

# **Saddleworth Historical Society Bulletin**

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# BULLETIN

OF

THE SADDLEWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 8

Number 2

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1978

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BILL'S O' JACK'S

The brutal murder of William Bradbury and Thomas, his son, on the night of April 2nd, 1832, has always held a morbid fascination. The Manchester Guardian for the 7th April 1832 records,

"...the vale of Greenfield was thronged by an immense number of visitors from Rochdale, Middleton, Manchester, Stockport, Ashton, Stalybridge, Oldham and all the adjacent towns and villages; besides thousands who came over the hills out of Yorkshire. Every possible conveyance appeared to have been put in requisition...It is computed by those who were on the spot that 30,000 persons visited it on Sunday alone. The crowd was so great that it was found necessary to place constables at the door of the house who admitted the visitors by 12 or 14 at a time..."

Despite a reward of £200 the crime has remained unsolved, allowing various writers to propose their theories.

Mention has been made of a confession to the murders. Joseph Bradbury (1) writing in 1871 states,

"Rumours have on various occasions since then been heard at intervals of persons here and there confessing that they assisted in the perpetration of the crime. At one time a theory gained some credence of an Irishman having confessed in his native country that he was one of the murderers, but on being investigated it proved to be a baseless story. On another occasion there was a rumour to the effect that one of the Red Bradburys had made a dying confession in Australia, but so far as we can learn neither James nor his son ever went to Australia".

Bradbury may have been referring to a letter in the Huddersfield Examiner, March 5, 1853, which has recently been rediscovered.

"Mr. Whitehead, sheep farmer, about 160 miles from Melbourne, Australia, says, ... I went into a public-house at Port Fary. Whilst there, a man came into the room, and said, 'I know you, and knew your uncles. There was a murder committed in Saddleworth; was it ever found out?' Mr. W. said he believed not. The man then said, 'It was a young man hawking tape in a basket who murdered Bill and Tom o' Jack's. I at the time was working at repairing the canal in Saddleworth as an excavator, and the man, soon after the murder of Bill and Tom o' Jack's, went to Leicester and committed a robbery upon a drover, for which crime he was transported to Sydney. Since he came here, he has committed a murder, for which he was hung in Hobart Town. Previous to being executed, he confessed to me that he had murdered Bill and Tom Bradbury of Greenfield, but that he had no intention to kill anyone, but to rob the house, and for that purpose sent the old man upstairs, but soon

coming down again, he struck him on the head, which disabled him. The hawker said he was put off robbing the house by Tom coming in. Previous to his return, old Bill crawled upstairs. The tape-hawker was searching the drawers, but found nothing. Whilst doing this, Tome came, when the man was going away. Seeing Tom come, he turned back, and as he entered the door, knocked him down with the fire-poker'.

The man who made this statement to Mr. Whitehead is now carrying on the business of wool carrier, with a bullock dray at Port Fary, and states that he had been a mate of the tape-hawker, who had confessed to him the crime which has so long and so mysteriously baffled all the attempts made to discover its perpetrators".

To try to verify the story, the Leicestershire Records Office was contacted. Unfortunately the criminal records for this period have not survived.

George Shaw of St. Chad's, Uppermill, who lived between 1810 and 1876, was keeping a diary at this time (2). It is the earliest detailed (but rather uninformative) record of Saddleworth life, and hopefully, being a private document, might contain revealing information. Unfortunately, Shaw was outside Saddleworth on a business trip in the Midlands from March 22 to April 9, 1832. He writes,

"April 8th...and got to Chapel (en le Frith) about seven. Taking up one of the Manchester papers I was surprised to find that Old Bill o' Jack's and his son Tom had been murdered. April 9th...I arrived home about 8 o'clock. It seems to be quite true that Old Bill and Tom have been murdered and under circumstances the most vicious... April 21st...Went up into Greenfield this afternoon with Master M. Hextal to see Old Bill's o' Jack's and the beauties of Greenfield...There was a great number of people up at Old Bill's today. The Struggle which deprived these poor unfortunate people of their lives must have been most terrific as Tom stood 6 feet  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch in height and was an extremely powerful man. The Manchester Guardian Newspaper of last Saturday (14.4.1832) gives a very good circumstantial account of the whole business as far as it is known at present. It appears very improbable that the murderers will ever be found out now".

Tom Bradbury was unpopular locally as contemporary newspapers reveal. Joseph Thornton (3), a generation later, writes

"The fact was that there were too many unwilling witnesses, some of whom could have hanged the culprit on their own evidence. Many declined to come forward with substantial facts on account of the unfriendly behaviour of the Bradburys towards those who had to travel on the road from Greenfield to Holmfirth...Statements have been made that if the tragedy had not taken place on the above date, it would have taken place shortly afterwards".

George Shaw reveals a further reason for Tom Bradbury's unpopularity,

"August 12 1829 (the opening of the shooting season)...there has been four or five dogs poisoned about Bill o' Jack's with small pieces of muffin which had been evidently scattered about on purpose for mischief, and which on being examined were found to contain leather buttons. It is supposed that Thom (sic) o' Bill's has been the author of this diabolical action in revenge for being fined for shooting last year...

August 19 (Cousin Richard Buckley of Hollyville told of) a magistrates meeting which had been held at Dobcross. He had been to hear whether anything had been made of Thos Bradbury alias Thom o' Bill's who had been taken up on suspicion of having had laid the poisoned cake on the opening day. But however they, not having any or at least not sufficient evidence to convict him, were forced to let him have his liberty".

Thus this new evidence provides a confession and a motive, but as they are irreconcilable they add further to the mystery.

#### References

1. Joseph Bradbury, "Saddleworth Sketches", Oldham 1871.
2. George Shaw Diaries, Manchester Central Library.
3. Joseph Thornton, "New Saddleworth Sketches", Uppermill 1967.

With acknowledgements to A. Burke for the loan of his Bill's o' Jack's file, and T. Wyke for the discovery of the confession letter.

N. Barrow.

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#### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

I was surprised to read the note about the Bell Inn, Delph, on page 16 of Volume 8 of the Bulletin.

Some years ago, after showing a series of slides of Saddleworth to people in Delph, two octogenarian friends of the late Mr. Fred Battye told us that the building on the LEFT of the arch was the original Bell Inn.

This was confirmed by the residents of this building. We were told that the assembly room stretched across the first floor and over the arch. The ground floor had been prepared for painting and decorating some time before and traces of the fastenings of benches had been found in the walls.

As late as 1908, cottages which had replaced the stables were in existence on both sides of the road through the arch.

In Ammon Wrigley's book, "Those Were the Days", opposite page 192 there is a photograph, taken in 1937, of the inn by the son-in-law of the author. This shows all the building on the left of the arch, the arch, and just a small part of the wall of the adjoining house.

Burnside,  
Greenbridge Lane, Greenfield.

Yours etc. H. M. WOOD

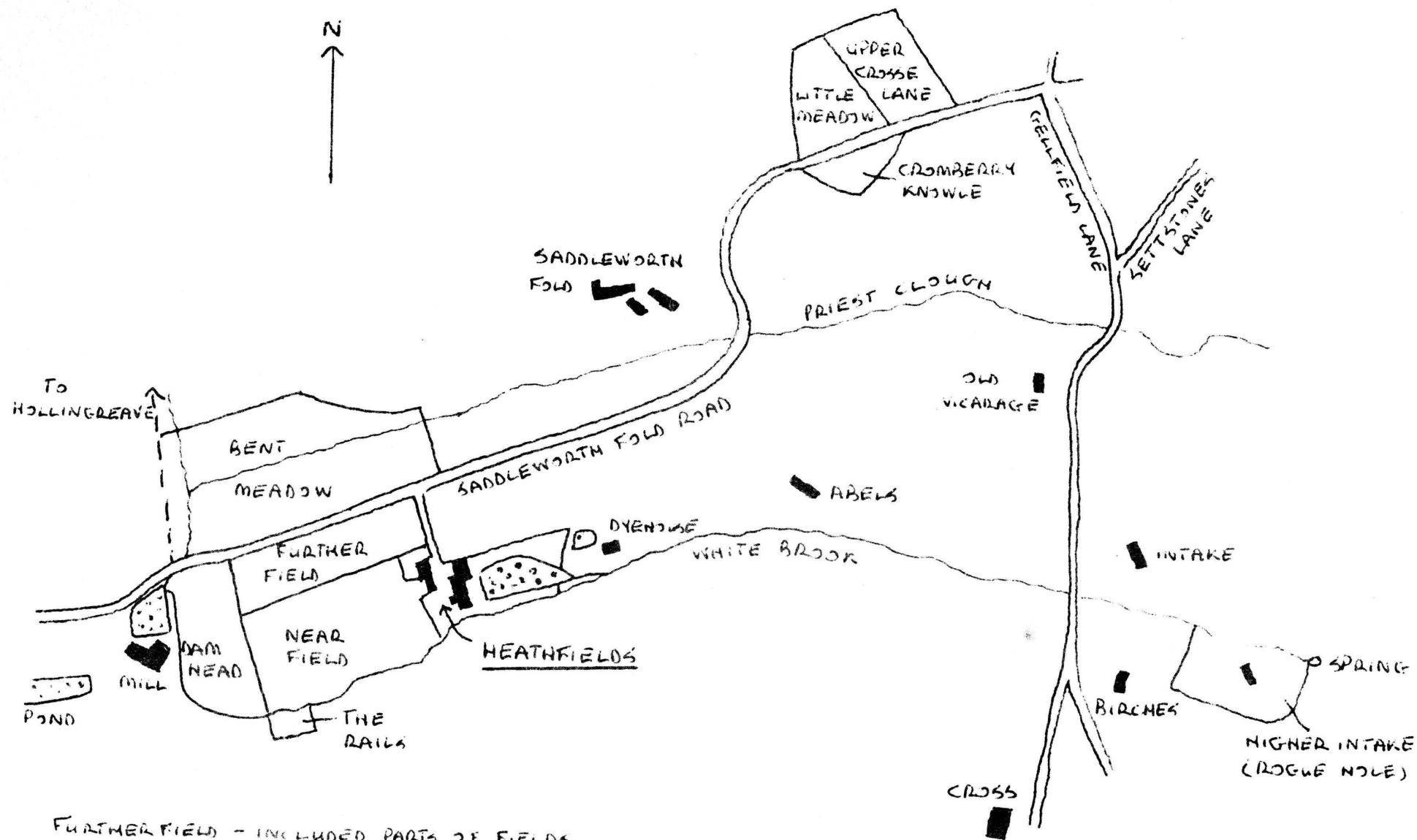
### HEATHFIELDS, UPPERMILL

In the previous number of the Bulletin (V.8 1978, pp 9-10) John Buckley gave a preliminary account of the mill at Heathfields. The following is an historical outline of the Heathfields estate. A good part of it has been provided by the voluminous Schofield papers (which are held in the Archives Department of Manchester Central Library), supplemented by numerous other sources including the Saddleworth Parish Registers, newspaper advertisements, and the Registry of Deeds at Wakefield.

Heathfields is situated on the lower eastern slopes of the Tame valley, along the northern side of White Brook which descends steeply from its source 1,000 feet above sea level at Rogue Hole, north-west of Pots and Pans Rocks, to join the River Tame in Uppermill. Originally the Heathfields estate included the land between the head of the dam belonging to the old-established corn mill in Uppermill (later the Old Factory, adjoining the Hare and Hounds Inn), and the Abels estate (see Map). Though largely bordered on the north by the road between Uppermill and Saddleworth Church and on the south by White Brook, some of its land holdings were on the north side of the road. These comprised a field or parts of fields which were originally known as Crossey Lane, part of the Saddleworth Fold estates, but which in the nineteenth century were called Bent Meadow and later Well Meadow. Together with White Brook, this field - which was liberally supplied with spring water as well as water from the small stream coming down Priest Clough - meant that the estate possessed good supplies of water, and, furthermore, water that was pure and soft, a factor that was to play a most significant role in the economic growth of this part of Uppermill.

The first reference to Heathfields in the Registers is in 1722, when John Gartside, a clothier, was living there. A survey of the cottages adjoining Heathfields House which was carried out by the Historical Society (Bulletin, V.4 1974, p. 33) suggested that the oldest of these might date from the early eighteenth century at least, and possibly John Gartside leased land from the Farrers about this period and built a cottage there. Certainly the Gartside's were still landholders there in 1777 when the records of the Farrers' estates show that a John Gartside was tenant of Heathfields and 8 acres 3 roods 26 perches of land, at a rent of £5-10-6 (Bulletin, loc cit, pp 33-35). By this time other cottages had been erected adjacent to the first. In 1738 Edmund Wood (of Philips, clothier) had married Jane Gartside of Heathfields, and they continued to live at Heathfields, possibly erecting one of these cottages. Significantly in the later history of Heathfields, a James Wood was christened on 6th July 1777, the youngest of six sons of Robert Wood of Heathfields, a shoemaker, who had married Jane Radcliffe of Cross in 1761.

By 1787 John Platt had probably built himself a house at Heathfields (see below). The Platts of Heathfields were a branch of the Butterhouse Platts. An early reference in the Parish Registers referred to the christening of John, son of John Platt of Butterworths, in September 1700. John Platt senior, a carpenter, was buried on June 9, 1737. John Platt junior continued as a carpenter at Butterhouse, where he and his wife Sarah had seven children. Their eldest son was James, christened October 19, 1729, and he inherited Butterhouse on his father's death. In the 1750s he was described as a clothier, and it was from him that the Platts of Heathfields were descended. It is also interesting to note that John Platt's third son, Henry (christened 17 December 1732) was the ancestor of Platt Brothers of



FURTHER FIELD - INCLUDED PARTS OF FIELDS  
FORMERLY CALLED LITTLE  
MEADOW AND FARTHER FIELD

NEAR FIELD - INCLUDED PARTS OF FIELDS  
FORMERLY CALLED NEAR FIELD,  
UPPER MEADOW, LOWER MEADOW  
AND DAMHEAD.

# MAP OF HEATHFIELDS AREA

NOT TO SCALE.

DRAWN FROM NINETEENTH CENTURY PLANS

Dobcross and Oldham.

On January 1st 1750 James Platt married Mary Wyld of Oldham Parish, and they had four children: John, christened 25 December 1750, James, christened 24 February 1760, Frank christened 30 March 1770 (died 9 April 1846), and Hannah, who died 24 April 1843. James Platt's wife, Mary, was buried on October 8, 1783, and his second wife Sarah (Buckley) on 17 August 1792. His second son, James, continued to live at Butterhouse, but his eldest son, John, as noted above, moved to Heathfields. Before this, however, he married Mary Whitehead on April 16 1770, and their son John was christened 7 March 1771 and another son, Ammon, in 1785. Mary died aged 46 on 7 March 1795. John married his second wife, Sarah Bottomley, on 26 May 1798, and she died aged 57 on December 22 1812. Betty, his third wife, also predeceased him in June 1832.

On 14 November 1787 Thomas Shaw of Furlane leased to John Platt senior at an annual rent of 7/6 part of the Little Meadow at Uppermill "as the plot or parcel is now wholly built upon, containing in length on the western side 6 yards 19 inches, on the eastern side the same, and on the northern and southern sides 7 yards 6 inches...bounded on the west by part of the said Little Meadow, on the north side by a plot of ground agreed to be let to Cornelius Farrand, on the east side by the fold or waste and on the south side by a House belonging to the said Thomas Shaw", to erect a "messuage or dwelling house or other building". This house is described in the same deed as being already nearly finished. A proviso was laid down that Platt should allow "the passing and repassing with Carts by the Door of the House where Cornelius Farrand now lives with the liberty for Cornelius Farrand... to join a Building to and raising the Gable End of the House of him the said John Platt and of laying and resting timber and wood thereon...".

In November 1791 John Platt (described as "of Uppermill, clothier") purchased the Heathfields estate from the executors of James Farrer. The mill at Heathfields must have been built by him about this time, probably for the scribbling of wool.

In August 1795 John Platt contracted with William Radcliffe of Birches for the purchase of Upper Intake (or Rogue Hole, later called White Spring Head) for £82, and he built a house there. The purpose of this negotiation was obviously to protect his water rights on the stream, and to consolidate these he later (on September 9 1818) bought Priest Clough Head, part of the common land containing 2 acres 1 rood 1 perch, from the Commissioners.

On 17 January 1799, by a deed of gift (or feoffment) John Platt the elder of Heathfields, clothier, granted his son John (also described as a clothier) "all that messuage or tenement with outbuildings and cottages and one quarter part of a mill lately erected...commonly called Heathfields and in the occupation of John Platt the elder, together with the closes (purchased by John Platt the elder off the Trustees of James Farrer) called Upper Meadow, Lower Meadow, Little Meadow, Near Meadow, Near Field, Further Field, Lower Field, Damhead and the Rails, containing 8 acres 3 roods 26 perches and now in the occupation of John Platt the elder...and other closes near Saddleworth Fold called Hanging Acker, now divided into 3 closes, the Little Meadow, the Upper Crosse Lane and the Crowberry Knowle, containing 6 acres 2 roods 6 perches, in the occupation of John Platt the elder...and one quarter share in the machinery in the mill and privileges of waters, dams etc...". These estates were to become John's upon his father's death, and the gift was occasioned by the former's marriage.

John Platt junior married Mary Shaw of Charlesworth, Glossop, on 13 September 1799. She was the grand-daughter of Thomas Shaw of Lane, yeoman, who left his estates at Lane and Grotton by his will dated 29 October 1774 to his grandson Thomas of Charlesworth (Mary's brother). The latter, by his will dated 5 April 1828, eventually bequeathed the income from these estates for the maintenance of Mary and John Platt's children until they reached the age of 21. Mary died soon after this, on 5 December 1829 at the age of 49, leaving her husband and nine children.

John Platt senior and his two sons were important local entrepreneurs or yeoman-clothiers. They were merchant-manufacturers, handling part of the local output of woollen cloth produced by hand-loom weavers, and also supplying them with raw wool, some of which would undergo the preliminary process of scribbling at their mill at Heathfields. At first the Platts would dispose of the cloth in its unfinished state, but, as will be seen below, they gradually extended the field of their operations particularly in the dyeing and finishing aspects of the trade.

In 1795 John Platt senior leased land at Damhead to Abraham Rhodes. The latter had leased the old corn mill at Uppermill from James Farrer, the Lord of the Manor, in 1785 (1), and had begun the scribbling of wool there. Rhodes at the same time leased part of the waste ground at the upper end of the dam belonging to the corn mill, and by 1788 had built another scribbling mill there (Damhead Mill). It is interesting to note that both these mills were served by White Brook in particular and also by the stream coming down Priest Clough. The 1795 lease between Platt and Rhodes involved extensions to the mill at Damhead (see later).

John Platt junior purchased the Abels estate from John Buckley of Banktop in November 1808 for £910. By 1818 he had built a mill there (later called Heathfields Dyeworks, and still there), which was leased in the 1820s to William Robinson (later of Springmeadow Dyeworks). The mill at Heathfields was tenanted by James Wood at this time (see reference above).

Also about this time, after both the mills at Damhead and Uppermill had passed by mortgage into the ownership of the Armitage family of Hunslet (and later of Farnley Hall), the Platts took out leases upon them. Thus by the early 1820s John Platt and his two sons, John and Ammon, were working all four mills on White Brook.

On December 1 1834 the Abels estate and mill were purchased from John Platt junior by William Kenworthy Schofield of Dobcross, woolstapler, for £1,300. The mill was then tenanted by Samuel Buckley. Schofield became John's son-in-law about this time, marrying his eldest daughter Sarah who was born in 1804.

In September 1833 Hannah Robinson, the widow of William Robinson, diverted part of the waters from the spring at Rogue Hole into a newly-constructed reservoir at Springmeadow Dyeworks. This action resulted in the commencement of a lawsuit in July 1834 by James Wood the tenant of Heathfields Mill against her, "for diverting and turning a certain stream of water from flowing and supplying the mill of John Platt the elder at Heathfields". This lawsuit is interesting because it illustrates the extent to which every drop of water was utilised, both for domestic and industrial purposes, and how the owners of mills lower down stream were obliged to maintain jealous eyes on what was happening to the waters in the higher reaches of the streams. Many

disputes over water rights occurred as more and more water-powered mills were constructed along the Pennine streams. It had long been the custom to divide the stream arising at Rogue Hole into two parts. One part, White Brook, ran alongside John Platt's estate and was used at Abels and Heathfields for working a dyehouse and mill respectively. The other part served the houses at Cross (see map) and then passed back into White Brook just above Platt's dam at Heathfields, having also served the dyehouse at Springmeadow, and it was this water that was in dispute. Hannah Robinson had begun storing it in her dam from which it would pass at a lower level into White Brook, thus by-passing the Heathfields dam. Agreement between the parties was reached in 1835, whereby "the water at Rogue Hole shall be divided into two, two-thirds to run via White Brook, and one-third...into the lands of Hannah Robinson to the dam...and then back into White Brook at a point higher than the present embankment built to divert the water into a reservoir for supplying the mill of John Platt...". At the same time, Hannah Robinson agreed to divert water from a spring arising on the Cross estate in the same direction.

In the meantime, however, on 26 December 1834, John Platt junior had died at the age of 63. His inheritance was auctioned by his father's mortgagees, the Armitages of Bayhall, Huddersfield, at the Commercial Inn, Uppermill on 19 November 1835. W. K. Schofield (of Dobcross, woolstapler) and John Whitehead Platt (of Heathfields, merchant) bought the estate, consisting of Heathfields House, quarter share in Heathfields Mill, and the land mentioned earlier, for £2,750. In December 1838 Schofield came into the ownership of J. W. Platt's share when the latter left Heathfields to settle in New South Wales.

John Platt senior died on 29 August 1839 at the age of 88. By his will (dated 26 December 1835) he gave the residue of his estates to Ammon Platt his surviving son. The latter was already working Damhead Mill and the Old Factory, and now came into ownership of a three-quarter share of Heathfields Mill.

To be continued.

Reference: 1. Barnes, B. "Upper Mill: the Manorial Mill and other Corn Mills in Saddleworth", Saddleworth Historical Society Bulletin, V.6 1976, p.27.

Bernard Barnes.

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#### SPECIAL OFFER

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MANOR RECORDS

Part 13: 1815-1825

24 October 1815

At a Meeting of the Proprietors of the Manor of Saddleworth cum Quick... held at the House of Mr. John Wrigley at Dobcross Innkeeper for the purpose of taking into consideration the Claims attempted to be set up by the Devisees of the late Mr. Farrer respecting the Common Right belonging to those Estates which have limited Common Right which said limited Common Right was purchased along with the Manor. And also for the purpose of appointing another Member of the Committee in the place of Mr. Edward Brown who is desirous of resigning the situation on account of his being appointed Clerk to the Commissioner for Inclosing the Commons in the said Manor, and for other purposes. Mr. John Radcliffe in the Chair (21 other proprietors present).

RESOLVED that in consequence of the Devisees in trust for the late Mr. Farrer having attempted to claim before the Commisssioner for Inclosing the Waste Lands in Saddleworth the limited Common Right belonging the Manor of Saddleworth which said limited Common Right was purchased along with the Manor, that it is the opinion of this Meeting that such Claim be resisted and that a Subscription be forthwith entered into by the holders of Manor Shares for the payment of 5 shillings per Share for defraying the same to be paid into the Hands of Mr. John Radcliffe of Stonebreaks.

RESOLVED that Mr. John Radcliffe of Stonebreaks be and he is hereby appointed one of the Committee to attend the Commissioner at any meeting to be called respecting the said Inclosure to watch over the Interest of the proprietors in the stead of Mr. Edward Brown...

RESOLVED that Mr. Edward Brown of Dobcross Gentleman be and he is hereby appointed Clerk to the Proprietors of the Manor of Saddleworth cum Quick... in the stead of the late Mr. Joseph Mellor of Ashton under lyne Solicitor deceased.

18 May 1825

At a Meeting of the Proprietors of the Manor of Saddleworth...held at the House of Benjamin Lawton of Dobcross...Innkeeper, in pursuance of the following Requisition

To Edward Brown Esq.

We whose Names are hereunto subscribed being respectively Lords of the Manor or reputed Manor of Saddleworth cum Quick do hereby request you to call a Public Meeting of the Lords of the said Manor to take into Consideration the proceedings under the Act of Parliament for inclosing the Common Lands in the said Manor and to adopt such measures as may be deemed necessary for protecting their interests. Dated the fourteenth day of May 1825.

James Buckley William Buckley Benjamin Whitehead Thomas Shaw  
John Platt Senior John Wrigley Giles Shaw

Mr. John Radcliffe in the Chair (21 other proprietors present).

RESOLVED that it is the opinion of this Meeting that the Commissioner shall pay one farthing per foot out of the proceeds of the Stone gotten on Runninghill to Mr. Hesslegrave to be laid out by him on the Road leading from Hollingreave Wharf to Runninghill Head under the inspection of Messrs. John Wrigley, John Shepherd and John Bradbury.

The funds under the Inclosure being nearly exhausted RESOLVED that the Clerk be requested to apply to the Huddersfield Canal Company for the payment of the amount due from them to the enclosure.

RESOLVED that the Chairman do sign these resolutions on behalf of the members.

RESOLVED that the thanks of this Meeting be given to the Chairman for his impartial conduct in the Chair.

(This is the concluding entry in the Minute Book of the Proprietors of the Manor of Saddleworth. Also included in this Minute Book are details of the meeting and records of the sub-committee set up to watch over the proceedings of the Saddleworth Inclosure, and these are given below).

#### SADDLEWORTH INCLOSURE

##### Part 1

16 Aug. 1810

At a Meeting of the Committee appointed to watch over the Interest of the Lords of the Manor...held at the House of Mr. John Wrigley Innkeeper at Dobcross. Present Mr. Henry Whitehead in the Chair (all four other members of sub-committee present plus John Radcliffe, treasurer for the Proprietors).

WHEREAS at a Meeting of the Proprietors of the Manor of Saddleworth called by public advertisement held at the House of the said John Wrigley on Saturday the 30th Day of June 1810 at which Meeting the following Gentlemen viz the said Henry Whitehead, John Rooth, Joseph Harrop, Joseph Lees, Edward Brown were appointed a Committee to attend the Commissioner at any of his Meetings to watch over the Interest of the Proprietors of the said Manor any three of whom would be competent to Act.

In conformity to this Resolution At a Meeting of the said Commissioner held on the 11th day of July last the following Gentlemen, namely Messrs. John Rooth, Joseph Harrop, Edward Brown and Joseph Lees attended, and on the 12th Messrs. Henry Whitehead, John Rooth and Joseph Lees attended, and several Objections were made and Minutes taken down of several Claims then produced before the Commissioner. And at another Meeting of the said Commissioner held on the 11th and 12th days of August instant at which meeting all the Gentlemen who compose the Committee then attended for the purpose aforesaid and agreed to meet again this 16th day of August 1810.

RESOLVED that Mr. Joseph Mellor be and he is hereby appointed Clerk to this Committee.

RESOLVED that this Committee severally for themselves as Lords in Common with the several other Lords of the Manor or Lordship or reputed Manor or Lordship of Saddleworth cum Quick do claim one tenth share of the said Commons Moors and Waste Grounds as allowed by the Act in lieu of as satisfaction for their right of Soil to which they are respectively intituled to as such Lords of the said Manor.

That it appears to this Committee that one tenth share allowed by the Act to the Lords of the Manor is in Compensation of their right of Soil but not in lieu of any other rights vested in the said Lords.

That it appears to this Committee that the said Lords are intitled to all Mines Minerals Waters Watercourses and all other Royalties of and belonging to the said Manor.

RESOLVED that this Committee do on behalf of themselves and the other Lords of the Manor claim all Mines (etc.)...to the said Manor with all incroachments made thereon or therefrom or a Compensation in lieu to be allowed to them in lieu thereof:

That it appeareth to this Committee that a great proportion of the Freehold Estates in Saddleworth aforesaid were purchased from the Lord or Lords of the Manor with a limitation and reservation of right of Common to the said Lords.

RESOLVED that this Committee do object to all such Claims as shall be made by any Owner or Occupier of any Estate or Estates within the said Manor wherein such Common Right is supposed to have been heretofore reserved in the Lord or Lords of the said Manor.

RESOLVED that this Committee do put in a Claim for all such limited and reserved rights as Lords of the said Manor.

It appearing to this Committee that the Commissioner hath no power to interfere with or take Cognizance of any of the Commons Moors or Waste Grounds called by the Name of Frier Mear being excepted in the said Act.

RESOLVED that all claims to a right of Common made by any person or persons for and in respect of any Estate or Estates within or upon the said Mear be objected to, they not being intitled to or having enjoyed any privileges in or upon the said Commons or been considered as intitled to any part thereof.

It appearing to this Committee that all Estates situated upon Quick Mear have heretofore had their proportion of the Commons allotted to them by the Lord or Lords of the said Manor and that they have no right to claim in or upon the Commons Moors and Waste Grounds intended to be inclosed by the Act. RESOLVED that if any claims be made for any Estate upon the said Mear the same shall be objected to upon the above Grounds.

It appearing to this Committee that the Common rights of all the Estates upon Shaw Mear have been heretofore limited and reserved by the Lord or Lords of the said Manor of Saddleworth.

RESOLVED that the Committee do object to all Claims of Common Right for all estates situate in or upon Shaw Mear.

RESOLVED further that the Committee do put in a Claim as Lords for all Common Rights belonging to the said Mear.

It Appearing to this Committee that several Claims are made for Beast Gates, Sheep Walks, Lands uninclosed, right of Turbary, and privileges of Getting Stone in and upon the Commons Moors and Waste Grounds intended to be inclosed by the said Act.

RESOLVED that this Committee do object to all such Claims as shall be made except such as have derived their Rights and Privileges from and under the Lord or Lords of the said Manor.

That it appearing to this Committee that the whole right of Soil and also other rights are acknowledged by the Act of Parliament to be vested in the said Lords of the Manor.

RESOLVED that all Claims set up or preferred before the Commissioner named in the said Act be objected against until the Title Deeds or Writings be produced before the Commissioner.

It appearing to this Committee that several Claims are made for Manor Shares by persons whose Title is doubtful to the same.

RESOLVED that all Claims for Manor Shares set up or preferred before the said Commissioner be objected against until the Title Deeds or Writings be produced before the said Commissioner.

RESOLVED that Mr. Mellor do and he is hereby requested to make out proper Claims for and on behalf of the Lords of the said Manor for an Allotment or share of the Commons Moors and Waste Lands of Saddleworth aforesaid to be made to them for and in respect of the different Claims above mentioned and according to the said Resolutions ready to be delivered to the Commissioner at his next Meeting.

RESOLVED that this Meeting be adjourned to this House subject to the Call of Mr. Henry Whitehead the Chairman of this Meeting.

To be continued.

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#### SOCIETY SCRAPBOOK

##### A Secret Wireless Station on Standedge.

Early this century, probably in 1908 or 1909, an experimental wireless station was set up on Standedge between the Floating Light Inn and the cutting. A party of naval personnel erected a transmitting and receiving station, a number of tents, a dining marquee and a field kitchen.

This attracted a great deal of local interest, especially among the boys, and gradually news filtered out that wireless messages by Morse Code were being transmitted to and from warships in the Manchester Ship Canal.

Efforts to find references to this in local newspapers of the period have proved fruitless, but in recent correspondence with a retired Wireless Operator, who lived in Greenfield when a boy, further information was obtained.

He writes, "Regarding the Standedge Wireless tests to warships in the Manchester Ship Canal early this century, I cannot recall these as I would only be a boy at the time, but no doubt they are correct, because tests started first about 1897, and in 1900 tests were made by a ship to shore test. The Navy were interested, and I would suspect that, so as not to attract attention to their activities nationwide, would use a ship well inland, i.e. the Manchester Docks, and a high spot not too far away, i.e. Standedge... In 1914 I was on a ship in St. Johns, Newfoundland and went up to Signal Hill and signed my name in the same book that Marconi signed when they received the three dot (letter S) signal from Poldhu in Cornwall 1901".

It appears that after the successful transmission from Poldhu, Marconi's ideas were developed, and subsequently our district of Saddleworth was used to experiment further in the scheme.

R. C. Wood.

Saddleworth Sales advertised in the "Manchester Mercury"

Feb. 26 1771 To be Sold to the best Bidder

At the House of Mr. James Lawton, known by the Sign of the Blue Bell, at Delph, in the Parish of Saddleworth, and County of York, on Thursday the 14th day of March 1771, between the hours of two and five in the Afternoon...

The Fee Simple and Inheritance, commonly known by the Name of LOWER BARN, situate and being on Frier Mear, in the Parish and County aforesaid, consisting of five Bays of good Building, in sufficient Repair, and about nine Acres of Arable, Meadow and Pasture Ground, be the same more or less, and capable of great Improvement, with an Eighth Part of an undivided Piece of Ground called Linfit Slack, and four Seats in Frier Mear Chapel, which lyeth contiguous to the said Premises; it is situate near the Turnpike Road leading from Manchester to Huddersfield, and about the Midway between them.

For further Particulars in the mean Time apply to Mr. John Buckley of Car Cote, near Delph, or Mr. Henry Buckley of New Tame, or of Mr. Edward Kenworthy, the present Tenant, who will shew the Premises.

June 30 1795 To be Sold by Auction

At the House of William Lawson, the Angel, in Oldham, in the County of Lancaster, on Wednesday, the 15th Day of July 1795, precisely at 4 o'Clock in the Afternoon...

The Inheritance in Fee Simple of and in all that Messuage and Tenement, with the Outbuildings and Appurtenances, commonly called or known by the name of THORNLEE, situate, lying and being in Saddleworth, in the County of York, and in the Parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, in the said County of Lancaster; together with the several Closes, Closures, or Parcels of Land, Meadow and Pasture, thereunto belonging, commonly called or known by the several Names of the Low Bank, the New Field, the Owler Croft, the Higher Little Field, the Lower Little Field, the Field at the Green, and the Croft, containing in the whole, by common Estimation, seven Acres and a Quarter of Land, of the Measure there used, or thereabouts, be the same more or less, and now in the Holding or Occupation of Mr. Robinson, as Tenant from Year to Year.

The above Premises are situate within three Miles of the Town of Oldham, and near the new Turnpike Road leading from thence to Huddersfield. The greatest part of the Estate abounds with Coal of an excellent quality, which may be got at a very easy Expence, and disposed of to great Advantage in the Neighbourhood, there being no Collieries within three Miles thereof.

Bernard Barnes.

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LOCAL INTEREST TRAILS

Six Local Interest Trails are now available, including the newly-reprinted "Grasscroft Area". They are priced 20p each, and are available from the Museum in Uppermill, the Local Interest Centre in Oldham or from the Editor of the Bulletin (30p each including postage, etc.).

The Trails were reviewed recently in the magazine "Industrial Past" (V. 5, Spring 1978) where the following comments were passed:-

"Guided Walks...are a welcome manifestation of increasing public awareness in our environment, and this is an activity in which local groups can excel, as in Saddleworth.  
...these trails published by the Saddleworth Historical Society are worth acquiring...They take their readers by means of simple and well illustrated maps and directions round particular trails, and detailing all the essential background information..."

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### 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.

#### HALLS

Grid Reference: SD 994049

Location: By the side of the Huddersfield Canal and between it and the River Tame, just north of Frenches, Greenfield. 520 feet above sea level. Approached originally by a cobbled track from Chapel Road across the canal (now a footpath); present approach is from Wellington Road (across the river).

Description: Two buildings. One, a large two storey stone-built building, has large archways front and rear in the centre, but also has mullioned windows. The archway at the rear (near the canal) has a filled-in taken-in door above it. Was this building a house with barn or house with warehouse? The other building is partly two storeys partly three storeys high, stone-built, with flat, slightly recessed mullion windows. The two storey block was four cottages, and the other consisted of two cottages, all backing on to the canal tow-path which is at first floor level. All the buildings were restored by Saddleworth Council shortly before its demise. The sketch is from an old photograph.



History:

- 1723 Apr. 28 Ann daughter of Hugh Shaw clothier and Ann his wife of Halls christened. Their daughter Sarah christened Aug. 13 1727 and their son Hugh Jan. 20 1734 (Registers).
- 1729 Aug. 14 John Kenworthy yeoman of Halls buried (Registers).
- 1729 Oct. 12 Ann daughter of William Buckley clothier and Patience his wife of Halls christened. Aug. 22 1731 their son William christened. Feb. 25, 1733 their son Joseph christened. Apr. 13 1735 their son William christened, and buried June 18 1738. June 5 1737 their daughter Mary christened. Mar. 11 1739 their daughter Esther christened. Mar. 1 1741 their son William christened. Aug. 28 1743 their daughter Nelly christened. (Registers).
- 1731 Apr. 22 Joseph Lawton of Woods married Ann Kenworthy of Halls. Ann was buried from Dobcross Dec. 17 1736 aged 26 (Registers).
- 1733 Mar. 11 Betty daughter of Ralph Ryle tailor and Mary his wife of Halls christened (Registers).
- 1733 Oct. 1 Martha Kenworthy widow of Halls buried (Registers).
- 1736 Apr. 14 Helen daughter of James Whitehead of Halls buried (Registers).
- 1739 Nov. 4 Robert Fitton of Wellihole clothier married Alice Shaw of Halls (Registers).
- 1740 Hugh Shaw was a Warden of Saddleworth Church for Halls (Registers).
- 1740 Jan. 3 John Shaw of Halls clothier married Mary Shaw of Townstead. Their son William christened Jan. 30 1741 and buried next day. Mar 31. 1745 their son John christened. Jan. 6 1748 their son Hugh christened and buried Dec. 29 1760. Nov. 11 1750 their daughter Mary christened. Feb. 3 1754 their son William christened. Their daughter Sarah christened Nov. 7 1756. Their daughter Hannah christened Jan. 13 1760. Their son Hugh christened Oct. 17 1762. John Shaw of Birches late of Halls buried Mar. 12 1799 aged 80 (Registers).
- 1743 Oct. 6 William Shaw of Halls clothier married Sarah Broadbent of Thame-water. Their daughter Mary christened Sept. 23 1744. Their son Hugh christened Dec. 7 1746. Their son John christened Feb. 19 1749. Their son William christened July 6 1755. William Shaw clothier of Halls buried Nov. 2 1786 and Sarah his wife buried Jan. 17 1789 (Registers).
- 1745 Mar. 4 Lease for 99 years: James Farrer of Ewood to Joseph Lawton of Dobcross yeoman - messuages called Halls Tenement together with the closes named Ramsbottom, Ramsbottom Top, Lower Field, Meadow, Kiln Meadow, Lower Field, Green, Great Field, Daft Road, New Meadow, New Meadow Wood, Wheat Lands, Bauk and New Place containing 22 acres 3 roods 12 perches, plus a dole of Hollins near a place called Milner Coat in Greenfield. (Registry of Deeds, Wakefield, UU 769).
- 1747 Jan. 1 Giles Shaw of Townstead clothier married Mary Shaw of Halls. Giles Shaw of Strines died 30 Dec. 1800 aged 75 and Mary his wife died 13 Feb. 1790 aged 67. They lived first at Carr Barn, Uppermill (Registers).

- 1758 May 16 Hugh Shaw of Halls clothier married Mary Lees of Ashton Parish. Their son John christened Dec. 27 1761. Their son Hugh christened June 17, 1764 and buried July 12, 1766. Their son James christened Feb. 22 1767. Their son Hugh christened July 23 1769. Their daughter Ann christened April 20 1772. Their daughter Mary christened Nov. 20 1774 and buried Dec. 21 1774. Their son Hugh christened Apr. 23 1775. Their son William christened May 1 1785. Hugh Shaw of Halls buried Dec. 2 1798 (Registers).
- 1759 Jonathan Mallalieu of Halls clothier married Mary Shaw of Andrew Mill Nov. 5 (Registers).
- 1760 Oct. 30 Joseph Scholefield of Halls clothier married Mary Standfield sojourner (Registers).
- 1763 May 19 James Buckley of Halls married Peggy Whitaker (Registers).
- 1767 Jan. 26 John son of Sarah Bradbury of Runninghill by Hugh Shaw of Halls christened. Jan. 19 1772 Alice daughter of Sarah Bradbury spinster by Hugh Shaw of Halls christened. Aug. 3 1773 Hugh Shaw of Halls clothier married Sarah Bradbury (Registers).
- 1770 May 17 Ann wife of Hugh Shaw clothier of Halls buried. Hugh Shaw widower of Halls buried Apr. 28 1776 (Registers).
- 1773 Jan. 31 William son of John Shaw clothier and Alice his wife of Halls christened. Their son John christened Apr. 23 1775 and buried Nov. 16 1779 (Registers).
- 1777 The Shaw Hall Estate list includes Joseph Lawton as tenant of Halls, rent £26/1/- . 43 acres 2 roods 9 perches.
- 1779 Feb. 16 William Shaw of Halls clothier married Betty Buckley of New Inn. Their son John christened Oct. 24 1779 (Registers).
- 1780 Apr. 14 John son of Joseph Whitehead clothier and Alice his wife of Halls christened (Registers).
- 1781 Feb. 1 Joseph Howard of Halls clothier married Sarah Chadwick of Slackhead (Registers).
- 1782 May 26 Sarah daughter of Theophilus Ogden clothier and Esther his wife of Halls christened (Registers).
- 1783 Sept. 25 John Shaw of Halls married Sarah Radcliffe. Their son John christened Oct. 24 1784 and buried Dec. 11 1790. Their son Hugh christened Apr. 29 1787 and buried Dec. 11 1788. Their daughter Mary christened Dec. 6 1789. Their son Thomas christened Mar. 22 1795. Their daughter Betty christened May 6 1798. (Registers).
- 1793 Jan. 6 John son of Robert and Anne Lees of Halls christened. Their daughter Mary christened Mar. 22 1795. Their son Dan christened Apr. 30 1797 (Dan Lees of Uppermill died 6 Jan. 1861 aged 63 and Mary his wife died 2 May 1867 aged 68) (Registers).

- 1794 Feb. 17 Mary and Sarah twin daughters of James and Mary Shaw of Halls christened. (Mary daughter of James and Mary Shaw of Arthurs died 20 June 1853 aged 57 and her twin Sarah died 11 Jan. 1855 aged 59). Their son Hugh christened May 14 1796 (Hugh Shaw of Arthurs died 25 Sept. 1876 aged 80). Their son William christened 1799 (William Shaw of Arthurs died 2 Dec. 1872 aged 73. Mary his first wife died 25 Jan. 1828 aged 32 and Sarah his second wife died 14 Dec. 1883 aged 76). (Registers).
- 1797 Sept. 22 Mary daughter of Hugh and Sarah Shaw of Halls christened. Their son John christened Oct. 20 1799 (Registers).
- 1810 Owner of Halls Estate Edward Brown. Occupier Hugh Shaw; 44 acres 0 roods 24 perches (Enclosure Records).
- 1832 The Poll List includes James Ashworth of Halls.
- 1837 Edward Townley of Halls listed in the West Riding Poll Book.
- 1838 White's Directory includes Edward Townley, woollen printer of Halls.
- 1851 The Census includes the following under Halls: Martha Holland with three females, two of whom were silk dyers; Peter Ryan, with his wife and son - one of them was a woollen mule spinner and one a railway labourer; James Ogden, a farmer of 40 acres, with three males and two females. Three of the houses were unoccupied.
- 1871 The Census lists the following: John Kershaw, farmer of 39 acres, and his daughter who was a dairy maid; Martha Holland with three females, silk dyers and finishers; Benjamin Potter a cotton winder, with two males and three females, two of whom were cotton piecers; Thomas Mallalieu, an engineer, with four females, one a woollen weaver and one a woollen burler.
- 1885 The Poll List includes John Edward Dransfield of Halls.

HUSTEADS

Grid Reference: SD 984064

Location:

Northern slopes of Wall Hill Clough, near Dobcross, 700 feet above sea level.

Description:

Eighteenth century, two storey, four window stone farmhouse, with flag roof. Plain mullion windows.

History:

1737 John Scholefield was a Warden of Saddleworth Church for Housesteads.

- 1761 Nov. 28 James Buckley clothier of Housesteads buried. (Registers).
- 1762 Jan. 7 Anne Buckley of Housesteads buried (Registers).
- 1762 Mar. 29 John son of Thomas Whitehead clothier and Martha his wife of Housesteads christened and buried Mar. 31 1762. Their son Robert christened 27 Feb. 1763. Their daughter Mary christened Aug. 26 1765. Their son John christened Jan. 1767. (Registers).

- 1767 Oct. 20 Mally d. of Elizabeth Royley spinster of Wall Hill by David Harrop of Husteads clothier christened. They were married soon afterwards, and subsequently had four children: James christened Dec. 25 1769 (James Harrop of Dobcross died 2 Apr. 1799 aged 30), John christened Dec. 16 1770, died May 15 1773, Mally christened Aug. 22 1773, John christened Apr. 28 1776 (Registers).
- 1773 Apr. 11 James son of Mary Ann Royle spinster by Thomas Harrop clothier of Husteads christened (Registers).
- 1775 Nov. 26 Fanny daughter of Thomas Harrop of Dobcross by Mary Ann Riley of Husteads christened. Thomas and Mary Ann were Married July 17 1776. Thomas Harrop of Uppermill died 14 Mar. 1810 aged 67. Mary Ann died 31 Mar. 1831 aged 81 (Registers).
- 1777 The deeds refer to John and David Harrop of Husteads.  
1777 May 1 James Buckley clothier married Anna Whitehead. Sally daughter of James Buckley clothier of Husteads and Anna his wife christened. They had two more children: Mally christened Apr. 28 1782, died 14 Jan 1800 and John christened Nov. 23 1783. An earlier son, John, died aged 5 in May 1783. Anna wife of James Buckley clothier of Husteads buried Apr. 8 1785 aged 25. James died Aug. 21 1802 aged 48. Mally his second wife died 24 July 1839 aged 78. Ann daughter of James and Mally Buckley buried Jan. 3 1791 in her first year. Apr. 17 1797 Thomas son of James Buckley of Husteads died aged 5 (Registers).
- 1779 Feb. 8 Matthew Hirst of Husteads widower married Hannah Hawkyard widow of Mincy-croft (Registers).
- 1782 Nov. 24 Anna daughter of Joseph Thorp clothier and Betty his wife of Husteads christened. (Registers).
- 1788 Mar. 24 John Lawton of Walk Mill married Nancy Hill of Husteads, sojourner (Registers).
- 1789 Deeds refer to James Buckley of Husteads, clothier.
- 1795 Jan. 21 John Whitehead of Husteads buried (Registers).
- 1798 Jan. 11 Thomas Whitehead of Husteads buried (Registers).
- 1799 May 21 Ann daughter of James Whitehead of Husteads buried (Registers).
- 1807 Mar. 13 Indenture between (1) John Buckley late of Husteads now of Heyside, Royton, cotton manufacturer (eldest son and heir of James Buckley late of Husteads yeoman deceased) and Thomas Bradbury of Pobjgreen clothier (executors of the will of James Buckley) (2) George Buckley of Tamewater cotton manufacturer and William Buckley Fox of Saddleworth shopkeeper concerning the messuage etc. at Husteads together with its fields - Blake Meadow, Husteads, Brownhill with the Waste, Broadflatt (divided into two) containing 12 acres 3 roods 16 perches formerly in the occupation of James Buckley now of Edward Hall, Mary Buckley and John Seville (Registry of Deeds, Wakefield, EY 974). On Mar. 20

George Buckley mortgaged his share of the property to Sarah and Lucy Huxley of Macclesfield spinsters (FB 167), and on Sept. 24 1811 he took out another mortgage with John Halliworth of Bramhall, gentleman (FQ 220).

- 1832           The Poll List includes Thomas Mills of Husteads.
- 1835           The Saddleworth Church Rate Book lists Thomas Mills as the occupier of Husteads, owner Thomas Hardman.
- 1838           Pigot's Directory lists James Buckley of Husteads, manufacturer and merchant.
- 1841           The Census includes James Buckley and Ann his wife with eight children (he was a merchant); Thomas Mills and Elizabeth his wife with four children and a servant (he was a cloth finisher).
- 1846-7          Ammon Platt of Husteads contributed £7 to the building of the tower of Saddleworth Church (plaque in Church).
- 1851           June 1 James Buckley of Husteads, late of Tunstead, died aged 53. Ann his wife died 11 Aug. 1869 aged 73 (Registers).
- 1865           Dec. 11 Indenture between (1) Thomas Lomas banker of Manchester (trustee in will of Thomas Hardman late of Broughton Esq.) (2) Francis Burton Mills of Bicester gentleman and Thomas Johnes Smith of Hoole Lodge, Cheshire, Chief Constable concerning the Quickwood and Husteads Estates purchased by William Hardman father of Thomas Hardman from the assignees of George Buckley. (Registry of Deeds ZM 371) On Aug. 25 1866 the Husteads Estate including freehold mill, plantation and 4 acres 28 perches of land passed to John Mellor of New Delph, woollen manufacturer (ZM 375).

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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, 7 Elsted Road, Greenfield, Oldham. OL3 7LL.

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