was hardly creditable to some of the parties concerned...".

(March 27, 1886).

Resulting from the poll of the ratepayers, John Shaw was re-elected by 225 votes to 149.

In 1887 John Shaw was elected unanimously, but in 1888 another rival, Edwin Wood of Slackgate, was proposed by Senior Howard and Abraham Brierley. Again, Shaw was re-elected by a large majority. Between 1889 and 1891 his re-election passed unopposed. In 1892, however, when it was suggested that he should again hold the office at a salary of £35, his rivals put forward the name of Thomas Longbottom of Higher Barn who was willing to serve at a salary of £25. This time the voting was equal (22 votes each) and the Chairman, G. F. Buckley, gave his casting vote in favour of Shaw. The same happened in 1893, but this time Shaw was re-elected with a larger majority. The 1894 election passed off peaceably.

This squabbling over the election of surveyor in the late 1880s is referred to only obliquely in the Highway Records however, and the above account has been compiled by reading between the lines and, more directly, by referring to contemporary newspaper reports. What does emerge from all this is the amount of influence generated in Friarmere affairs by G. F. Buckley of Linfitts. The greater part of the Records deal with the occasional meetings of the ratepayers and their administration of the highways.

The ratepayers' meetings in the late 1850s specified exactly the quantities of stone to be obtained from each of the various quarries, the maximum size and weight of the individual pieces, and approved the

contractors who were to be permitted to work on the roads. In 1857, for example, the maximum amount to be obtained from the Dumfries Quarry was 500 cubic yards, from the Bowkhouse Quarry 300 cubic yards, and from the Ragstone Quarry 500 cubic yards. In 1858 additional quarries were in use at Heybarn, Colls, Beswicks and Linfitts Slack.

In 1861 the records contained details of the letting of the quarries for the repair of specific sections of road:

- Lot 1 From Dumfries or Bowkhouse Quarry to between Cotton Tree and Grains
- Lot 2 From Dumfries or Bowkhouse Quarry to between Green Holes and Cotton Tree
- Lot 3 From Dumfries or Bowkhouse Quarry to between Barracks and Green Holes
- Lot 4 From Dumfries or Bowkhouse Quarry to between Junction and Barracks
- Lot 5 From Dumfries or Bowkhouse Quarry to between Denshaw and New Year's Br.
- Lot 6 From Dumfries or Bowkhouse Quarry to between New Year's Br. and Dorey Castle.
- Lot 7 From Dumfries or Bowkhouse Quarry to between Denshaw Bridge and Summerhill Clough
- Lot 8 From Dumfries or Bowkhouse Quarry to between Summerhill Clough and New Tame
- Lot 9 From Bowkhouse Quarry to between Junction and Sun Inn
- Lot 10 From Bowkhouse Quarry to between Sun Inn and Butterworth Boundary
- Lot 11 From Dumfries Quarry to between Marshbottom and Cherry Clough
- Lot 12 From Dumfries Quarry to between Cherry Clough and Moorcock
- Lot 13 From Dumfries Quarry to between Marshbottom Denshaw and Denshaw Br.
- Lot 14 From Ragstone Quarry to between Badgerslack and Dorey Castle
- Lot 15 From Ragstone Quarry to between Badgerslack and Reapsgate
- Lot 16 From Linfitt Slack Quarry to between New Tame and Ryehole
- Lot 17 From Heybarn Quarry to between Grains and Delph
- Lot 18 From Packhorse Quarry to Castleshaw, Marl'dearth Nook and Millcroft Bridge

In 1858 the Friarmere ratepayers received notice from the Clerk to the Trustees of the Oldham and Ripponden Turnpike Road ordering them to repair fences between Old Tame and Grains Bar, and between Grains Bar and Delph. In the same year it was agreed that "the road up Heights Field between New Gate End and Grange Lane Head be repaired at the expense of the parish".

On January 5, 1864, Thomas Broadbent preferred an indictment against the ratepayers of Friarmere at the Wakefield Quarter Sessions "for the non-repair of certain portions - to wit 1,584 yards - of a certain highway leading from Eagle Mill, Delph, to Ridding Water, and also of a certain footbridge formerly erected on the said highway called Moorcroft Wood Bridge, otherwise Johnny Mill Bridge, and also of a certain other footbridge formerly erected on the said highway called Kur Bridge...". A meeting of the ratepayers on February 4 determined to defend themselves against this indictment on the grounds that it was "unwarranted and the said alleged highway and bridges are not repairable out of the rates of the said Division". On February 17 a meeting was held which agreed that the expenses of Mr. Mellor of Oldham, solicitor, and Mr. George Heywood of Oldham, surveyor, of £64-4-9 and £63-11-2 respectively, for defending the indictment, should be paid out of the rates. Finally, at a meeting held on May 1, John Gartside, the surveyor for that year, reported on the result of the trial at the Leeds Assizes and the subsequent attempts to prevent the costs of the prosecution from being laid upon the Friarmere ratepayers, and those present gave him their full approval.

An 1873 meeting of the ratepayers empowered the surveyor of Darkside to pay John Lawton of Dumfries, Denshaw, "the sum of 28/-, the cost of repairing the road to Dumfries pit and also 50/- for levelling the pit at Dumfries opened by Moses Shaw, surveyor 1871-2".

In January 1889 a meeting of the ratepayers was called to consider a notice from

"Charles Winterbottom of Delph, Contractor, and George Frederick Buckley of Linfitts House near Delph, that the Delph Conservative Company Limited being owners of lands in the Highway Parish of Friarmere, and being desirous that a portion of a certain highway for foot passengers leading from the Turnpike Road at or near Woodhouse Knowle in Delph to the public footpath leading from Delph to Woodhouse Mill over the said lands and being about 58 yards in length should be entirely stopped up and a new public footway provided...".

The meeting agreed to these changes.

Another notice was considered and agreed to at a meeting held in March, 1889. The proposition here was

"that the owners of a certain highway leading from the Turnpike Road on Main Street in Delph in the direction of Woodhouse Mill, and passing between the buildings known as the Free Church and the Mission Church, and which highway is in length about 130 yards and of the width required by the Highway Act of 1835, do intend to make and complete the same and dedicate it to the use of the public".

The penultimate meeting of the ratepayers in March 1894, was adjourned

in order to allow time for the consideration of the provisions of the Local Government Act 1894, so far as it affected the local highways. The final meeting, held at the Royal Oak Inn on April 21, 1894, was chaired by G. F. Buckley, and resolved that

"the operation of the Local Government Act 1894 so far as it relates to highways, should be postponed in the rural parts of the township and especially in the Friarmere Highway Parish for a period of one year from the appointed day named in the Act".

It was agreed unanimously that this resolution should be brought forward at the enquiry to be held by the County Council at Uppermill on May 10. This was the final entry in the Records, and characteristically, the Friarmere ratepayers under the leadership of G. F. Buckley depart, objecting to the last against any outside interference in their affairs.

Reference

- (1) Parliamentary Papers, "Report of the Commissioners for enquiring into the State of Roads in England and Wales" 1840, V. 43, Appendix.

Bernard Barnes.

SADDLEWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S ARCHIVES

The Society's archives are now housed in the Old School, Lee Street, Uppermill. Anybody wishing to consult them should contact our Archivist, Rev. C. C. W. Airne, Lydgate Vicarage (telephone Sadd. 2117).

Recent additions to the Archives include:

Donated by Miss O. Lees, Greenfield - miscellaneous deeds relating to Hawkyard, Greenfield, dated 1816, 1852, 1869, 1870 and 1878, and to land at Sidebank, Greenfield, dated 1855.

Donated by Mrs. Howard of Huddersfield Road, Delph - Morgan Brierley, "A Chapter from a MS History of Saddleworth", 1891. Ammon Wrigley, "Annals of Saddleworth", undated. Ammon Wrigley, miscellaneous pamphlets. "Abstract from the Accounts of the Overseers...of Quick", 1850. Notice of Sale of the Estate of Esther Buckley, 1903. Subscription List of the Indian Famine Relief Fund, Saddleworth. Joseph Brierley, "Pre-Historic Saddleworth", 1910. Edwin Hudson, "History of Delph Methodism 1770-1850", 1902. Newspapers relating to the General Strike, May 7-May 15, 1926. Abstract of the Title Deeds relating to the Estate of Ralph Lawton of Grove House, deceased. 1856.

Copy of the Consecration Deed of St. Thomas, Friarmere, 1768.
F. A. Bruton, "First Interim Report of Excavations of the Roman
Forts at Castleshaw", 1908. Two Minute Books of the Delph
Mechanics' Institute. Box of Lantern Slides of Delph and district.
Large photograph of the Delph Bonfire lit to celebrate the
Coronation of George VI.
Numerous other leaflets and pamphlets (mostly non-Saddleworth).

TENTER POSTS, WALL HILL

The illustration on the cover of this issue of the Bulletin shows part of the almost unique row of stone tenter posts which stand on the hillside near Greaves Farm above Wall Hill. The following extract is taken from "Saddleworth Heritage" by Bernard Barnes, published by Saddleworth Historical Society in association with Saddleworth Festival of the Arts 1975, pp. 30-31.

"Many more of these tenter posts once existed, and the 1845 O.S. Map indicated a large number of tenter seams in various parts of the area. Some of the more impressive were along the roadside north-west of Bleakhey-nook, behind Shepherds Green, Greenfield, on the hillsides north of Walk Mill, Dobcross, and Longroyd Mill Denshaw, east of Broadhead House in the Castleshaw Valley, and, finally, three long seams belonging to Greenfield Mill which were just below the junction of Bank Lane with the Holmfirth Road. None of these survives at the present day, and it is possible that they consisted of wooden posts... The ones near Wall Hill are themselves now divided by a stone wall, but eleven are still standing, while three have fallen and one lies fractured on the ground. They are about six feet high and between six and seven feet apart, and each stone has parts cut away so that the wooden frames holding the tenter hooks could be slung across. The bolt holes and the stumps of the bolts can be seen. Ammon Wrigley stated that Greaves and Cooper of Wall Hill Clough Mill had them erected in the 1840s, and, if this is true, it was at a very late date for by this time much of the tentering of woollen cloth was being done under cover..."

MANOR RECORDS

Part 11: 1804 - 1806

24th August 1804

At a Meeting of the Proprietors of the Manor of Saddleworth...held at the House of John Wrigley, the King's Head Inn in Dobcross...to take into Consideration the Right of cutting Stone on Diggle Edge and other Places in the said Manor of Saddleworth, and also to determine on any other Matter that may be proposed relative to that Concern. John Radcliffe in the Chair (16 others present).

RESOLVED that Thomas Lawton of Harrop Edge Enc. and James Shaw of Nab End both within Saddleworth aforesaid be permitted to build a Sand Mill and get stone to grind into sand upon Harrop Edge in Saddleworth afsd. paying to the Proprietors of the said Manor the sum of two Guineas yearly.

RESOLVED that all the Millstones which have been got and made within the said Manor of Saddleworth since the present Proprietors purchased the same shall be charged after the same Rate that the late Jas. Farrer Esq. charged similar Stones got and made within the same Manor.

RESOLVED that Mill-stones hereafter to be got and made within the said Manor shall be charged as following, to wit, each stone under 5 feet high 10/-, if 5 feet high and not exceeding 6 feet 20/-, if 6 feet high and not exceeding 7 feet 30/-, if 7 feet high and upwards 40/-.

RESOLVED that this Meeting consents as far as it can that Giles Shaw of Furlane inclosed a plot of land opposite the house in Hall Clough in the occupation of James Shaw being about 8 yards by 11, in Consideration of the Sum of one Guinea which he is to pay Mr. Radcliffe the Chairman.

RESOLVED that it appears to this Meeting that the Place where stone has been cut on Diggle Edge is within the Boundary mentioned in the Lease of Back o' th' Lee and that the said Stone is the absolute property of the purchasers of the Freehold Reversion and Inheritance of the said Back o' th' Lee.

RESOLVED that a Court Baron for the said Manor of Saddleworth be holden on Wednesday the Whitsun Week next at the House of John Bottomley, Inn-Keeper, at Saddleworth Church within Saddleworth aforesaid.

28th March 1805

A Meeting was held at James Andrew's Upper Mill to consider on the propriety of preserving the Game, but I did not attend so have not had the Resolutions handed to me and therefore conclude nothing was done to make it necessary to record the Resolutions here.

John Radcliffe.

5th June 1805

At a Meeting of the Proprietors... called by printed circular Letters held at the House of John Bottomley of Saddleworth Church within the same Manor, Innkeeper. John Radcliffe in the Chair (32 others present).

RESOLVED that Mr. Thomas Shaw of Shepherd's Green be requested to pull down the Fence which Benjamin Winterbottom is now setting up at or near Fernlee for the purpose of inclosing land which does not belong to him.

RESOLVED that Mr. Edmund Lees of Austerlands have the Consent of this Meeting to inclose the Waste Land adjoining the End of new Barn at Austerlands afsd. paying the sum of two Guineas into the hands of Mr.

John Radcliffe the Chairman for the use of the proprietors of the Manor.

RESOLVED that Mr. John Buckley of Pastures have the Consent of this Meeting to inclose the Waste Land lying between the new and old Turnpike Roads on Gorsey Hill at Austerlands afsd. paying into the Hands of the said Mr. Radcliffe the sum of 5 Guineas for the use of the said Proprietors.

RESOLVED that as it will be necessary to take a part of the Bottom of the Meadow at Brow near Tamewater Bridge to widen the Road there, that the Waste Land adjoining the said Meadow Bottom be land thereto in lieu of what shall be taken from it.

RESOLVED that four several Plots, Pieces or Parcels of Waste Land having been surveyed and valued by Mr. Nicholas Brown, to wit one Plot situate lying and being on Harrop Edge containing 1 acre 1 rood 24 perches, another Plot situate on Diggle Moss containing 19 acres 1 rood 1 perch, another Plot situate at Brun Clough containing 47 acres 2 roods 5 perches, and another Plot situate at Diggle Edge containing 41 acres 2 roods 30 perches, this Meeting agrees and consents to accept Mr. Brown's Valuation for the same several Plots of land provided the Huddersfield Canal Company will accept the same at that price with such Title as the Proprietors of the Manor are qualified to give.

28th May 1806

At a Meeting of the Proprietors...called by the Treasurer by printed Notices...held at the House of John Bottomley Inn-Keeper near Saddleworth Church...for the purpose of being informed how far the Resolutions of the last Meeting have been executed and deliberating and resolving on any further Business that may then occur. John Radcliffe in the Chair (24 others present).

RESOLVED that it appears to this Meeting that several Persons have inclosed different Slips of Land for which they have not made Compensation and it is therefore hereby ordered and directed that James Whitehead and Thomas Shaw shall put a Valuation upon the respective Lots of Land so inclosed and shall give the respective parties notice of the same with Directions to pay the separate amounts to Mr. John Radcliffe on or before the 1st July next, and on their refusal or neglect to make the said payments that the said James Whitehead and Thomas Shaw shall without further Notice pull down all such Inclosures.

RESOLVED that it appears to this Meeting that a Resolution made at a Meeting of the Proprietors of the Manor of Saddleworth held 5th June 1805 for the Sale of certain parts of Common therein specified shall be and is hereby confirmed and that Messrs. John Buckley, John Radcliffe and James Harrop are requested to see the same carried into

Effect or to conclude any other Bargain for any part of the Commons or Mines which the Huddersfield Canal Company may be at any time desirous of contracting for.

RESOLVED that Mr. John Radcliffe be requested to call a Meeting of the Proprietors of the Manor of Saddleworth to be held at such time as will leave an opportunity after that Meeting to give legal Notice of an Intention to apply to Parliament for Powers to inclose the Commons belonging to the said Manor which Intention shall be specified in the Notice of the Meeting.

BESIDES the last copied Resolutions of the 28th May IT WAS AGREED to adopt and insert in this Book the two following Resolutions which were agreed to be the Game Association, viz.---

At a Meeting held at the House of James Andrew Inn-Keeper at Upper Mill in Saddleworth on Thursday the 31st October 1805
James Buckley of Greenfield in the Chair.

ORDERED that the Clerk do give Notice to the Agent of the Huddersfield Canal Company that if the said Compy. do not make satisfaction to the Proprietors of the Manor of Saddleworth cum Quick for getting taking selling and carrying away Stones from and out of the Wastes belonging to the said Manor, & if the Compy. does not discontinue to get and carry away any more Stones from and out of the said Wastes, an Action must be commenced by the said Proprietors of the said Manor against the said Company to compel the said Compy. to make satisfaction to the said Proprietors for getting taking selling and carrying away the said Stones from and out of the said Manor.

At a Meeting held at the House of James Andrew Innkeeper Upper Mill on Thursday the 12th December 1805
Mr. John Lees Austerlands in the Chair.

RESOLVED that Messrs. John Radcliffe of Stonebreaks, John Buckley of Uppermill and Joseph Harrop of Grasscroft be and they are by this Meeting requested to procure a Clause to be drawn up and prepared for the purpose of having the same inserted in a Bill intended to be brought into Parliament the next Session by the Huddersfield Canal Compy. for authorising a Person or Persons to be appointed by a Majority of a Meeting of the Proprietors of the Manor of Saddleworth cum Quick with the consent of a Majority of a Meeting of the said Proprietors of the Manor to sell and convey to the said Compy. such of the Stones Wastes or Commons within the said Manor as such Meeting of the said Proprietors of the said Manor shall direct and to authorise such Person or Persons to give a Legal Receipt for such purchase money which said purchase money shall be receipted by such Person or Persons so receiving the same IN TRUST to dispose of in the same Manner as a Majority of a Meeting of the said Proprietors shall order and direct.

A copy of the above was given to me by James Ingham Clerk to the Game Association. J. R.

10th July 1806

At a Meeting of the Proprietors of the Manor... held pursuant to public Notice at Mr. John Wrigley's Inn-Keeper Dobcross to take into Consideration the Propriety of applying to Parliament for an Act to inclose divide or sell all or any part of the Commons Moors or Waste Lands within the said Manor and to make such arrangements respecting the same as may be then thought proper. John Radcliffe in the Chair (31 others present).

RESOLVED that it is the opinion of this Meeting that it will be proper to apply to Parliament for an Act to inclose divide and sell the Commons Moors and Waste Lands within the Manor of Saddleworth cum Quick the next Session of Parliament.

RESOLVED that a Committee consisting of Mr. James Whitehead of Shaws, Mr. John Broadbent of Tunstead, Mr. John Harrop of Dobcross, Mr. John Buckley of Uppermill, Mr. John Radcliffe of Stonebreaks and Mr. Thomas Bradbury of Furlane be and is hereby appointed to arrange proposals to be made to the Freeholders at a general Meeting thereof, which they are requested to call the first opportunity after such arrangement is made, any four of which will be competent to act and that it be an Instruction to this Committee that they claim one part of the Commons Moors and Waste Lands within the said Manor on behalf and as the Right of the Proprietors of the said Manor in their proposal to the Freeholders at the general Meeting.

RESOLVED that the Committee shall have power also to make and receive proposals from the Freeholders and Land owners on Frier Meer and to settle the Conditions on which those Freeholders &c may have an opportunity to join us in applying to Parliament for powers also to inclose divide and sell the Commons &c in that District.

RESOLVED that James Whitehead Shaws and Thomas Shaw have each of them £2 paid him for the trouble they have been at in viewing and estimating the Value of Encroachments.

To be continued.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

In my research of my pedigree I find that my great-grandfather, Joseph Wrigley, joiner, was born in 1818, married Mary Steel in 1847, and that they had 13 children (including 9 sons) all born in Saddleworth. All the family had moved to Morton Street, Oldham by the Census year 1871.

Now I am desirous and hoping to make contact with anyone descended from any of these sons, or who has information about the ancestors of Joseph Wrigley, joiner, of Holden Smithy, Dobcross. The sons were: Richard T., George F. or S., John F., Joseph Andrew, William B., Arthur A., Joshua and James. One James had died early. Five of them were "joiner apprentices" in the 1871 Census.

I am also seeking information about the ancestors of William Broadbent, born Midgeley or Sowerby about 1816, another great-grandfather.

Yours etc.

James C. Wrigley

4420 Slocan St.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada VSR 1Z7.

LOCAL INTEREST TRAILS

Another Interest Trail has been published by the Society in the new format: No. 2 Uppermill and its Environs. This incorporates part of the former Uppermill-Dobcross Trail, but also includes much "new" material.

The new trail together with the other four Local Interest Trails are available, price 20p (30p postage etc. included), from the Museum in Uppermill, the Local Interest Centre in Oldham, the Pennine Park Information Centres at Hebden Bridge and Haworth, or from the Editor of the Bulletin. Trail No. 5, the Grasscroft Area, is at present out of print.

OLD SADDLEWORTH

This is part of the work being carried out on a Gazetteer of Saddleworth by the Historical Society. As more of this work is completed details will be published in future editions of the Bulletin. The information given below has been extracted from Record Cards held by the Society, which are available for reference.

BELL INN (originally called the New Inn) Grid Reference: SD 987075

Location: Huddersfield Road, New Delph, 623 feet above sea level.

Description: See illustration. Ammon Wrigley ("Those were the Days", p. 187 'A Famous Old Coaching House') described the inn as "a great house of call. It was architecturally and in every other respect the aristocrat among Saddleworth inns, and even now it is the most striking and distinctive old building in the Delph District, an old Georgian aristocrat still wearing the faded glories of its famous days when lord and lady stepped down from their chaise and walked in at its doorway...".



The Delph and Dobcross branch of the Oldham-Ripponden turnpike road passed through the archway, and alongside this, at the rear of the inn, were extensive stables. The original inn is the part of the building on the left-hand side of the arch as shown in the illustration.

History: 1790s. The trustees of the Wakefield-Austerlands turnpike road obtained Parliamentary sanction to replan their road. In Saddleworth this involved a completely new stretch of road to the south of Delph Hill, taking a lower line than the old turnpike as far as Austerlands. In consequence, Delph was by-passed and its old-established inns must have lost a good deal of their trade. But as soon as the new road was completed the New Inn was constructed near the new bridge across the Tame, and in its vicinity grew the hamlet of New Delph. The inn was in existence by 1797 (Wrigley, loc cit). The landlord was William Bell. The New Inn was a posting and coaching house on what was the busiest trans-Pennine road. The road through the archway became defunct when the present road into Delph, the Sound, was constructed in 1801. Ammon Wrigley describes how local people used to flock to the inn "to hear M.P.s speak from its windows" and how "parsons and wardens met here to discuss pew rents, etc.".

- 1801 March 11. A deed (in the West Riding Registry of Deeds, Wakefield) referred to the "messuage called the New Inn" including a barn, stables, brewhouses etc. "lately erected and built at Delph together with fields called the Upper Greenbottom, Lower Holm and Croft containing 6 days work" in the occupation of William Bell. Joseph Lawton the elder of Delph was the owner and he was mortgaging the land etc. to bankers in Huddersfield (Deeds FI 147).
- 1804 Sept. 25. A deed referred to the "New Inn at Delph in the occupation of William Bell as tenant and lately erected on the north-west side of the New Diversion of the Turnpike Road from Austerlands to Wakefield", together with the fields mentioned in 1801 (Deeds FR 420).
- 1805 Dec. 26. James Lees of Delph Lodge, New Delph, gentleman, purchased "the New Inn in the occupation of William Bell". (Deed FW 631). By his Will, dated Oct. 28 1807 James Lees left the "New or Bell Inn at New Delph" with its outbuildings and fields in the occupation of William Bell to his son Edward Lees. Thus the name Bell Inn originated around 1807.
- 1811 Ammon Wrigley in "Saddleworth Chronological Notes" pp 35-36 writes, "Delph Prosecution Society formed, for suppressing the village hushshops, rowdyism and immorality. There were evidently warm ladies and gentlemen in Delph at that date. The Society held its meetings at the Bell Inn."
- 1824 Thomas Carlyle called at the Bell Inn and "commented on the purity of the local Anglo-Saxon folkspeech. He was on a visit to a friend, Dr. George Johnstone of Marsden". (Saddleworth Chronological Notes p. 39; also "Those were the Days", loc cit).
- 1825 Baines's Directory mentioned that coaches called at the Bell Inn daily on their way to Manchester, Oldham, Huddersfield, Wakefield and Leeds.
- 1832 William Bell was still the landlord (Pigot's Directory).
- 1838 Richard Steel was the landlord. He was described as "coach proprietor and livery stable keeper" in Pigot's Directory. In the same Directory are listed the following coaches which called at the inn: to Huddersfield, the "Accommodation" 6-30 p.m.; to Leeds, the "Pilot" 6-30 a.m., the "True Briton" 10-30 a.m., the "Umpire" 1-45 p.m., and the "Surprise" 2-15 p.m.; to Wakefield, the "Cornwallis" at 4-45 p.m.; to Manchester, the "Accommodation" at 7-30 a.m., the "Cornwallis" at 10 a.m., the "Umpire" at 1 p.m., the "Pilot" at 3 p.m., the "True Briton" at 3-45 p.m. and the "Surprise" at 6-30 p.m. An "omnibus" also operated from the Bell Inn to Manchester every Tuesday and Saturday morning at 7 a.m. The same Directory also lists Henry Hardiman of "the Bell Inn and Saddleworth Hotel, New Delph".

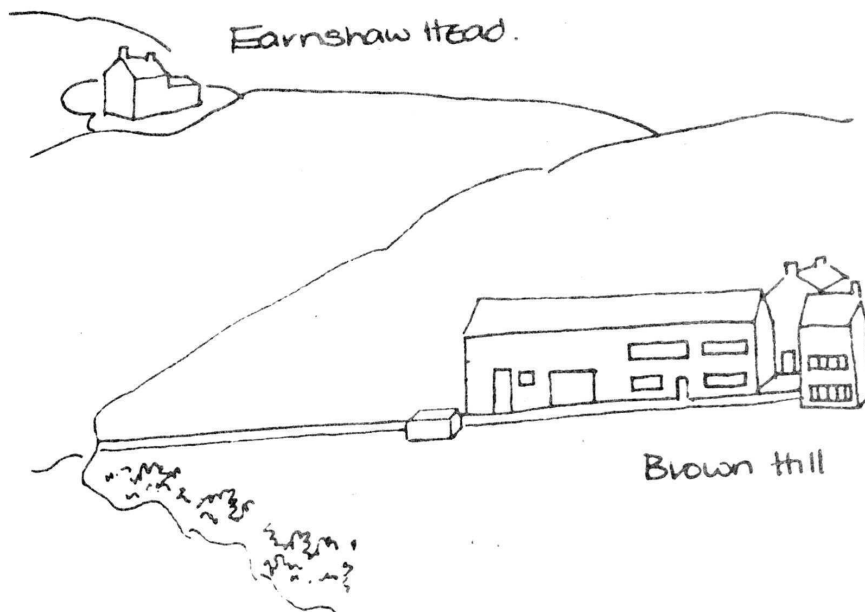
- 1849 Richard Steel, victualler, Bell Inn (Slater's Directory).
1850 The Masonic Lodge moved from the Bell Inn to the Swan Inn, Dobcross (Saddleshworth Chronological Notes, p. 56).
1851 Richard Copeland was the landlord of the "Bell Inn and Saddleshworth Hotel" (Slater's Directory). He was still there in 1853 (White's Directory), by which time the days of the inn as a coaching house had ceased.
1853 The Candour Lodge of Freemasons moved from the Bell Inn to the Swan Inn, Dobcross (Saddleshworth Chronological Notes, p. 58). Ammon Wrigley also reports that soon after the railway was built to Delph the inn closed. It became a boarding school for a time. ("Those were the Days" pp. 187-192).

BROWNHILL

Grid Reference: SD968048

Location: On farm track from Grotton to Lawton Fold.

Description: Large farmhouse, cottages and barn, either side of the track. Demolished 1958, but foundations still visible in the field to the East of the track.



History: 1635, July 28th. Conveyance of two fields at Grotton called the Brownhills, part of the tenement of John Loton, with turbary on High Moor; John Loton of Grotton husbandman to Thomas Shaw of Boarshurst clothier.

- 1655 Nov. 2nd. Conveyance of six acres of land at Grotton, the Marled Earth, the Great Field or Lower Field and the Lower Field Meadow; Robert Binnes of Linthwayte Yorks. gentleman and Ralph Taylor of Grotton yeoman to Henry Shaw of Grotton yeoman.
- 1656 March 4th. Conveyance of two fields called the Brownhills; Gyles Shaw of Overmylne Saddleworth yeoman to Henry Shaw of Lane yeoman.
- 1689 April 13th. Will of Henry Shaw of Lane yeoman. Leaves lands at Lane and Grotton to eldest son John. Mention of younger children Thomas, James and Sarah.
- 1733 Aug. 24th. Will of James Shaw of Lane yeoman. Leaves land at Grotton to his son Thomas who is already resident there.
- 1774 Oct. 29th. Will of Thomas Shaw of Lane yeoman. Leaves messuage and land at Grotton to his grand-daughter Jane Stuart and in the event of her decease, to his grandson Thomas Shaw,
- 1778 March 1st. Death of Jane, daughter of John Stuart of Manchester and Mary his wife, in the 4th year of her age. (Shaw grave-stones near vestry door, Saddleworth Church).
- 1778 Survey of the Brownhills, the Hills and the Lane Estates belonging to Mr. Thomas Shaw. Brownhills, 14a. Or. 27p., comprised Little Brownhill, Great Brownhill, Longlands, Lower Field, Lower Meadow or Clough Meadow and Marled Earth. (Higson MSS.).
- 1785 Aug. 30th. Will of Thomas Shaw of Brownhill clothier. Leaves lands at Brownhill, Lane and Hills in trusteeship of Thomas Shaw of Furlane clothier and Giles Shaw the younger of the same place clothier, the income to maintain his children Mary, Sarah and Thomas; the reversion to his son Thomas Shaw. The land is in the occupation of himself, Robert Mayal, Joshua Goddard, Samuel Harrison, Joseph Buckley, Nathaniel Bottomley and Joseph Knight.
- 1822 Survey of Saddleworth. Brownhill, owner Thos. Shaw, occupier Jas. Smith, 12a. 2r. 18p.
- 1828 April 5th. Will of Thomas Shaw of Charlesworth, Derbs., gentleman. Leaves Brownhill, occupied by James Smith, in trusteeship of his nephew Thomas Shaw Ashton to apply the income to the maintenance of the children of his sister Sarah, wife of Rev. Solomon Ashton, the property to be sold when the youngest child attains the age of 21.
- 1851 Census. James Smith, 53, farmer of 15 acres, Mary his wife and 6 children employed in cotton manufacture. His son Edward Smith, 28, cotton spinner, wife and children, and another family engaged in cotton manufacture, occupying the cottages.

- 1857 May 27th. Brownhill Estate, 14a. 1r. 9p. auctioned at the White Hart Inn, Lidgate. Tenant, James Smith, paying rent of £46. 0. 0., two cottages sub-let at £5. 10. 0. and one at £3. 0. 0. Property withdrawn at £1,450.
- 1858 Oct. 15th. Conveyance of Brownhill, formerly in the occupation of James Smith but now of Robert Kenworthy; Thomas Shaw Ashton of Whitefield, Glossop, gentleman to his brother James Ashton of Stockport, doctor of medicine.
- 1861 Census. Robert Kenworthy, 53, farmer of 14 acres, wife Betty and 7 children, 5 employed in cotton manufacture.
- 1864 Aug. 30th. Will of James Ashton of Stockport, M.D. Leaves income of property in Stockport and at Brownhill to his son Stephen Joule Ashton.
- 1922 April 27th. Conveyance of Brownhill, 14a. 1r. 9p.; the Public Trustee acting for the children of Stephen Joule Ashton deceased, to Hugh Kershaw of Stonebreaks Farm, Springhead, farmer.
- 1958 March 24th. Saddleworth U.D.C. approve order under Housing Act 1957 for demolition of Brownhill House, Grotton, belonging to the executors of Hugh Kershaw, deceased.
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The Society would welcome any further information on the houses and hamlets mentioned here, and also on any other property of possible interest in Saddleworth. The Gazetteer will also encompass turnpike roads, canals, railways, bridges, etc. Information should be sent to the Editor of the Bulletin: Mr. B. Barnes,
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Greenfield,
Oldham. OL3 7LL.

Enquiries about membership of the Society should be sent to the Subscriptions Secretary: Mr. S. Broadbent,
45 Beechfield,
Grasscroft,
Oldham.

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