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Cover Illustration:
Rochdale Church, 1830
(From James Butterworth, *History of Rochdale & Saddleworth*)

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ANTIQUARIANISM IN EARLY VICTORIAN ROCHDALE: THE TRINITY CHAPEL AT ST CHAD'S.¹

Adam Bowett

This tale has three protagonists: George Shaw (1810-76), the son of a mill owner of Uppermill, near Oldham; the Reverend Francis Raines (1805-1878), vicar of the parish of Milnrow, near Rochdale; and James Dearden (1798-1862), lord of the Manor of Rochdale.

George Shaw was the eldest of nine children born to Giles Shaw and Elizabeth Radcliffe. The Shaws were originally farmers in the parish of Saddleworth in the Tame valley, about five miles east of Oldham at the extreme western edge of the West Riding of Yorkshire. About 1770 they began to industrialise, building a woollen mill, called Giles Mill, on the river at Uppermill. In the 1790s the local roads were turnpiked and the Huddersfield Narrow Canal was dug, greatly improving Uppermill's connections to the wider world and with them the Shaw family's prosperity. George was educated locally and by 1829, aged eighteen, he was working in his father's mill. As the boss's son he had no trade as such, but instead learned the management of the business on the mill floor, the packing room and the counting house, and often accompanied his father to markets in Huddersfield, Halifax and Manchester. In 1830 he became the firm's traveller, covering an area from Birmingham in the Midlands to Perth in Scotland, dealing with sales and orders, making and receiving payments for woollen cloth. All the while, however, he aspired to a different and aesthetically richer existence; as he confided to his diary on 9 April 1830: 'My soaring ambition is confined within the narrow limits of a country manufacturer's life'.²

Francis Raines was a grammar-school boy. He originally trained as a surgeon but, finding the work uncongenial, in 1826 he was admitted to St Bees Theological College and in 1828 was appointed assistant curate for the chapelry of Saddleworth, of which Uppermill was a part.

Since the Shaws were not only locally prominent but also assiduous churchgoers it was natural that they would soon make the acquaintance of the new curate, and a warm attachment was soon established. Although only five years older than George Shaw, Raines soon became the young man's confidant and mentor, guiding his reading in literature and history, encouraging his artistic talent and sharing a mutual enthusiasm for an idealised medieval past, drawn in equal measure from the novels of Sir Walter Scott and scholarly works such as Whitaker's *History of Whalley* or Meyrick's *A Critical Enquiry into Antient Armour*.³

In Shaw Raines found a receptive pupil, for the young man was sensitive, artistic and impressionable. Long walks over the moors and valleys took them to old manor houses, ruined abbeys, slighted castles and Roman encampments, while evenings were spent reading, sketching and absorbing the principles of ancient architecture. When Raines was moved ten miles away to the curacy of Rochdale in July 1829 the two friends kept in touch, frequently walking the ten miles between Uppermill and Rochdale to take tea and occasionally to stay in each other's houses.⁴ The close association continued when Raines was made perpetual curate of nearby Milnrow in 1832.

It was almost certainly through Raines that Shaw met James Dearden, a Cambridge educated barrister who had inherited the manor of Rochdale in 1828. The Deardens were not, however,

¹ This article was originally published in *Regional Furniture*, Vol. 34 (2020).

² Oldham Local Studies and Archives (OLSA), George Shaw Diary (Diary); An accounts of Shaw's early life can be found in Howcroft (1972); Hyde and Petford (2006); Petford and Buckley (2017).

³ Thomas Dunham Whitaker, *An History of the Original Parish of Whalley* (Blackburn, 1801); Samuel Rush Meyrick, *A Critical Enquiry into Antient Armour, As it Existed in Europe, but Particularly in England, from the Norman Conquest to the Reign of Charles II*, (London, 1824).

⁴ OLSA, Diary.

of aristocratic stock, for Dearden's father had bought the manor only in 1823 from Lord Byron, whose family had also acquired it by purchase in 1638. There was no manor house. The Deardens lived in a brick-built Queen Anne house in Rochdale called The Orchard, now demolished. Dearden's legal career effectively ended with his inheritance. He married in 1829 and spent the rest of his life devoted to the interests, responsibilities and obligations arising from his tenure of the manor of Rochdale. He was closely concerned in local politics, exercising patronage in both secular and religious matters, and also enjoyed the customary sporting and other leisure pursuits of an English gentleman.

Shaw's friendship with Dearden took longer to mature, for socially they were not likely to meet in their daily course. But they had a mutual friend in Francis Raines, a mutual interest in antiquarian subjects and both were avid collectors, and on these foundations a relationship developed. However, they did not become close until the 1840s. In the earliest letter between them to survive, dated 8 March 1842, Shaw addressed Dearden rather formally as 'My Dear Sir', and expressed an unexpected pleasure - 'delighted beyond measure' - at Dearden's proposal that they meet in London.⁵ Dearden's reply does not survive, but he had evidently chided Shaw for his formality, for in his next letter Shaw explained, with much flattery, that he was conscious of the social gulf between them. Dearden was 'an Oxford man [sic] - a barrister - a magistrate - and Lord of one of the most important Manors in the Kingdom' ⁶. Henceforth, however, he would begin his letters 'Dear Dearden'. They remained on this friendly and informal footing until Dearden's death in 1862.

All three men were active antiquarians. They did a little buying and selling, they tipped each other off about choice finds at local auctions or interesting monuments in local churches and exchanged or sold antiques of all kinds between themselves. Their idol was Sir Samuel Rush Meyrick (1783-1848), the most eminent antiquary of the age and known to modern furniture historians as the author of *Specimens of Ancient Furniture* (1836), illustrated by Henry Shaw (no relation). In time they all came to know Meyrick personally, and Shaw stayed at his house, Goodrich Court in Herefordshire, on more than one occasion. Indeed, it was at Goodrich Court in August 1840 that Shaw met Thomas William King, alias Rouge Dragon of the College of Arms. He became an invaluable ally in Shaw's incessant quest for information on genealogy and heraldry.

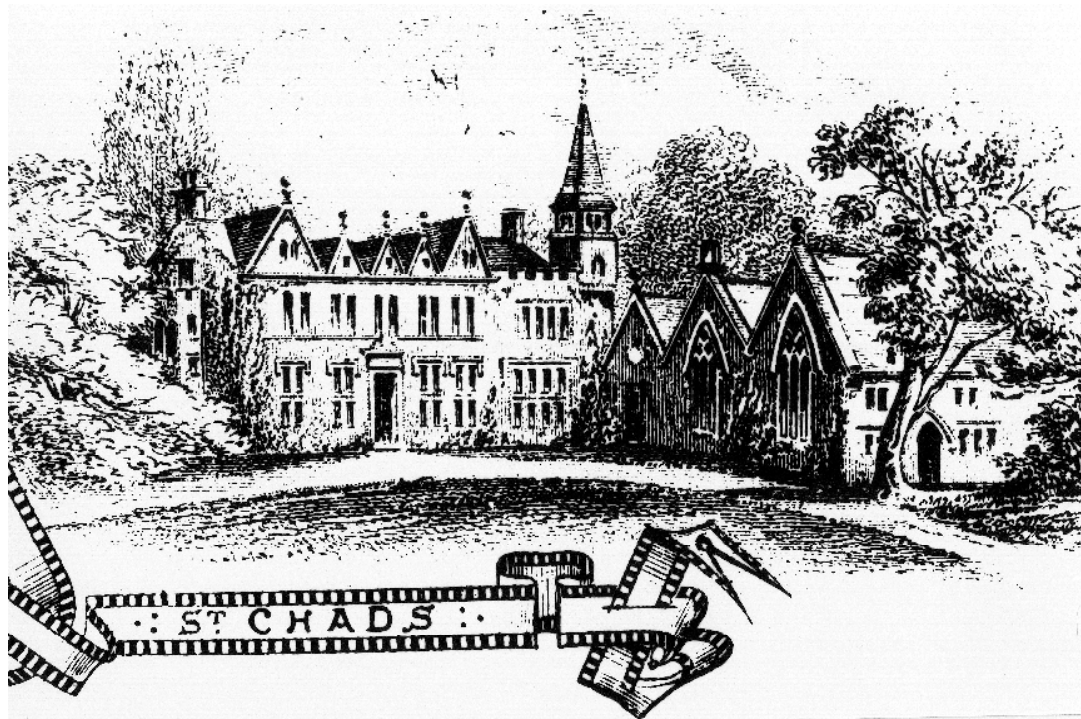
By the early 1840s the three men were recognised among the most prominent antiquaries in Lancashire. Raines was an author, a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and a founder member of the Chetham Society of which both Dearden and Shaw were also members. Dearden too was a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and an associate of the British Archaeological Association. Shaw, without the social advantages of his friends, had to work harder to gain acceptance and owed much to the two older men's encouragement and support. They were, in effect, his patrons, and played a crucial role in Shaw's progression from mill owner to Gothic revival architect. From the late 1840s until his death in 1876 he built an architectural practice which eventually employed upwards of a hundred hands in different trades.⁷ More than thirty of his churches, houses and other buildings survive, most in the northwest of England, with some outliers in North Wales, Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire.

In 1842, when this story begins, Shaw was still a young man, just thirty-two years old, and looking for a way out of the woollen trade. Since 1830 he had been teaching himself how to restore, recycle and copy old woodwork and furniture. With the assistance of Charles Lawton (1798-1879) a dyer and wool sorter in one of his father's mills, he taught himself to carve, to darken and age wood, and to mix old and new work into a plausible semblance of medieval authenticity. In his parents' house in Uppermill, where he lived all his life, he installed chimney pieces made from old bed headboards, lined rooms with panelling removed from

⁵ Rochdale Archives (RA), Box 20, Shaw to Dearden, 8 March 1842.

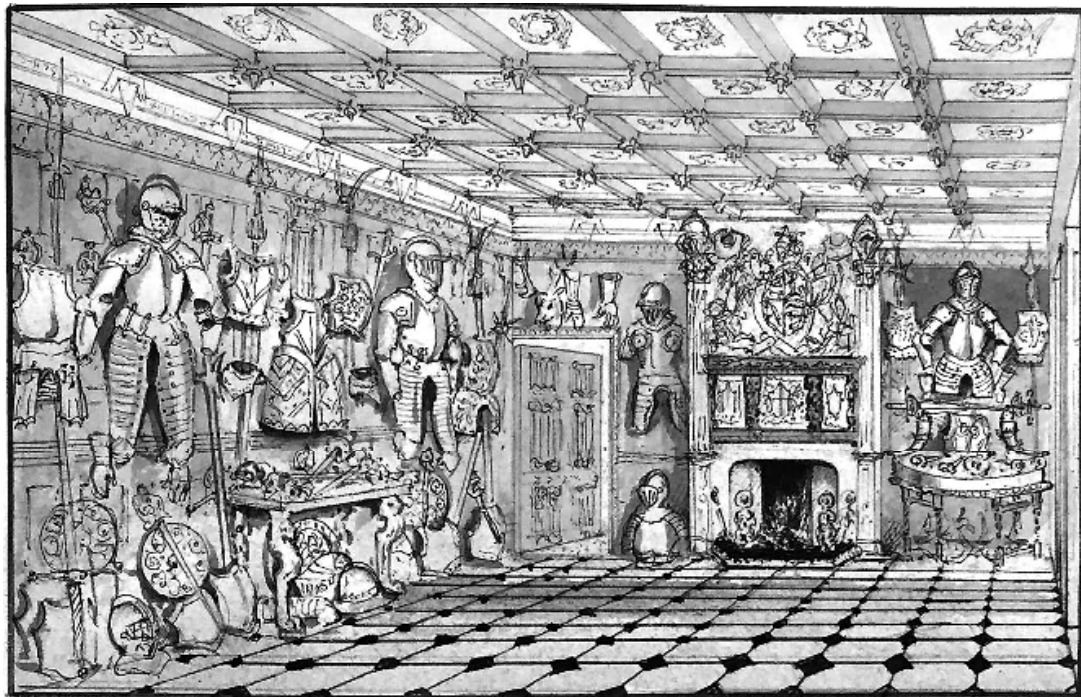
⁶ RA, Box 20, Shaw to Dearden, 24 March 1841.

⁷ Howcroft (1972), *passim*; Hyde and Petford (2006).



SHSA, H/HOW/GS

Figure 1 Letterhead of George Shaw, showing his house, St Chad's, as it appeared in the 1860s.



SHSA/H/HOW/GS/I

Figure 2 George Shaw, The Hall, St Chad's, c. 1860. Ink and Wash.

local houses and replaced the staircase with one of his own design in a loosely 'Jacobean' style.⁸ His model was Sir Walter Scott's house at Abbotsford, which he had first visited on a spring evening in early May 1830. It made a deep and lasting impression - his description of the house and its contents runs to over fifteen hundred words - but how could he, a country manufacturer's son, ever afford to such a house and such a collection? Later that year he confessed: '...how I should like to have such a house... [but] a fine taste without the means of gratifying it, is of no use'.⁹ Nevertheless he determined to try, and in stages he transformed his parents' Georgian-fronted seventeenth-century farmhouse into a Gothic pastiche which he named 'St Chad's' (Figure 1). The staircase, two chimney-pieces and substantial quantities of panelling are still in the building, which is now Uppermill public library. The entrance hall, now greatly altered since Shaw's day, was very obviously modelled on the hall at Abbotsford (Figure 2).

Both Raines and Dearden took an interest in Shaw's progress, not least because they also were dabbling in similar projects. Indeed, there was a friendly rivalry between them as each developed their campaigns of medievalising their respective homes. In October 1833 Shaw wrote to Raines about four oak figures which the latter was installing in his study at Milnrow: '...bye the bye, were they a God send, or did Robinson your carver extraordinary make them... Come confess the truth as I suspect, well knowing the great difficulty there is in meeting with such articles, that they are modern'.¹⁰ The jocular tone hints at an ambiguous relationship with historical truth which underlies a great deal of Shaw's work. If the deception is good enough, who is to say it is not real?

By the early 1840s antiquarianism was more than a hobby for Shaw. He had architectural ambitions and already he was acquiring a reputation both locally and further afield as an authority on Gothic, Tudor and Jacobean architecture, and was flattered when early in 1842 John Tollemache, a Cheshire landowner and MP for Cheshire South, asked him to look over the plans for his proposed country house, Peckforton Castle. Since the architect was Anthony Salvin this was quite a compliment, and one which he proudly shared with his two friends.¹¹ He confided to Dearden that 'Sir Samuel Meyrick Advises me to cease being a Manuf^{cr} and to become an Architect!! What say you?'¹²

On 24 March 1842 Shaw wrote a long letter to James Dearden, evidently in reply to one Dearden had sent him. He concluded:

Pray what do you mean by this sentence? "I could make you a more profitable week than all Saddleworth trade ever will do for one of your ideas and opinions" - If you can put me in the way of some lucrative occupation, I shall be very much obliged to you I am sure, as my present one is almost defunct. One half of my Father's property is at this present moment of no value to him, as our trade through the country from the daily growth in poverty of the drapers and county dealers, is of no use to us. A mill which we let a few years ago for 300£ per ann^m is now unoccupied and we can get no rents from either cottagers or our land tenants. - Such is the state of things here, and instead of mending they appear to get worse. - God help us.¹³

Dearden's meaning must have been made clear later that year when Shaw wrote to Raines in October 1842: 'By the by, have you seen the new old armorial and heraldic aumbrie at "the orchard". - Pray give it recommendation when you see it, and which I hope you will find it merit. - The Squire [Dearden] is much pleased with it, and declares it a pet piece of old oak

⁸ Diary, OLSA, various dates.

⁹ Diary, OLSA, 1 May and 6 September 1830

¹⁰ Chetham's Library (CL), Shaw to Raines, 5 October 1833.

¹¹ CL, Shaw to Raines, 13 June 1842, 24 January 1843; RA, Box 12, Shaw to Dearden, 10 June, 6 November 1842.

¹² RA, Box 20, Shaw to Dearden, 6 November 1842.

¹³ RA, Box 19, Shaw to Dearden, 24 March 1842.

and like to become a drawing room favourite'.¹⁴ In the same letter he wrote that 'Dearden is pele mele after a very fine old and much dilapidated bed, near Huddersfield and which he wishes me to get repaired for him. I have seen it, and believe it will be one of the finest and first ones after its reparation, with additions of heraldic inspiration...'. From these it is clear that by late 1842 Shaw was acting as Dearden's agent in buying, repairing and 'improving' antique furniture.

It is not known whether the 'aumbrie' and bed referred to in these letters survive, but a sideboard almost certainly made for Dearden does (Figure 3). It is carved with the Byron arms and dated 1643; below the arms is an inscription:

IOHN*BARON*BYRON*24DAIE*OCT*XIX*CHAS*REX

The reference is to John Byron, commander of Royalist forces in Lancashire and Cheshire during the Civil War and created Baron Byron after the first Battle of Newbury in October 1643. Pieces like this and the 'aumbrie', plus the restoration work on the bed, convinced Dearden that Shaw was the man to deliver something much more ambitious - the complete remodelling of the 'Trinity Aisle' in the parish church of St Chad's at Rochdale (Figure 4).

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the parish church in Rochdale was partly ruinous. It was patched up in 1815-16, the first of several partial restorations until a major rebuilding beginning in 1873. The eastern end of the south aisle alongside the chancel had been established as a private chapel in 1487 by a 'brotherhood' of three local men, Adam Marland, Sir Randolph Butterworth and Sir James Middleton.¹⁵ After passing through the hands of several owners it was inherited by Richard Greaves Townley from whom it was bought by James Dearden's father in 1823 for £650.¹⁶ In the 1830s it was 'a comfortable cushioned and carpeted room, with its windows corniced and curtained'.¹⁷ Dearden decided to have it remodelled into something that accorded more closely with his notion of how a medieval chapel should look, and Shaw received his proposal on 17 November 1842. He replied the



A. Bowett Collection

Figure 3. Sideboard attributed to George Shaw, c. 1842, St Chad's parish church, Rochdale.

¹⁴ CL, Shaw to Raines, 5 October 1842.

¹⁵ Dixon (2004), p. 31.

¹⁶ Raines (1849), p. 123; Baines (1888-93), iii, pp. 36-37.

¹⁷ *The Ecclesiologist* (August 1847), p. 59.



Figure 4. The Parish Church of St Chad's, Rochdale.

same day: 'I should like above all things to undertake the doing up of that for you, and will guarantee it equalling Trinity Aisle at Mavesyn Ridware'.¹⁸

Mavesyn Ridware is a Staffordshire village where at the beginning of the nineteenth century the local Lord of the Manor, Charles Chadwick (1753-1829), had created a cod-medieval chapel in the parish church, complete with tombs, grave slabs and other monuments. Shaw had visited the church in June the previous year and had written an account of it to Raines:

A door opens... into the Chapel and a scene breaks upon the dazzled gaze of an antiquarian beholder of a very uncommon nature. For splendour the only thing I know superior is the Beauchamp Chapel Warwick. I did expect to be pleased but for such a blaze of sepulchral grandeur I was totally unprepared... I was struck quite dumb on my first entrance, for wherever my eyes turned they encountered either blazoned escutcheon, mailed warrior, painted glass in quaint inscriptions in every style from the days of the conqueror to the present time. After the eye becomes a little more accustomed to the scene it becomes evident to the antiquarian, that many of the monuments are modern, but so exactly copied from ancient models that to an unpractised observer they would pass for what they appear. Charles Chadwick Esq^r the Antiquary has evidently found the chapel of his forefathers contained a few mutilated recumbent figures in a near dilapidated state, and has renovated it, and added a monument to each ancient in the style of his age. The spaces between the altar tombs and alabaster flags of the floor are filled with coloured tiles with armorial bearings of the family upon them, and at the door end... carvings in alabaster of battles about the old hall in one of which the inscription says the Mavesyn was killed by his own gate, and an exact representation of the old gateway is carved in the alabaster with a battle going on about it, and one old fellow falling off his horse. After you have examined the place for some time you can discern the old things from the new - I say I can - and I can - but how few can do, and the chapel is in consequence the lion of the neighbourhood, and parties go frequently from Litchfield to see it...¹⁹

With this in the forefront of his mind Shaw continued his letter to Dearden:

If you are really in earnest let me commence with the perforated oak screen work and a cumbent stone figure in chain mail and without slapping[?] at the whole thing at once, proceed by degrees. -

¹⁸ CL, Shaw to Dearden, 17 November 1842.

¹⁹ CL, Shaw to Raines, 1 July 1841.

I can engage to make your Chapel rival "Ridware" - with armour - [illegible] - stained glass - open screen work - cumbent tombs - brasses - tiled (armorial [illegible]) floor &c. &c. &c. - I could set a clever mason to work upon a monumental effigy this winter under my own eye, and proceed with him as I see [?] him succeed - you giving the name and time of existence - There ought to be three or four cumbent effigies, and as many or more brasses - ²⁰

He concluded,

'What think you, shall we conjointly try, if we two with Raines's assistance cannot equal Col^l Chadwick?'

Here was a plan. Dearden would provide the funds, Shaw the designs and the workmen, and Raines would oversee all with a scholar's eye. In the first week of January 1843 work on the Trinity Chapel was under way. Shaw took his joiner to Rochdale to measure up and make plans for the screen and then, not having enough wood on hand, went to Manchester to buy oak.²¹ Later that month he wrote to Raines that:

'The materials for the first screen are being brought into shape, and with the assistance of a clever mason I have made a capital figure of Sir Roger de Duerden, temp. Edw^d Ist, in the ring mail of that period, with legs crossed drawing his sword. - The model is the full size, and looks noble. - If the mason succeeds with the stone figure as well we shall make a fine thing of it, and can talk with much confidence of other monumental erections'.²²

The work was slow, delayed perhaps by the shortage of skilled labour, but by November 1843 the screens were ready to be installed (Figures 5 & 6), and it is likely that the rest of the woodwork comprising stalls and sedilia soon followed.²³ The final touches took much longer. As late as January 1848 Shaw was engaged in making, or having made, some brass memorials, as he described in a letter to Raines on 23 January:

'... on the opposite page you will find a rubbing from the head of Otiwelo Duerden de Whitfield which I have had made here & a most successful imitation of an old brass it is. The inscription is now in progress, but the work is very tedious & slow' ²⁴ (Figure 7).

Two payments to Shaw were noted in Dearden's pocket book at this time. The first, on 19 February 1848, was a cheque for £30 and the second, on 17 July, was £25 lent 'on account of work at Trinity Chapel'.²⁵ Nevertheless, the work was sufficiently advanced to allow the *Ecclesiologist* to publish a highly complimentary account in August 1847. And since the south aisle was extended and completely reconfigured in 1885 it is the only account to survive of the Chapel in its original form:

This is a spirited restoration... [The chapel] stands on the south side of the spacious chancel of the church, and is separated from it and the south aisle by a most elaborate oak screen. This is almost entirely new (a very small portion only of the original one remaining), of late Middle-Pointed. The lower part is panelled on both sides with deeply cut carving. In the centre of each panel is a shield of armorial bearings. Of these there are about 150 - the arms of numerous family alliances. The heads of the bays are filled with tracery, and the cornice is ornamented with the grape and vine-leaf moulding. The chapel contains two benches arranged stallwise and returned, the desk fronts resembling the lower part of the screen. At the ends instead of poppy-heads are kneeling ecclesiastics. The sedilia are of oak, without canopies... The floor is laid with armorial tiles unglazed. The roof is late Third-Pointed of oak heavily panelled, and is to be painted in azure and gold. The east window of three lights (also Third-Pointed) is filled with stained glass, by Mr Willement. In the centre light are the usual emblems of the Holy Trinity, with foliage on a deep ruby ground. The side lights contain respectively the figures of the blessed Virgin and S. John the Baptist, with the evangelical symbols at the corners... There are two south windows of the same

²⁰ CL, Shaw to Dearden, 17 November 1842.

²¹ RA, Box 20, Shaw to Dearden, 31 December 1842.

²² CL, Shaw to Raines, 24 January 1843.

²³ CL, Shaw to Raines, 11 November 1843.

²⁴ CL, Shaw to Raines, 23 January 1848.

²⁵ RA, Dearden Papers, Box 6.



A. Bowett Collection

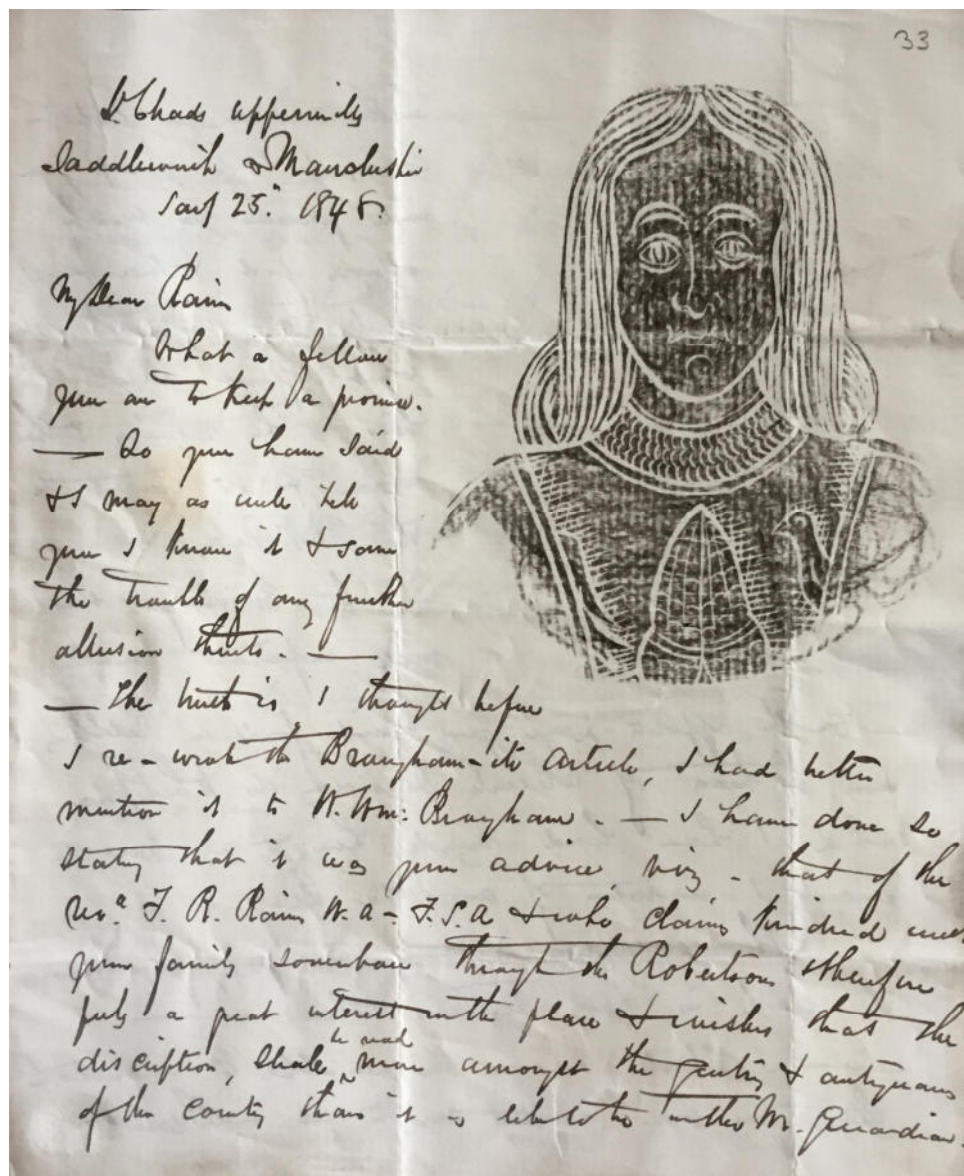
**Figure 5. George Shaw, screen for the west side of the Trinity Chapel, 1843.
This is the only part of Shaw's woodwork still in its original location.**



A. Bowett Collection

**Figure 6. George Shaw, screen for the north side of the Trinity Chapel, 1843.
Now removed to the north aisle of the church.**

character, both filled with stained glass, but chiefly armorial... There are four interesting monuments. At the entrance is a stone coffin lid, with foliated cross standing upon a dragon, with a sword and shield about the stem. Next a recumbent alabaster effigy of a bishop, with pastoral staff, piercing a serpent - the head under a canopy, with a low mitre. There is no inscription. It is the monument of a bishop Duerden, of Lichfield and Coventry, who died in A.D. 1161. Opposite to this is another effigy in ring mail set edgeways, the legs crossed, bearing in Lombardic characters this inscription - 'Sire Rogier de Durden gist ici deu [sic] de son alme eit merci.' There are two alabaster slabs incised in enamel colours; one of a Priest in canonicals '... quondam Rector Eccle B. Marie de Mamcester qui obit IIII mensis augusti an dni millmo c.c.c.vii mo. t'cio... E'ra d'nicalis cuj^s aie ppet Deus. Ame.' In this Christian company there is but one pagan monument. In the centre of the chapel is suspended a *corona lucis*, made, we fear, of tin, painted and gilt. It is the only unsatisfactory thing, as far as material is concerned, in the place, and ought to be replaced with one of brass. After all these particulars, it seems useless to add that the chapel looks exceedingly beautiful.²⁶



Raines Collection, Chetham's Library, Manchester

Figure 7. Letter from George Shaw to Francis Raines, 23 January 1848, with a rubbing of his brass of Otimelus Duerden.

²⁶ *The Ecclesiologist* (August 1847), pp. 59–61.

A correspondent to the *Gentleman's Magazine* in February 1852 took a different view, however, describing a 'long series of "mediaeval" mockeries' and castigating the individual 'whose vanity has led him into so great a folly'.²⁷ The objection was not so much on the grounds of historical authenticity as of taste, and in particular the appropriation of illustrious ancestors by one who was not entitled to them. Particular scorn was directed at the recumbent effigy of Walter Durdent, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, 'of whom it has been reserved to Mr. Dearden to discover that he was of *his* race of Dearden, and buried at Rochdale, whilst other (perhaps less learned) authorities state that he was buried at Coventry...'. Dearden's egregious error, it seems, was to have been born base and to be unable to trace his own ancestors 'beyond the time of James I'. When James Dearden's arms were registered in 1841 his lineage was traced to Richard Dearden of Whitefield (d.1630), a mere yeoman, so neither he nor his successors had any true claim to arms. In the absence of any proven arms, Dearden used a variant of the arms of the local Rashdale family- an escutcheon within a bordure sable charged with seven martlets, the crest a stag and the motto *dum spiro spero*. Variations of this appear all over the woodwork of the Trinity Chapel.²⁸

The *Gentleman's Magazine* correspondent, who signed himself 'W. C.', began his excoriation by referring to similar 'performances of this nature done at Brougham... already... discussed in your pages'. This was a deliberate swipe at Shaw, who had obviously made enemies as well as friends among the antiquarian community. In April 1848 Shaw had published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* a long and highly coloured account of the recently restored Brougham Castle (near Carlisle) in which, wittingly or otherwise, he failed to distinguish between modern and old work, presenting the whole edifice and its contents as a wondrous medieval survival.²⁹ The response, written by the 'Old Subscribers', was both forensic and brutal and although Shaw tried gamely to defend his case he was firmly slapped down in subsequent issues.³⁰ The degree of animus used against him suggests that Shaw's real crime was not to be ill-informed but to have attempted, through his article, to join the ranks of a club to which he was not eligible.

In 1885 St Chad's chancel was rebuilt and enlarged, sweeping away Shaw's chapel in the process. Only the screen closing it at the west end survives *in situ* - the rest of the woodwork has been relocated. The north side of the screen, which closed the chapel from the chancel, is now in the north aisle and the stalls and sedilia have been moved into the chancel (Figures 8 & 9). All the woodwork bears Shaw's S monogram, which became virtually his trademark in both woodwork and architecture. It is everywhere carved with armorials representing Dearden and the noble families to which he was in imagination or reality related. Variations on the royal arms were added for good measure.

Additional furniture supplied either for the Chapel or for the chancel at a later date includes two Glastonbury-type chairs, a model much used by Shaw in his churches from 1850 onwards, and a lectern, again of a typical Shaw pattern (Figures 10 & 11).

Of the stone slabs and effigies, two remain; one carved with a cross fleurie piercing a dragon and another of alabaster incised with the figure of an ecclesiastic (Figures 12 & 13). The latter was copied from an original in a Yorkshire church for which Shaw's original drawing

²⁷ *Gentleman's Magazine* (February 1852). The letter was later quoted in George Burnett, *Popular Genealogists, or the Art of Pedigree Making*, (Edinburgh, 1865), p. 65.

²⁸ Shaw undoubtedly played a role in constructing Dearden's ancestry. Correspondence survives from Rouge Dragon discussing the largely unfruitful search for appropriate ancestors on which to base Dearden's lineage; SHSA, Rouge Dragon to Shaw, 18 December 1841 and 19 January 1842. H/HOW/GS/60/15.

²⁹ *Gentleman's Magazine* (April 1848).

³⁰ *Gentleman's Magazine* (June 1848, July 1848, July 1849).



A. Bowett Collection

Figure 8. George Shaw, the chancel of St Chad's, looking east, showing the stalls and desks originally made for the Trinity Chapel, 1843-7.



A. Bowett Collection

Figure 9. George Shaw, desk front, showing various arms supposedly related to the Dearden family. Their motto was 'Dum Spiro Spero'. Note the paired S - Shaw's 'signature'.



A. Bowett Collection

Figure 10. George Shaw, Glastonbury-type chair, c. 1848. This was one of Shaw's most widely used designs.



A. Bowett Collection

Figure 11. George Shaw, lectern, c. 1848. A standard model used, with variations in numerous Shaw churches.



A. Bowett Collection

Figure 12. George Shaw, stone grave slab, 1843-47.



A. Bowett Collection

Figure 13. George Shaw, alabaster grave slab, 1843-47.



A. Bowett Collection

James Deurden at prayer, 1609.



A. Bowett Collection

Oliver Deurden in armour, 1545.



A. Bowett Collection

Ottiwell Deurden in armour.



A. Bowett Collection

**Richard Deurden kneeling
in armour, 1586.**



A. Bowett Collection

**Richard Deurden
standing, 1630.**

Figure 14. George Shaw, monumental brasses, 1848.

survives.³¹ The two carved effigies of Bishop Deurden and Sir Roger Duerden were apparently buried beneath the floor when the chapel was dismantled in the 1880s and the five surviving brasses are now set into the south wall (Figure 14). There has been much speculation about these over the years, and they have been alternately taken as genuine or condemned as fake.³² However, Ottiwell (Ottivelus) Deurden is certainly one of Shaw's brasses and, given that the Deardens had no connection to St Chad's before James Dearden's father bought the manor of Rochdale, the rest must be Shaw's too.

The stained glass, most of which survived the rebuilding of 1885, was supplied by Thomas Willement of London (1786-1871), one of the best known of the early nineteenth-century stained glass manufacturers.³³ One window displays the newly acquired arms of Dearden quartered with those of Bellfield and Ingham (Figure 15), the other has memorials to Dearden children recently deceased.

³¹ SHSA, H/HOW/GS/3.

³² Dixon (2004), p. 34.

³³ Dixon (2004), pp. 27 and 32–33.



Figure 15. Thomas Willement, stained glass depicting the arms of Dearden and related families, designed by George Shaw, c. 1847.

Trinity Chapel was the commission which launched Shaw's career. Before it was finished he had built at least three churches - St John the Baptist, Birtle (1845-6), Christ Church, Friezland (begun 1848) and St Mark's, Scarisbrick (1848-51) - and supplied woodwork for St Leonard's, Middleton, among others. From these beginnings he was able to extract himself from the woollen trade and build a busy and extensive practice which, except locally, has perhaps not gained the recognition it deserves. Shaw's buildings are all strongly imprinted with his personality and his woodwork is distinctive, albeit somewhat repetitive. But there was another side to his business, one which he did not share with his good friends Raines and

Dearden. For Shaw was also a purveyor of fake furniture and metalware to the nobility of northern England. His victims were mostly aristocrats of an antiquarian bent, usually engaged on refurbishing or remodelling their ancestral seats in a revived Gothic or Elizabethan style. His first recorded venture in this vein was in January 1842, when he wrote to Edward Smith-Stanley, 13th Earl of Derby, that he had picked up ‘a sort of sideboard’ bearing the carved arms of Lathom and Stanley which he now offered to his lordship for £15. He claimed it came from a cottage on the borders of Lancashire and dated ‘from the time if Elizth or her successor James 1st’ (Figure 16). This was the first of a number of pieces of bogus ancient furniture which Shaw made and sold to the Earl between 1842 and 1849, and in all he conned him out of at least £95.³⁴ A more ambitious fraud was perpetrated on the Duke of Northumberland between 1847 and 1850, amounting to more than £600 of fake aumbries, beds, sideboards, tables, benches, andirons and firebacks. Most of this survives, at Alnwick, Warkworth and Syon House, and is furthermore fully documented. Furniture from Shaw’s own house also survives, at Saddleworth Museum and locally in private collections, and his own bed, originally made for Sir John Radcliffe of Ordsall Hall about 1572, is now on public

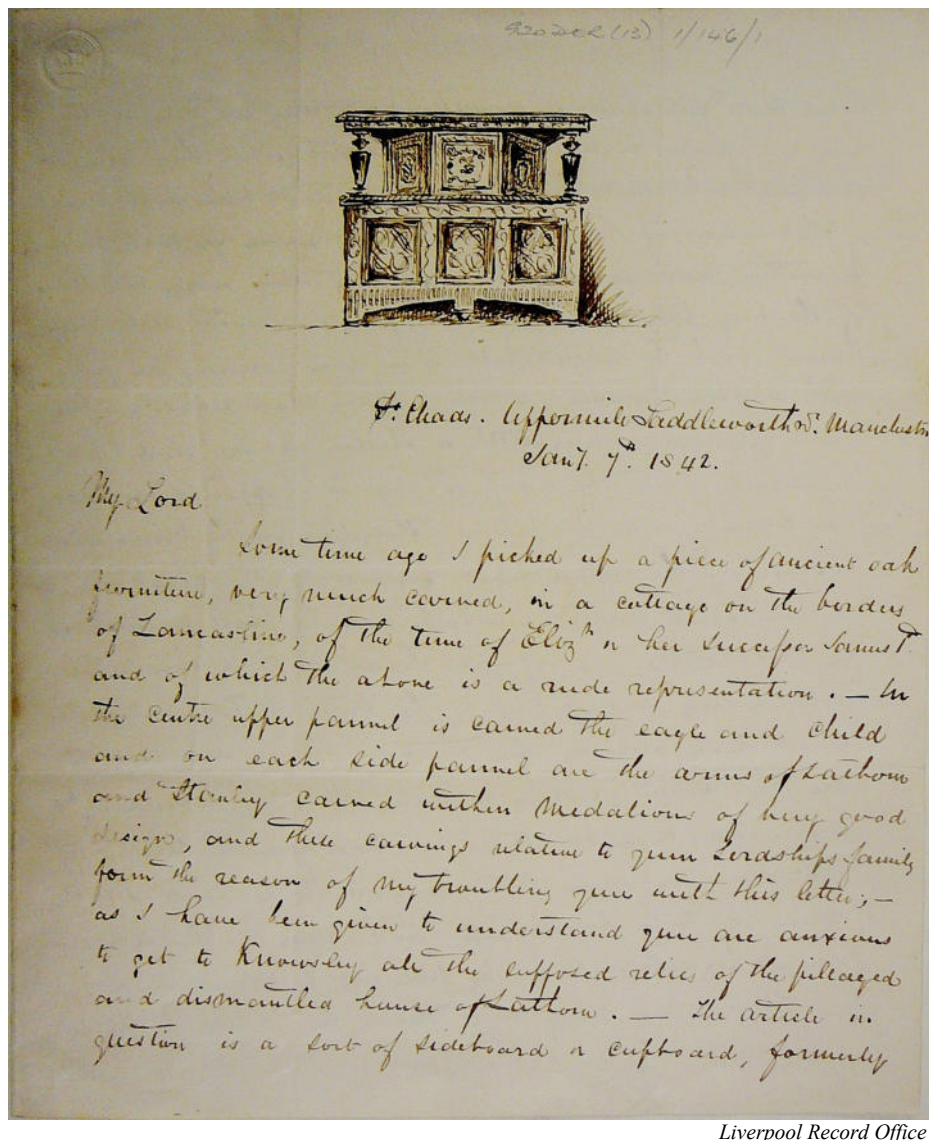


Figure 16. Letter from George Shaw to the Earl of Derby, 7 January 1842, with a drawing of a fake ‘sideboard’ made by Shaw and sold to the Earl for £15.

³⁴ Liverpool Record Office, Stanley Papers, 920 DER (13) 1/146/1–7.

display at Ordsall Hall, Salford. Finally, it is amusing to record that almost a century and a half after his death Shaw's fakes are still deceiving some. The so-called 'Henry VII' bed, which has in recent years received coverage in newspapers and online and is believed by its supporters to be a genuine Tudor relic, is one of at least three almost identical beds that Shaw made about 1847-48. One was made for the Duke of Northumberland and the other two (of which the 'Henry VII' bed is one) for as yet unidentified victims. Shaw seems not to have had much sense of humour; he was devout, dogmatic and self-opinionated, but this posthumous accolade would surely have raised a smile.

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VILLAGE LIFE IN THE 1950s: DENSHAW REMEMBERED

Robert Rodgers

I was born at home, 24, Ripponden Road on 1st May 1947 (the house was aptly named 'Windy Ridge' as it certainly was often very windy on that mooredge). So I consider myself a true Yorkshire man with West Riding of Yorkshire on my birth certificate certified by the local registrar, Ellis Brannan, in the Uppermill Registry Office. I was given to understand there was still snow on the hills at the time, but find it a little hard to believe. I was told that my parents lodged with Mr and Mrs Fred Buckley across the road at number 17, until number 24 had been finished. These new-build houses of the thirties must have been in great demand.

I was by far the youngest of five children. My grandmother came to live with us when I was a child and I really don't know how my mother coped. The house wasn't exactly small given the average size of a village home in those days, three bedrooms with one no more than a box room really, a separate toilet which seemed to be the fashion at the time, a bathroom of course, reasonably large living room but a very tiny kitchen. How mother turned out hot dinners for all of us still baffles me. However, it wasn't very long before the oldest ones were married and off to their own new homes. As the family got smaller, my grandmother took care of me while mum and dad worked. The houses on Ripponden Road were typical red-brick thirties style semi's and along with the Council estate were the only real expansion of the original village, until the development of Lichfield Close in the 1960's, and a couple of detached bungalows on Huddersfield Road. Later came Buckley Drive and Summerhill View. The Ripponden Road semi's were built on land previously belonging to Dumfries farm, I think by the Mills family who lived at Dumfries Farm. The set of five semi-detached dwellings all look pretty much the same at a glance, but each pair has a subtle difference in the frontal exterior, they each have slightly different shaped bay windows, but inside are all basically the same. All the houses had small, neat front gardens but a much larger space at the back where lovely gardens were developed. Our house had a good space at the back, with a beautiful view of the church, we also had a sort of glass conservatory, which served as an aviary for budgerigars; breeding these beautiful birds was one of my father's favourite hobbies and caused considerable interest among my school friends as you can imagine.

The real Denshaw village was further along Huddersfield Road, the area known as Denshaw Fold, still a beautiful unspoiled, little hamlet. What we now know as the village was originally known as The Junction, obviously due to the meeting of the five main roads, which over more recent years has caused traffic flow problems and much head scratching from local authority traffic engineers. The question is, has anyone ever got it right? There is still much confusion for drivers not familiar with the area. In the 1950s none of the infrastructure we see today was present and the 'Junction' was just that - the coming together of five roads with very little distinction or direction of who had priority and consisted of a vast open space. The parameters can be judged today, by observing the boundary walls of all properties adjacent to the Junction, as these have remained unchanged. Apart from the Ripponden and District distribution company travelling the Yorkshire/Lancashire route and the very large, rumbling, Peter Slater haulage waggons going to and from Outlane, there was very little traffic other than the regular bus service which consisted of the 'H' bus from Oldham to Denshaw, the X12 Ripponden to Manchester and the infrequent North Western Mossley to Newhey service, you could possibly count other traffic flow on two hands. This gave us children, the facility of having what amounted to a huge tarmacked play area where various games, included 'kick out can', 'whip in one two three' and of course football could be played virtually uninterrupted. It is true that 'fifties' children were good at inventing their own games to keep themselves occupied and hopefully out of mischief.

The village was almost self-sufficient and had a fair amount of services stretching as far as Slackcote, where the two villages of Delph and Denshaw meet. Near the crossroads, there was an outpost of the Co-op which was known as Branch Stores, its real name being Green Ash. There was even a post box here and the shop had good custom from workers at nearby Slackcote Mill and residents of West View and New Tame.

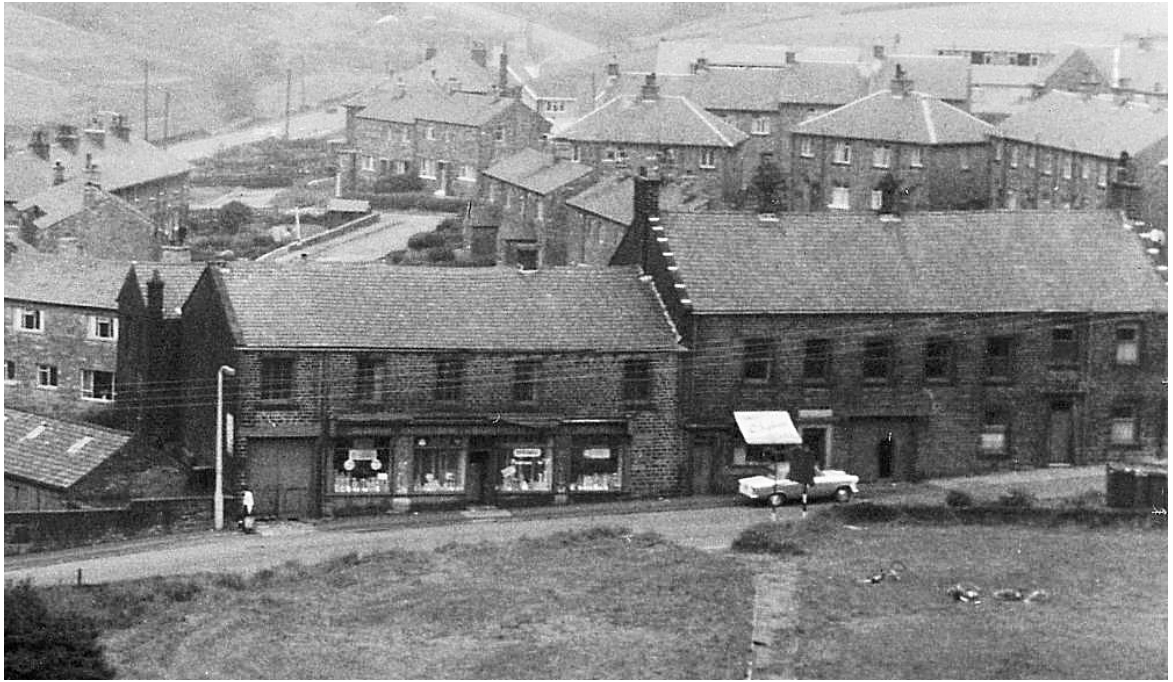


Mike Buckley Collection

Figure 1. Denshaw Church from the back gardens on Ripponden Road.

I suppose the best service was provided by Donald and Edith McLintock at the Post Office, they sold all manner of necessities. In addition to the Post Office, you could buy a daily paper and of course an Oldham Chronicle (all important in those days), all manner of confectionery, basic groceries and even drapery. Most of the village news (or should I say gossip) was exchanged in the shop or on the post office flags, a general meeting place for all the village each day, most mothers with children under school age stayed at home, as there were no nurseries or childminders around the village. I have a lasting memory of a huge glass cabinet, which only appeared to be used in the Autumn when it was full of what seemed to me, a vast array of fireworks, always Standard and always the best. Looking at this big display was almost as exciting for us children as actually letting them off, wondering how much we could save out of our pocket money to buy at least one of the most exciting ones. The Denshaw Co-op store, which is now private housing, was at the bottom of Ripponden Road and you could buy almost anything there, groceries, greengrocery, and hardware. Like the Post Office this was an amazing store managed by Mr Rhodes and Mr Dyson, both very helpful and friendly and knew everyone's Co-op. divi number without having to ask. There was also Mr Fielden, a small, dark haired, rather dour man who took care of the fabrics of the buildings; Mr Fielden and his wife lived at the top end of the block. The Co-op Hall ran across the top of the building. This consisted of one large, detached room where the whist drives were held, this had formerly been a storage area for the shop, but was later converted to a function room, and the biggest room being the main concert room. Downstairs there was a public library. Within the Co-op block was an independent butcher's shop, run by Clifford Topham. In common with many local butchers at the time the shop had an abattoir at the rear and so much of the meat sold was 'home killed' which customers always referred to as being the best. On Oldham Road was a bakery, bread was baked every day, what a wonderful smell the baking created. The shop went under the name of Blackwell's, but in my childhood was run by the Matthews family. Near the end of Rochdale Road was the fish and chip shop, referred to in H.B. Whitehead's poem, 'An Unofficial guide to Saddleworth' which says 'Now at last they've got their wish, a shop that sells them chips and fish'. Naturally this was very popular with the youth of the village who could buy pop and crisps as well as a bag of chips to keep them happy. There was a large

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Mike Buckley Collection

Figure 2. Denshaw Co-op and Topham's Butchers, c. 1965.



McLintock Family Collection

Figure 3. Donald and Edith McLintock in front of Denshaw Post Office.

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amount of pop drunk in the 1950's and, apart from everyone growing their own ginger beer plants, we had the weekly delight of the Stanton and Staveley pop waggon when you could buy your drinks out of the old stone bottles, which always seemed to taste better.

I can just about remember people wearing clogs for work, there was a cloggers (cobblers shop) in the next shop to the bakery and previously a similar business had been run in a shop next to the Printers Arms, in my time an empty house sometimes used as a changing room for football. The one I remember was near the bakery on Oldham Road, the last person to run the business there was Richard Haigh, who lived in Delph and would walk home for his lunch and back in the afternoon. It seemed all the retired men of the village congregated there each day, in the winter gathering round the stove in the middle of the shop, what tales must have been told within those four walls.

All these shops within about forty yards of the 'centre' of the village. Add to this the Junction Inn, the Black Horse and the Oddfellows' Institute and a little further out The Golden Fleece and the Printers Arms. Across the road from the Printers there was a refrigeration repair business run by Mr Holmes; quite unusual in such a small village I used to think. The pubs were very popular and well supported, of course there were very few televisions in those days and pubs were the main attraction. The Junction Inn was originally built as a coaching inn and so had a very interesting layout, it had at some time been brought up to date by the installation of a single cranked petrol pump and the landlord came out and served you petrol. What a luxury! There weren't many private cars in the village in the fifties and so most of the trade was from motorists passing through on their way to Yorkshire or beyond.

Denshaw has always had the reputation of serving good food, be it home made cakes for the many social events or for those wanting to eat out. Although eating out wasn't as popular as it is now, there were several very good restaurants and cafes dotted around the hillside. Strangely most of these were on the Rochdale Road: The Moorcock, Cherry Clough (La Pergola) and Fairplay Cafe all seemed to be gathered together around Chapel Street, part of the old Cherry Clough hamlet. I was always puzzled by the name Chapel Street but have since learned that it was due to a chapel having been set up by a group of Wesleyans in a house at Cherry Clough in the early 1800's. They had taken a stance against the Church's control of what was supposedly a non-denominational Sunday School at Denshaw. The house was used for services for many years hence the cottages becoming known as Chapel Street.

This hamlet was almost another village and included several busy farms; Cherry Clough Farm owned by Frank Hall had its own commercial abattoir. Lower down off into the fields was Marsh Farm, then Brimmycroft Farm, run by the Hill family. Across the road from Marsh Farm were the derelict mine workings and buildings where there was a flat, concreted surface where we used to scramble on our bikes, I always thought the buildings were quite eerie and full of pigeons and what pigeons leave, so we didn't venture in very often!

On the Ripponden Road we had The Ram's Head Inn (formerly the Old Cross), not technically in Denshaw but in Milnrow, but always regarded as part of Denshaw. This was also a sheep farm owned by John Michael Hopkinson whose mother Molly ran the pub. Nearer the village was Hey House Farm and in the same hamlet, Moorlands Cafe and the Moorlands Caravan Park which dominated the sky line and consisted of disused double-decker buses converted to livings with just one or two static caravans for weekend or holiday breaks. Next came Bowk House Farm run by Billy Battye (more on him later) and lower down across the road Dumfries Farm. Naturally, with all these working farms, milk was delivered daily, mainly by McLintocks. The sons of Donald and Edith, Harold and Norman ran Ralph's Farm and milk round and I am pleased to say it is still in the family with the milk round serving most of Saddleworth and beyond. Along Huddersfield Road, in what was the original village centre at Denshaw Fold, there was a lovely little cafe run by Mrs Grayson, where walkers would often call for afternoon tea. Walking into the Saddleworth hills had become very popular in the 1950's and so Denshaw was a regular escape to the country for those living in nearby towns so the cafe was well supported. There was another bigger cafe on Ox Hey Lane, just off the Delph Road, owned by the Wood family which attracted larger groups than Mrs Grayson's - I was always fascinated by the big sign painted in white on the roof, advertising TEAS. You really couldn't miss it.

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Saddleworth Museum Collection

Figure 4. Denshaw Crossroads c. 1960.



Sam Seville, Saddleworth Museum Collection

Figure 5. The Rams Head Inn, Denshaw, c. 1930.

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I started at Denshaw Primary School, as it was then, in September 1952, in a building that, surprisingly, has changed very little area wise over the years, despite the number of pupils having almost doubled. The building consisted of two classrooms and a hall which on occasions doubled as a classroom for PE and music and in addition to serving as the dining room. Attached to the hall was a small food preparation and washing up facility which was supervised by Mrs Sandy Schofield, also the school caretaker. No meals were actually made there and lunches were delivered in aluminium flasks from the canteen which served other Saddleworth schools situated next to the Delph school on Denshaw Road. In the opposite corner to the kitchen was the cloakroom and this in turn gave access to the playground and toilets. The girls' toilets were located at the bottom of the steps leading to the playground for the junior classes, the boys' toilets were accessed via a ramped slope that led to the Infant playground, the playgrounds being on two levels. To say that the toilet arrangements were primitive is an under-statement as there was no lighting or heating and no facilities for washing hands. The boys' urinals were open to the elements, being formed by stone slabs. To complete the footprint of the school, there was the disused headmaster's house, which was demolished after I had left the school, to create what is now the toilet and office block and the much newer canopy/play area. It is still possible to make out the ridge-line of the house roof on the outside wall. Most of the present school playing field was taken up by 'plots' which were let out to residents of Denshaw. Originally, these plots actually belonged to the school and gardening formed part of the curriculum during WW1 and later, when growing your own produce was something of a necessity.

The school had a cellar which was accessed through a door on Delph Road and although children were never allowed in there, I was told it had very low headroom and it is alleged the village Maypole was inadvertently walled in when improvements were made to the Infants' access. Part of the hall was taken up by a raised desk on a plinth where Mr Joel Buckley, the headmaster until 1954, would take school assembly, while any music needed would be provided by Mrs Lily Gartside, my Infant teacher, playing the piano. Mr Buckley's successor was Mr Blanch who also used the desk which served as an office for his paperwork and where we paid our dinner money. There was no clerical assistance in those days. Apart from the three R's, our curriculum consisted of geography, history, scripture, nature study, PE and music which was mostly singing traditional English songs and of course hymns. We were encouraged to attend Christ Church and relations between Church and school were good at the time. Mr Blanch encouraged us to attend church and several of us, including me, joined the choir. At one memorable Christmas concert put on by the school, I had to sing all three parts in 'We Three Kings' as the other two 'kings' for some reason didn't turn up.

During the time I attended Denshaw school it was under the control of West Riding County Council and almost every item we used had WRCC stamped on it. West Riding County Council also provided the village with a library which was accommodated down one wall of the hall. The library was open one afternoon a week after school, Mrs Henson from the village took care of it and would sit at a desk near the kitchen door to act as librarian. When I first started school, it was not very long since rationing had finished and all materials were in short supply, so we all had to be extra careful with the exercise books, reading books and paper etc. The council attendance officer, the uncompromising, Mr Young, visited regularly to keep a check on absentees and woe betide anyone who was repeatedly absent. The school nurse also made regular visits, being seen one to one while the rest of the class waited in the hall. Although the school had previously been known as a Church School, changes had been made to take it into the control of the West Riding, but In 1973, things changed again and according to the headteacher's log book 'On Friday 25th January 1973, at midnight, this school became Church of England (controlled).'

With Mr Blanch's encouragement, I passed the eleven-plus exam and was offered a place at Hulme Grammar School, funded by the West Riding. I was told that I was the first pupil from Denshaw to go to Hulme, followed a year later by a friend, who went on to achieve much greater things than I did. However, I am proud to say that in 1972, when I was elected as Councillor for the Delph and Denshaw Ward on Saddleworth Urban District Council, I was appointed to the school's Board of Managers Council, then later when the system changed, managers became governors and when Revd Sydney Clayton retired I was appointed Chair. I have spent around fifteen years as Chair and have now reached the milestone of fifty years' service.



Mike Buckley Collection

Figure 6. Art Class at Denshaw School, 1956.

The Youth Club provided the young people of the village with plenty of activity to occupy their time and was formed in one of the cottages at Denshaw Vale, locally known as Salt Lake. The club quickly outgrew its base and moved into the Co-op Hall, where it was managed by Enid Kirkbride, mother of Anne (Deidrie Barlow in Coronation Street). Activities included table tennis, darts, and snooker on a very small snooker table and of course plenty of music as we had just entered the 'Swinging Sixties'. I was assigned to purchase the very first record and that was a 'single' which sadly did not last long as our turntable had the heavy old stylus type pick-up which very quickly gouged out the record's track making it unplayable after only being played a few times. Later on 'live music was introduced' and several times a year local pop groups fronted Saturday night dances which were well attended and included teenagers from other parts of Saddleworth. We all attended each other's functions and so made new friends.

There were plenty of open spaces in Denshaw where we children could use our imagination. Adjacent to Denshaw Vale was a large area that had been used for spoil tipping from the Printworks Mill. Most of it was boiler ash, but also included many small vials which had been used for various chemical processes in the mill then discarded and many an hour was spent digging on the tip, searching for these bottles to the point where the surface looked rather like a small war zone with many craters. This obviously lent itself to playing war games. The tip, as it was known, was excavated for its ash which was used for spreading on the roads in winter, all the homes had coal fires in those days and people saved the ash for spreading on the snow to help stop cars skidding in the winter. Wagons would fill up with ash and two men would stand on the back, spreading the ash on the road. As the school was adjacent to the tip, these workmen became sitting targets for the snowballs thrown at them from the school playground. The excavation formed a bowl, which we converted to a 'wall of death' for scrambling on our push-bikes. Great fun was had on the tip.

For as long as I can remember, Denshaw had a football team, there was a choice of venues for the matches, the Co-op field, and the Holmes, which was situated in the valley bottom, just beyond the filter beds of the Printworks. However, if you played on the Co-op field, you were fortunate if the

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Saddleworth Museum Collection

Figure 7. Denshaw Vale, c.1910 - The Youth Club started in the cottage on the right.



Saddleworth Museum Collection

Figure 8. Denshaw Vale Print Works, c. 1950.

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mud didn't come over your boots before you started playing, as the field had a serious drainage problem due to the number of springs. The changing rooms were in a basement room in the Co-op. Post-match washing facilities were very primitive. I spent a lot of evenings kicking a football when I should have been reading a schoolbook. In Summertime, there was cricket, either on a dry patch of the Co-op field or by biking to Friarmere cricket club, where I played on the third eleven from being ten, then later on the second and finally first eleven. The third eleven were coached by Harry Morris and Jack Rhodes. Well known in Denshaw, Jack was the youngest of the Saddleworth cricketing dynasty that was the Rhodes family, their cricketing skills are still remembered throughout the area.

The Printworks has already been mentioned and had been the main employer in Denshaw for around one hundred years, going out of business as a printworks in 1941, it was subsequently used by the government as part of the war effort, finally closing in 1946. I remember it as a whole series of derelict buildings complete with its own air-raid shelter, a concrete building which we all used to play in but found very creepy. My father had started a sheetmetal/fabrication business in the houses across from 24 Ripponden Road, which quickly outgrew the premises, and he was one of the first to become a tenant of one of the Printworks buildings which these days would be referred to as units. The children of the village had 'free run' of most of the rest of the buildings, apart from the stables at the bottom end of the site, which were occupied by a riding school, run by a local lady, Enid Holmes. These stables backed onto the six old filter beds, the access path which led to the Holmes and the river valley bottom which ran down to Slackcote mill; at the time, the major employer for the area. This business, owned by the Byrom family, could always find work for anyone who was a good cricketer, as Robert Byrom, the founder of the mill, also founded the Friarmere club. After these closures, the farms were a source of employment for a good number of people from the village, also the pubs, restaurants and shops kept many in employment. However, by the mid-sixties, people were having to look further afield for employment and the number of car owners in the village began to increase. The local garage owned by Mr Jennings really came into its own.

In the winter the most popular venue for sledging was The Glen and we also used the Printers' Field which sloped down to the Printworks from Oldham Road. However, both these venues were somewhat dangerous as they had water hazards, the river and the mill pond, nevertheless Denshaw has always been a great place for sledging. When the roads were impassable through drifting, we could also sledge down the Ripponden Road and we did seem to experience numerous snowy winters when I was growing up. Unlike today's attitude to snow, we were expected to walk to school sometimes over drifts that could be over ten feet deep, but very few missed coming into school in bad weather. The village could be cut off for days on end and on occasions I remember Donald McLintock from the Post Office, taking the farm's horse and sledge up to Grains Bar, where Oldham council stopped ploughing at the boundary change, to load up with provisions for the village. On several occasions he was interviewed on BBC radio for being Denshaw's hero. Once some sort of route had been cleared, we then relied on the three or four Land Rover owners to give people lifts to work. Our family owned a Land Rover and would regularly pick up the same group of people to take them into Oldham to work. I remember one particularly bad snowfall (probably 1968) when the village was completely cut off, which prevented the Sir Alfred McAlpine construction vehicles working on the Scammonden Dam and M62 motorway development from getting access to the site. After what seemed a long isolation, we were relieved to see the arrival of the 'cavalry', when a cavalcade of construction equipment appeared along the Huddersfield Road to completely clear the village centre in half an hour and then disappear up the Oldham Road to enable the construction traffic to continue. My lasting memory is of a surface planer clearing the snow to within two inches of the curb around the island without once touching it. What great experiences these were, compared with the equipment they have today with snow blowers etc for the lanes, it really was a case of digging out your own premises. To think that some of today's children have never even seen real snow.

There was entertainment for all ages in the village during the 50's and 60's. Whist drives and dances were held regularly in the Co-op hall, which had an immaculate dance floor, which meant the dances were very popular. The annual pantomime week at the beginning of December, was always fully booked for each performance. During these performances a group of the most upright members of the

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community morphed into their alter egos and became hilarious pantomime dames. Walter Byrom, a large man and a successful business owner, Neville Whitehead a rather small, usually very quiet man and Harold Schofield, joiner, plumber and local handyman, hammed it up as the Ugly Sisters, Widow Twankey and the like, supported by a very willing cast who acted well and really enjoyed entertaining the audience. Great enjoyment for all in Denshaw and beyond.



McLintock Family Collection

Figure 9. Ripponden Road, Denshaw, Winter 1940.

The much-used Co-op Hall also served as an Independent Sunday School run by Mr and Mrs Senior. With the advent of a new vicar, Mr Stirrup, an unfortunate disagreement had occurred which caused the church Sunday School to close, as the disagreement was with Mrs Senior who had been its teacher and leader for many years. After this dispute the Vicar closed the Sunday school as there was no leader, and the village went without for all of six months. Parents started to complain to the vicar and Mr and Mrs Senior heard their plea and decided to open their own Sunday school; this became the Independent Sunday school. It became very popular and built up a good following. As Mrs Senior had a Congregational background she was well equipped to lead the new Sunday school. Along with several of my friends I attended this Sunday school. On Whit Friday when both churches processed, the Independents were led by Meltham and Meltham Mills Band (a very good band at the time) and the church carried their own banner specially made for the occasion. Christ Church were led by Denshaw Band, got together specially for the day as the band had broken up several years before. The processions always passed one another at the Black Horse, where there would be the obligatory pea-shooter fight. Lunch was provided for the Independents in the hall and for the church in the school. As Whitsuntide was an important date in the calendar it was at Whit that schools took their mid-Summer term break which meant there was always a good turnout. After lunch there were sports for the children, a short concert by the Meltham Band before they were off to something called the Whit Friday Band Contests, and rather like Brigadoon, Denshaw went back to sleep. The Independent sports were held in 'The Glen', a deep hollow which was formed by the embankment of the Oldham Road and a field sloping down to the River Tame. This piece of land was owned by Derek Parkin who lived on Brownhill Naze and very generously let village organisation use it for community events.

DENSHAW REMEMBERED

Like most Saddleworth villages, Denshaw was not without its share of characters. The one that immediately springs to mind is Billy Battye, a small, round man with a face that was definitely 'lived in'. Anyone who has seen the sketch of 'Owd Puddle' in Ammon Wrigley's *Songs of a Moorland Parish*, will have seen a very good likeness to Billy. He spent the majority of his retirement in the Junction Inn, after giving up his dairy farm when it was the norm to see him delivering his milk in churns carried on the old traditional yoke. He did so until the early fifties, what a sight, like something from a nursery rhyme. The Junction was the meeting point for several other characters, Billy would often play crib (cribbage) with Lily Tellin. Lily was a diminutive character, a weaver by trade, who worked at Raspin Mill in Delph and lived on the nearby Dumfries estate. It seemed to me that she always wore a navy-blue wool coat but was easily recognised by the heavy, grey, Ena Sharples (Coronation Street) type hairnet, seemingly day in and day out. She regularly attended Evensong at Christ Church and used to leave the pub, complete with prayer book, and walk along Huddersfield Road to church. The card team was completed by landlady Olive Gibson, a large, formidable lady with jet black hair in an immaculate French pleat. While Lily's drink was milk stout, Olive would stick to the G and Ts. You could always rely on Olive and Roy being the most convivial hosts and everyone was made very welcome; it was great pub for all ages, and was the home base for the Denshaw football club. The village even had its own clown. Harold Millward featured in all the local carnivals during the 50s and it was quite unsettling to see a fully made-up clown walking down the street to catch the bus to take part in the Oldham Carnival. Each pub seemed to have memorable licensees at one time or another. One of the earliest landlords I can remember, and what I still consider to be unusual, was that of the local policeman living in a pub. PC Tom Webb was a formidable man, both in stature and reputation, he was one of the 'old brigade' and always wore his



Robert Rodgers Collection

Figure 10 Coronation Celebrations at Denshaw, 1953.

Police cape when on duty. He had his own way of administering justice and it was always best policy to behave in his presence. Following the Webbs as landlords at the Printer's Arms, were Eileen and Bert Buckley. Eileen was the licensee, she was regularly behind the bar and was the archetypal landlady of those times - there was no questioning who was boss. In the tap room, Eileen kept a

DENSHAW REMEMBERED

minah bird which the regulars taught to repeat quite rude expletives, so it was quite an attraction to many punters from around Saddleworth. These were in the days before the breathalyser, therefore some people drove to the pub and even after it was introduced, legislation was much more relaxed than it is today. Pubs in the area always seemed to be busy.

The one event I remember distinctly from my early childhood is Coronation Day in 1953. Despite there being a public showing of the Coronation on a television installed in the Co-op Hall, the few households who owned a television welcomed their neighbours to share the crowning of the country's first female monarch since 1901. The Rodgers family watched the event next door along with other neighbours, we crowded round a twelve-inch screen which displayed a rather grainy image of a London as dull and wet as it was in Denshaw. Nevertheless, it was an exciting morning, only to be surpassed by the afternoon's experience. Along with my friend, David Smith, I had been selected to be a page boy for Denshaw's own Coronation Queen, Phyllis Bailey. Along with the Queen, her six attendants, herald and crown bearer we rode, followed by the Britannia float with Britannia and her eleven attendants, round the village to the Glen. Prior to the event we had several rehearsals including dress rehearsals and as six-year-olds, we two page boys felt rather embarrassed dressed in our velvet knickerbockers trousers and frilled shirts, so we would sneak home hiding behind trees when anyone passed by on our way home. The crowning was held in the Glen followed by a full evening of entertainment and culminating in a grand bonfire in Mr Hughes' field.

The television broadcast prompted my dad to rent a TV set from Wildbores (as most did in those days). He wanted a clearer picture so we went upmarket by including a magnifier which stood in front of the screen to make it bigger. We were then able to enjoy the delights of the Grove Family, Quatermass, and on children's TV Crackerjack was the favourite. Later came the excitement of a second channel, ITV's Granada and so started a whole new world for Denshaw. A few years later a group of us took to the big screen and caught the bus to Oldham and one of the Saturday morning Cinema clubs at the ABC, Gaumont or Odeon.

Probably the most memorable event in Denshaw's history occurred on Saturday, 30th May 1964, and was something, to my disappointment, that I missed. The family had left for Cornwall, early that morning; in those days, it took a full eight hours to get there. On arrival we rang grandma to say we had arrived, only for her to impart the news that the village had suffered a flash flood that afternoon and all the roads were awash with Ripponden Road like a river. The village was cut off and the amount of water running off the hillside caused the river to overflow and the accumulation of water, as it picked up debris caused the culvert in the Glen to block up, resulting in the formation of a huge lake, stretching 400 yards up the Rochdale Road valley. More dangerously it put tremendous pressure on the embankment of Oldham Road washing part of it away; a huge hole appeared and into it fell most of the road. It was felt such a serious situation that all dwellings below this point, as far as Delph, (which had its own problems) had to be evacuated because there was the possibility of danger from the whole banking collapsing. By the time I returned from holiday, the army had been involved in erecting a Bailey bridge over the destroyed road and numerous water pumps were still being used to regulate the newly formed lake which still existed. Many spectators arrived to view this devastating scene and the Bailey bridge was in place for many months until restoration of the road was completed. The noise of the traffic rumbling over the bridge must have caused great irritation to the residents in the area. The bridge was in position for all summer and there was great rejoicing when the road was finally re-opened. On the day of the disaster, further up Oldham Road at Woodbrow, the lodge behind the farm had given way, resulting in water cascading across Oldham Road and down to the Holmes football field carrying with it washed out debris and resulting, when the flood subsided, in silt covering half the field, in places to a depth of two foot which took a considerable time to clear before the pitch became playable again.

I considered Denshaw, despite its isolated location, to have been a wonderful place to grow up in the fifties and sixties. I believe the community spirit of those times fashioned my willingness to serve as Councillor, Manager and Governor and latterly deputy warden at the church. I have always loved the village and hopefully will continue to serve the community in the years to come.



Mike Buckley Collection

Figure 11. The Bailey Bridge over the Collapsed Culvert - Denshaw, 1964.



**Figure 12.
The Lake formed in the Glen,
Denshaw, 30 May 1964.**

Mike Buckley Collection

PINK TAPE AND SEALING WAX: IN COURT WITH FRANCIS BUCKLEY (1881-1949)

John A. Gilks¹

A great deal has been written in recent years about Francis Buckley's experiences during the Great War and of his lasting contributions to the study of Mesolithic of the southern Pennines and of the area around Marsden in particular.² Rarely mentioned however, is Buckley's profession as a barrister. The writer's knowledge of his legal background was enhanced in the 1990s by his late daughter Maude's loan of family correspondence and of her father's album of Photographs. Found within the pages of the latter was a sheet of white paper on which Buckley had sketched whilst in court three of his presumed clients. These comprise of two men and a woman, One man is young, and well groomed, possibly a soldier, the other a down at heel soul, whilst the lady looks respectable in her straw hat. There is also a fourth sketch. This is of a portly, middle aged barrister, possibly Buckley's leader, who appears from his stance and gaze to be addressing perhaps someone in the witness box.

So when Buckley did execute these sketches? From what is presently known, Buckley after studying law at Trinity College, Oxford, and obtaining the degrees of Bachelor of Civil Law and Master of Arts, became a pupil at the Inns of Court School of Law, with chambers at 6 New Square, Lincoln's Inn. He was called to the bar on 17th November 1905. Subsequently, and as war loomed, he joined the Inns of Court Officer Training Corps and enlisted on 10 May 1905. Buckley was appointed Company Commander of C Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Northumberland Fusiliers, and left for France on 10th January 1916.³ After his demobilisation on 13th February 1919, Buckley returned, not to his chambers in London, but, with his wife, Bebb, to the family home, Tunstead, Saddleworth, where according to his late daughter, Maude 'he repaired his health and strength, working on his researches into glass, entertaining and lecturing on the local flints'.⁴ It therefore seems reasonable to conclude that Buckley had executed the sketches between his being called to the bar in 1905 and his joining the army in 1915.

END NOTE

In 2018 the author donated a complete set in photocopy of Francis Buckley's lithic find notes and drawing books, the originals of which are in the keeping of the Tolson Memorial Museum, Huddersfield, and much of the author's original research on Buckley, the flint collector, to Saddleworth Museum and Art Gallery, Uppermill (Accession No. 2018.13.1; M/GX/Buckl/E). The archive is available to all who are interested in this remarkable son of Saddleworth.

¹ Late Curator of Archaeology in the Tolson Memorial Museum, Huddersfield.

² G. Smith, *Captain Francis Buckley, 1881-1949, 7th Northumberland Fusiliers, 1915-1918*, (2001), <http://www.fairmile.fsbusiness.co.uk/buckleyfrancis.html>; S. Griffiths and N. Saunders, 'Forged in Conflict. Francis Buckley, the First World War and British Prehistory', *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, Vol. 25 (2020), pp. 469-85; contra P.A. Spikins, *Prehistoric Peoples of the Pennines. Reconstructing the Lifestyles of Mesolithic Hunter-Gatherers on Marsden Moor*, West Yorkshire Archaeological Services, (Wakefield, 2002), p. 8; and C. Conneller, *The Mesolithic in Britain, Landscape and Society in Times of Change*, (Routledge, 2022), pp. 3-4. See also G. Smith, 'Francis Buckley', *SHSB*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (2012), pp. 1-11.

³ G. Smith, op. cit.

⁴ Tolson Memorial Museum, Buckley Archive, M.F. Pictor, 'The Late Francis Buckley, MA, BCL, JP, FSA, of Tunstead, Greenfield, Saddleworth, by his daughter Maude F. Pictor' (1979); J.A. Gilks, 'Francis Buckley and the Discovery and Excavation of a Beaker Occupation Site on Ross Links, Bamburgh, Northumberland', *Durham Archaeological Journal*, Vol. 9 (1993). p. 1-7.

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Figure 1 Francis Buckley's sketches (Buckley Family Collection)

Figure 2
Francis Buckley, BCL, MA.
Oil on canvas by
T. Martin Ronaldson, RA, 1906



Buckley Family Collection



John A. Gilks Collection

Figure 3 Tunstead House, c.1900

CONTRACTING FOR SADDLEWORTH CHURCH NEW TOWER, 1845 ¹

‘TO MASONS - Parties desirous of CONTRACTING for the MASON’S WORK required in raising the TOWER and erecting a SPIRE to SADDLEWORTH CHURCH may inspect the PLANS and Specification at the Offices of the Architects. STARKEY and CUFFLEY, Manchester, until the 24th instant, after which day the Plans, &c, will be at the New Inn, Saddleworth - Sealed tenders are to be addressed to the Committee, on or before the 31st of May; the lowest tender will not necessarily be accepted. - Stone delivered on the ground at 7d. per cube foot.’

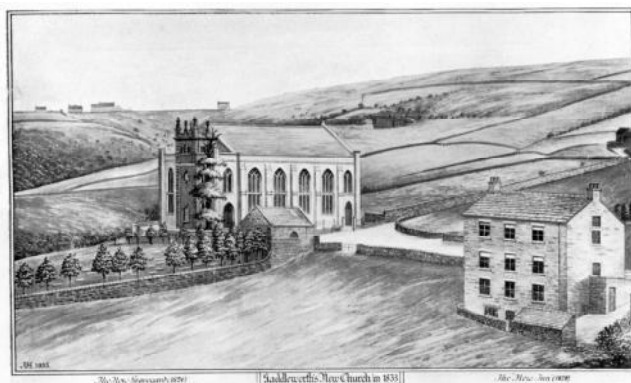


Figure 1. The New Church with the Old Tower (1836-1846) ²

EDITOR’S NOTE

Howcroft in his 1933 publication *Supplement to the History of the Chapelry and Church of Saddleworth* ³ gives an interesting account of the building of the present tower of St Chad’s Church and how parts of the old tower was retained as part of the new build.

‘Shortly after the new white Church, which shamed its surroundings was completed (1836) a subscription was asked for to erect a tower more suitable to the Church. A list of subscribers of £5 or over hangs over the baptistry doorway. The amount raised was £1,538 2s 0d, including £214 1s 0d subscribed in small amounts. A firm of Manchester Architects was engaged in 1845 with the original idea of erecting a tower and spire. A drawing was made showing a spire 134ft high from the ground. This was wisely abandoned for a tower only. The old tower was then 100 year old (1746-1846).

‘The Architects for the new tower of 1846-7 were Starkey and Cuffley, of Manchester, who gave a receipt in 1848 for £11 17s 0d balance of account for services. The accounts reads as follows:

‘To the Committee of Saddleworth Church Tower.

Dr to Starkey & Cuffley				
1845		£	s	d
	To plans, elevations, sections, specifications, and superintendence of the Tower as above	35	0	0
	To journeys, &c	5	5	0
July 24	Paid advertisement in Courier	0	5	6
Aug. 9	Paid Kitchen for attendance	0	10	6
Sep 19	Paid for 2 advertisements in Guardian	0	11	0
Sep 20	Paid for advertisement	0	5	0
		41	17	0
	Of which they had previously received	30	0	0
		£11	17	0’

¹ *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, Saturday, 17 May 1845.

² A.J. Howcroft, *Supplement to the Chapelry and Church of Saddleworth*, (Oldham, 1933), p. 4.

³ *ibid.*, pp. 17-18, 20-21.

THE ROYAL GOLDEN JUBILEE IN DELPH: 25th OCTOBER 1809 ¹

We continue to receive from all parts of the United Kingdom the most gratifying account of the celebration of this memorable day. Sincere affection, gratitude and esteem for His Majesty have been manifested in different parts of the country, in various modes, but in uniform degree.

In contemplating the brilliant celebration of the Jubilee, on the part of the people, we ought not to forget the acts of grace which have proceeded from the Royal breast. It has been announced that all deserters from His Majesty's fleets and armies have received His Majesty's free pardon... All persons confined for debts due to the Crown have been released by the King's command... Two thousand pounds has been appropriated by the King out of his own purse, for the release of poor debtors in England and Wales...

Joseph Shaw Esq. of Delph,² on the day of Jubilee, called to his house, all his tenants, labourers and work-people, to commemorate the Fiftieth Anniversary of His Majesty's Accession to the Throne; and entertained them with an elegant supper, and plenty of home brewed beer, old Jamaica, &c.

His noble mind the Country people saw,
And swell'd with loud applause the name of Shaw.

But strange to tell, throughout the extensive, rich, and populous Township of Saddleworth, not another example of loyalty manifested itself, in which the hungry were fed, or the poor tasted the sweets of Jubilee.

¹ We are grateful to Howard Lambert for this extract. *Manchester Mercury*, 14 November 1809. Unlike today, the jubilee was celebrated at the beginning of the fiftieth year of the king's reign, not its conclusion.

² Joseph Shaw (1762-1842) was a shopkeeper in Delph. He was also described at the time of his death alternately as a wool stapler and gentleman. He is buried in St Chad's Old Graveyard, No. 202.