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Point of View

Fifteen years ago, in 1994, Heritage Open Days (HODs) were launched with the aim of celebrating England's architectural heritage and related culture: similar events are held elsewhere under the banner of European Heritage Days. HODs aim to encourage the opening of buildings to which the public are not normally admitted. Events across the country attract around one million visitors during the course of an extended September weekend. They take place in a huge variety of venues, including municipal buildings, factories, offices, private residences, places of worship, courts, archaeological sites and many other locations. Attractions, such as guided walks, concerts, street theatre and children's activities, usually accompany the opening of buildings. The Civic Trust and English Heritage are the joint co-ordinators of HODs, but events are driven by the grassroots. It is local property owners, staff and volunteers who initiate and stage the events.

For many years, Tameside has been well-served by local organisations and volunteers enthusiastic to let the public see behind the scenes: all credit to those who open their doors and arrange activities. However, with all due respect, the venues tend to be 'the usual suspects' - places of worship, local government buildings and established archive, museum and heritage sites. All concerned do a splendid job. But what about the industrial sites, offices, retail sites, educational establishments, development sites and many other places that have yet to open their doors to the public and celebrate their history, traditions and culture?

We should never be complacent as there are surely still many hidden gems within Tameside worthy of wider appreciation. An obvious candidate is Ashton Baths which has lain unused for around forty years. Of course, there are safety issues involved in opening such a building. But surely a safe viewing point could be established, near an entrance, and, with careful use of spotlights, Tamesiders would have the opportunity to view a building that Nikolaus Pevsner, in his magisterial work *The Buildings of England*, described as, 'An amazing performance'.



Bob Hayes
Publicity Officer for the Forum

This is the first History Alive Tameside 'Point of View'. In future editions other local historians will pen a personal viewpoint in relation to history or heritage in Tameside.

Tameside Local History Forum

LOOKING BACK AT 2008



Our members were very pleased to be awarded the runner up in the e-tameside awards for best voluntary community group website 2007.

2008 saw a few, longstanding companies in the borough either close down or relocate. Local history groups working with staff at our Local Studies and Archives Centre made contact with companies to make sure none of our heritage material was lost or destroyed and were successful in placing material into the archives. One of the companies was Robertson's jam works. We continue to help save any local source material from disappearing.

Buildings that are about to be demolished are also photographed and recorded, most recently the old hospital nurses' home and workhouse at the Tameside Hospital site. The work is supported by the University of Manchester Archaeological Unit. An exhibition marking the 60th anniversary of the National Health Service was displayed at the hospital.

One of the highlights of 2008 was the excavation at Buckton Castle, Carrbrook, by the Unit. Following this, an excellent lecture took place at Dukinfield Town Hall explaining what had been found. 140 members enjoyed a supper afterwards; this was part of a series of lectures supported by Tameside Tourist Office.

Barbara Foster, a volunteer from Dunham Massey, enthralled a most interested audience with a lecture about the Earls of Stamford and their Estates.

Recently, other boroughs have shown an interest in how the Forum works; it would seem we have set an example of the benefit of local groups and the Council working together in the interest of heritage. Members regularly attend Heritage meetings with officers from Planning, Conservation, Museums, Local Studies, Tourist Information and Events.

April saw the launch of our third *HAT* magazine and once again the response was very good, with more copies travelling the globe and many interesting queries through our website.

A very exciting start to the restoration of Stamford Park will start in 2009, when work will begin with public consultation meetings. The Forum will be taking part in the decisions regarding its heritage and monuments.

Members thoroughly enjoyed visits to Croxteth Hall and St George's Hall Liverpool.

One of our long standing supporters, Sir George Kenyon, died in June 2008, I attended a celebration of his life at Dukinfield Town Hall and was amazed by the amount of work he had been involved in during his life-time. The Forum has been fortunate to have such a dedicated supporter of heritage in Tameside.

Heritage Open Days proved to be a huge success in 2008, with over 5,000 visitors coming into Tameside to attend some 22 buildings and events, but this would not have happened, without the dedication of the volunteers who host these events.

Our third 'Tameside Heritage Fair' was held at Dukinfield Town Hall in October, local groups exhibited their work and a wide range of local/family history books and old maps/postcards were on sale. Our 'Who Do You Think You Are' family history corner proved to be a very successful attraction.

LOOK OUT FOR THE 2009 TAMESIDE HERITAGE FAIR 3 OCTOBER AT STALYBRIDGE CIVIC HALL.

Our year ended with a Christmas quiz and social event. I would like to thank everyone for supporting the Tameside Local History Forum and hope you enjoy the 4th issue of *HAT*.

Chris Clough
Hon Secretary of Tameside Local History Forum

The views expressed in articles and reviews are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Tameside Local History Forum.

The Forum would like to thank the *History on Your Doorstep* group for donating the proceeds of their *Smokestack to Urban Chic* publication towards funding most of the cost of printing this issue of *History Alive Tameside*.

We should also like to thank Councillor Jackie Lane for a welcome donation from the Tameside Heritage Development Fund.

The Story of the Rectory for St Mary the Virgin, Haughton Green

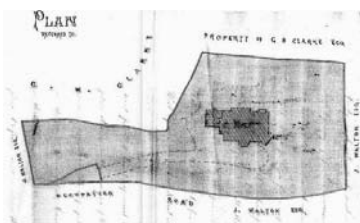
James Walton Esquire and his son William founded the church of St Mary the Virgin, Meadow Lane, Haughton Green. James Walton laid the foundation stone on 11 April 1874 and the church was dedicated in 1876. The architects, for both the church and later the rectory, were the brothers James Medland and Henry Taylor, two of the most important regional architects working in Manchester in the mid-Victorian period.



James Walton was born at Sowerby in Halifax, Yorkshire. After coming to live, first at The Elms on Anson Road, Manchester, and then at Romiley, Stockport, he purchased the Haughton Dale Wireworks. He endowed the area with the Haughton Dale Mills School on Meadow Lane, the Church of St Mary, a row of terraced houses on Meadow Lane named Haughton Terrace, and, in 1881, the Rectory. By this time, James Walton had moved to Merionethshire, Wales, where he is listed on the 1881 Census, as a farmer, aged 78, living at Cwmllecoediog Hall Farm and was also, by then, High Sheriff of Montgomeryshire. He and his family, however, still contributed to the upkeep of the church. James Walton died at Montgomeryshire in 1883 when he was 80 years old.

In 1881, James Walton was to provide the land and funds to provide a rectory for the incumbent of the church. This is the story of that rectory on Meadow Lane, Haughton Green. The rectory was built on an enclosed piece of land off Meadow Lane: this enclosure had the name of Wall Bank. The plan shows the land bounded by the occupation road, now known as Meadow Lane. The land to the north, south and west, was owned by James Walton Esq and the land to the eastern boundary was the property of George Hyde Clarke Esq.

The original title deed, dated 31 July 1882, shows the transfer of the parsonage site for Haughton St Mary from James Walton Esq to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England. Building plans were drawn for the rectory and approved by the Haughton Local Board on 9 May 1881. The architects were James Medland and Henry Taylor of 2 St Ann's Churchyard, Manchester. The builder was Samuel Robinson of Hyde. Robinson Brothers built some of the principal buildings in this area, including Hyde Theatre Royal, Hyde Hospital, Hyde Town Hall, and the grammar school amongst others.



The plans show an eight bedroom parsonage with cellars: sadly the Meadow Lane elevations are missing from these plans. The original, pitch pine front door to

the parsonage is on this elevation; the door has ornamental ironwork and an extraordinary Gothic fanlight set on corbels, its six irregular, cusped lights filled with leaded glass. The door bears the inscription 'Ye House Shews Ye Owner'.



To the right of the door, the gothic hood-mould ends in a decorative label stop - a gothic monogram under a stylized crown. To the left of the doorway is a small quatrefoil window. Despite the late alterations, the west elevation facing on Meadow Lane remains intact and adds a great deal of historical interest to the area

The projecting bay on the western side remains intact: this bay houses the main stair tower for the rectory.

Behind the pitch pine door is an original, encaustic, tiled floor. To the right of the main door is a single-storey projecting bay: this feature is typical of the style of the Taylors.



The first incumbent of St Mary's Church was Revd Edmund Vernon Schuster. Revd Schuster and his family lived at the St Lawrence's Rectory, Vaudrey Lane, until the rectory on Meadow Lane was built and, in 1882, the rectory began its life as home to the rectors of St Mary the Virgin. The last rector to live at the rectory was Charles Burke and his family. Local residents fondly remember the Revd Burke and his love for the rectory. When, however, Revd Burke retired, the new incumbent, Revd David Smethurst, refused point blank to move into the rectory, describing it as a *mausoleum*. Instead, Revd Smethurst moved his young family into a flat, whilst the new rectory was built next to the church, signalling the end of the rectory's use as a parsonage. Consequently, the Church Commissioners decided to place the rectory on the market.

The rectory was sold by the Church Commissioners on 7 June 1967 to Alfred and Florrie Challenor Chadwick, for conversion to a restaurant and later a hotel, for a purchase price of £4,000. The Chadwick family extensively altered the interior of the building and successfully ran the business with their son Lee and his family, until they sold it in 1988 as a going concern.

The hotel is currently owned by the Ailantus Hotel chain. The owners have applied to demolish the hotel and replace it with a purpose built residential care home, and the planning application was the catalyst for an extensive search for the historical records of the rectory.

Little was known about exact age of the rectory or the architects for the building, with no historical evidence appearing to have survived. The Church Commissioners were the only ones who might have the surviving records. This led me to ask our Member of Parliament, Andrew Gwynne if he would ask the Commissioners for a copy of the old deeds. Andrew very kindly did this and at last we had a date for the building - 1882. We then looked at the possible sources of records for that date and, thanks to the very helpful staff at Tameside

Local Studies and Archives, we found the tracings for the rectory in the building by-law plans of the Haughton Local Board held there.

It was certainly a red-letter day, when archivist Larysa brought out the fragile documents. Jill Cronin was also in the library that day and we all gathered round as Larysa unfolded the tracings, revealing at the bottom of each sheet the words we had been longing to see, *'Medland and Henry Taylor Architects, 2 St Ann's Churchyard Manchester'*.



English Heritage had declined to list the building in early 2008, because of the lack of evidence: now that the architects were proven, I could apply for a review of that decision.

When the Chadwick family acquired the rectory in 1967, they embarked on an extensive programme of alterations. Sadly, this destroyed much of the original interior and, whilst it would be easy with hindsight to criticise, it is important to remember that in the 1960s Victorian architecture was not so highly valued. The Chadwicks wanted a building to suit their purpose and that was what they set about doing.

The internal alterations have proved a setback to having the building listed. The discovery, however, of the original plans and a sympathetic appraisal by David Garrard, of the Victorian Society, have allowed us to apply for a review of the refusal of listing. At the time of writing, we do not know the outcome of this review.

Haughton Dale is also to be considered for conservation area status but we do not know whether this will come in time to save the rectory from demolition. There is little doubt that the loss of this fine, old building would deprive the area of an important member of its most significant architectural group.



Margaret Smethurst. Denton Local History Society

With thanks to all those who helped me and pointed me in the right direction. Without their kindness I would have been lost.

The Gorse Hall Murder Mystery

Diary of a Murder



Gorse Hall is situated on the border of Stalybridge and Dukinfield, Cheshire, and it is where in 1909 the brutal murder of George Harry Storrs took place. The following events are documented in the book by Jonathan Goodman, ***The Stabbing of George Harry Storrs***. There have been several theories as to why and by whom George Harry was murdered. There are more questions than answers and the fact that Cornelius Howard was stated to be the alleged murderer on 1 December, long before he was charged and acquitted.

11 August 1891 - The marriage of George Harry Storrs and Mary Margaret Middleton took place in the parish church at Silverdale. After their marriage they moved into Gorse Hall, bought by William Storrs, father of George, and given to him as a wedding present. There were two live-in servants and a coachman and his family, who lived above the stables. Some months later, Maggie Storrs' orphaned niece, aged 9, came to live with them.

Autumn 1905 - Robert Innes, solicitor, friend and accountant for George Harry's firm engaged a governess for his elder daughter, appointing a young woman from Bavaria, Maria Hohl. George was a frequent visitor to the Innes' house and it was noted he was seen walking in the nearby park with her.

6 February 1906 - Maria Hohl put the youngest child to bed and that was the last time she was seen alive.

27 February 1906 - On the canal just through Stalybridge, a bargeman saw a body floating as the ice was breaking. The body was that of a young woman, later identified as Maria Hohl.

10 September 1909, Friday - According to George Harry Storrs, about 9.30pm a shadowy figure appeared outside the window at Gorse Hall, a voice shouted out,

'Hands up or I'll shoot', and the window pane shattered as the barrel of a gun protruded into the room. George Harry quickly pulled down the blind and two shots were heard. There being no telephone in the house, a servant rang a hand bell to summon the coachman, who alerted the police based at Stalybridge. A search of the house and grounds found nothing. George Harry suggested placing a bell on the flat roof of the hall, a bell that could be heard at the police station.

29 October 1909, Friday - The silence of Stalybridge was shattered that night by the tolling of the bell - Dong!! Dong!! Dong!! Two constables rushed up to the hall, only to find George Harry looking at his pocket watch and informing them that he had decided to try the bell to see what the effect would be.

1 November 1909, Monday - The cook had just entered the kitchen when she was startled by a figure in the doorway, presuming it to be the coachman. But she screamed, when she realised it was a stranger who pointed a revolver at her head and said, *'Say a word and I shoot'*. Dropping the milk she held, she ran out of the room bumping into the housemaid, screaming, *'There's a man in the house'*. On entering the front room panting, she screamed, *'There's a man in the house'*. George Harry, already on his feet and going into the hall, followed by Maggie and Marion, faced the stranger, who had a revolver in his hand and what looked like a knife. Pointing the revolver at George, he is thought to have said, *'Now I've got you'* or *'I have got you now'*. Meantime, Marion had run down the drive to the Oddfellows' Hall, crying, *'My uncle is being murdered'* and then was taken to the Liberal Club across the road, where someone phoned the police. As the men struggled, Maggie tried to hit the stranger with a shillelagh off the wall. He cried, *'No, I will not shoot'*. She grabbed the gun away from him as George Harry shouted, *'Go, ring the bell'*, hiding the gun under a carpet as she went. The housemaid and cook had gone to fetch the coachman but he was in Stalybridge, having a drink in a local pub.

By the time men from the Liberal Club and elsewhere had arrived, the kitchen resembled a blood bath. George Harry was lying on the floor still alive; he asked weakly for Mrs Storrs. Someone asked, *'Who attacked you?'* No answer. Someone went to look for Maggie and found her still clasping the bell. The bell stopped ringing. George Harry was struggling to breathe and was covered in wounds. He asked for his wife again. Someone asked him, *'Who was the man'*. *'I don't know'*. Maggie was brought to him and fainted at the sight before her. She was taken to her room. A Dr Williams, the nearest one available, came about 10pm and found Mr Storrs gasping for breath. He saw there was nothing he could do: George Harry Storrs died shortly after ten. It was thought he had been stabbed about twelve times but at the autopsy it was reported to be fifteen times.

2 November 1909, Tuesday - Reporters from all over arrived in Stalybridge: all the guest houses and hotels were full. A search was on for the murderer and the weapon: bloodhounds were brought in (the first time Cheshire Constabulary had used them) to cover the whole area, looking for clues and a knife. The gun was recovered and sent to a gunsmith.

4 November 1909, Thursday - George Harry Storrs' funeral took place at St Paul's, Stalybridge. After the funeral, Maggie and George Harry's brother, James,

discussed the running of the family firm. They agreed that William Hargrave Storrs, James's elder son would take over. James wanted to buy out Maggie's shares.

5 November 1909, Friday - The gunsmith reported that the revolver recovered from the hall was an American Bullock: there was no proof mark and it was useless, as the swivel pin had been removed and one of the chambers was jammed with a cut down rifle cartridge.

12 November 1909, Friday - The coachman's wife was uneasy all day and when her husband had not returned home at teatime, she sent for her brother to look for him. A search was started. Eventually James was found by Detective Sergeant Lee, hanging from a beam in the hayloft.

17 November 1909 - A man was arrested in Oldham breaking into the Co-op. The custody sergeant noted that he fitted the description of the murderer at Gorse Hall and he was taken to Dukinfield Police Station.

18 November 1909, Thursday - The women from Gorse Hall were driven to Dukinfield to attend an identity parade. They agreed that he '*looked like*' the intruder at the hall. A special court sat that afternoon and the man remanded until Saturday. Further investigations revealed he was a former resident of Stalybridge. His name was Cornelius Howard. His mother had been the younger sister to William Storrs: George Harry's father. Both his parents were dead. He had been in custody in Sheffield until 7 October, for breaking into an ironmonger's, when he was conditionally discharged and told to go elsewhere.

1 March 1909 - The trial of Cornelius Howard started at Chester. This caused quite a stir, as one of the defence barristers was an Edward Theophilus Nelson, a gentleman from British Guiana, possibly one of the first (if not the first) black barrister to practise in an English court. The trial lasted four days.

5 March 1910 - The jury retired and returned sometime later with a verdict - **NOT GUILTY**.

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Maggie Storrs did not stay long at Gorse Hall but left with M Lindley, the cook and the housemaid for Harrogate, to live in a furnished house until in the spring of 1910, when she bought a house in Kent's Bank near Grange-over-Sands. The widow had Gorse Hall taken down in the spring of 1910.

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10 June 1910, Monday - A young couple, James and Gertie, were going for a stroll on Early Bank Road, not far from the Gorse Hall estate. On passing a man they thought was looking suspicious, they both turned and, as they did so, the man attacked James with a knife, cutting him near his collar bone. James shouted to Gertie to run, the men fought but James eventually got away. On arriving home he got the police and gave a description: the police wondered if there was a connection with the Gorse Hall murder,

22 June 1910, Wednesday - Police found another witness to this event, who was on Early Bank Road at the time in question. He had met an old friend Mark Wilde.

He had asked him, *'Have you been in a scrap?'* as he had a mark on his face and his clothes were dirty. He'd been out for a stroll!

23 June 1910, Thursday - An identity parade as held at Dukinfield Police Station and Mark Wilde was identified as the man who had attacked the couple. He was charged and sent for trial at Knutsford, where he was given a two month sentence for attempted murder.

22 August 1910, Monday - The four women from Gorse Hall were taken to Knutsford gaol for yet another identity parade. Again one of the women said, *'She was sure the man she had indicated was the murderer'*. Another said, *'The man she had touched resembled the murderer'*. Mrs Storrs could not identify him.

30 August 1910, Tuesday - Mark Wilde was released from gaol: little did he know that as soon as he stepped out, he would be immediately arrested for the murder of George Harry Storrs. He was sent for trial.

24 October 1910, Monday - The trial of Mark Wilde started at Chester and what a surprise when the barrister for the defence turned out to be none other than Edward Theophilus Nelson.

27 October 1910, Friday - The jury retired and returned some 50 minutes later. Verdict - **NOT GUILTY**.

To this very day no one has been found guilty of the murder at Gorse Hall.

Two trials, two people acquitted - no motive for the killing of George Harry Storrs. Do You Know Who Did It?

G Brown and Christine Clough
Friends of Gorse Hall

**NORTH WEST
LABOUR HISTORY
GROUP**

Are you interested in the history of the working class, its organisations, unions and co-operative societies?

Membership of the North West Labour History Group costs just £10 for individuals (£15 for organisations) which includes our journal - North West Labour History.

For more information visit:

www.workershistory.org

or write to: Pat Bowker, NWLHG Secretary
1 Bedford Road, Eccles, Manchester M30 9LA

Ashton Parish Church

A valuable document belonging to the church has been conserved for future generations. This is the **Parish Terrier of 1854** which was in a very poor state. A substantial contribution from Tameside Local Studies and Archives enabled the Terrier to be cleaned and rebound by a conservationist at Greater Manchester County Record Office.



The document is:

A True Note and Terrier of all the Glebe Lands, Meadows, Gardens, Orchards, Houses, Stocks, Mines, Implements, Tenements, Tythes, Chief Rents and other Rights belonging to the Rector and Parish Church of Ashton-under-Lyne now in the use and possession of Rev. George Chetwode MA taken and made with an Inventory of the goods and utensils in the use and possession of the Churchwardens by John Ross Coulthart, John Moss, Frederick Wilde Bromley and Samuel Kershaw.

According to the Terrier it appears,

that the non resident Rector Rev George Chetwode of Chilton, Thame, Oxfordshire refused to give any information as to the Rectorial property, therefore the facts embodied in the following pages had to be laboriously collected from the oldest and best informed of the resident inhabitants, from the tenants of the Glebe lands and from parochial valuations in the possession of the Assistant Overseer of the poor of the parish. For these reasons the Churchwardens do not claim absolute accuracy for the Terrier, all they pledge themselves to is that of its being a faithful consolidation of the information received to the best of their knowledge and belief.

This information none the less is itemised in great detail. It lists all the owners and occupiers of land in the parish, its area in acres and rent in lieu of tithes plus income from coal mines, and details of dues due to the parish for baptisms, weddings and funerals, which are still displayed in the church along with a list of benefactors. Every item the church owned is listed from candles to silver.

At the rear of the Terrier are original plans, on linen, of the town centre showing the old town hall and almshouses. There are also plans of Heys and Crooked Withens estates together with detailed plans of the interior of the church showing every pew and pew holder.

Thanks to a generous grant from Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council, the second and final phase of the restoration of the late nineteenth-century mosaic floor has now been completed. With missing pieces of mosaic replaced and the whole polished, it now looks as good as new.

The next major project the church is faced with is the restoration of the Victorian south-east sanctuary window and stonework which has been damaged by the ingress of water into the masonry and will require the removal of this large window. Several of the clerestory windows on the south side are also in urgent need of attention. The work is expected to take several months and to cost £140,000. Whilst some grants have been obtained from English Heritage, the church will still have to find a considerable sum itself.

The Soroptomists have donated a time capsule which has been placed in a vault under the church containing artifacts, photographs and information about Ashton in 2008.

The Friends are always looking for new members and invite you to become a Friend of Ashton Parish Church by joining them and helping to maintain and beautify this wonderful Grade 1 listed building which is part of our heritage.

To join pick up a membership form from the church, download a copy from the Forum website or apply to the Secretary Mrs J Currie
27 Rushmere, Ashton-under-Lyne. OL6 9EB Tel: 0161 330 5795.

For Guided Tours of the Church contact:-

Mr Alan F Bacon

17 St Christopher's Avenue, Ashton-under-Lyne. OL6 9DT Tel: 0161 330 5829.

Alan F Bacon

Friends of Ashton Parish Church.

Winter Diet for a Child

What might nutritionists think of the following article which appeared in the **Ashton Reporter** during January 1930?

The winter diet of a baby can advantageously be augmented with a few drops of cod liver oil emulsion or pure cream, added to three of his bottles during the twenty-four hours. A bigger child can be given a little bowl of patent groats or fine oat meal every morning, or a cup of soup for dinner with a few breadcrumbs broken into it. Little ones who have cut their teeth will enjoy little strips of bread, fried in bacon fat, as an addition to their morning meal. A baked apple served with whipped cream is a splendid winter additive to the children's meal. Carrot cake may also be given with advantage, because the iron in the fruit is beneficial. It is a good plan to pass the currants through the mincing machine before adding them to the cake.

Mary Whitehead

A Little Piece of Ashton History in Cumbria

Possibly the most important 'lost' building in Ashton was the 'Old Hall' which dated back to at least 1379 but probably had an earlier structure on the site. As with all such buildings, it went through several rebuilds and additions, transforming it from a fortified to a family house. A key feature of the hall, in its final incarnation, was two round towers on each side with 'pepper pot' or 'beehive' tops, as can be seen in this postcard. It was the Old Hall's misfortune to be located in a strategic spot between the parish church and the new railway line passing through Ashton roughly where Park Parade is now. In one of those great pieces of Victorian vandalism, the hall was demolished in 1893 to make way for an extension to the goods yard at Park Parade Station, an extension that in the end was never built.



My late wife Barbara (née Hooper) had an old (undated) cutting from the **Ashton Reporter** with a picture of the gang of workmen who demolished the Old Hall in 1893. For many years she wanted to find the remains of Ashton Old Hall, referred to as having been removed to Broughton in Cumbria. In 2006, whilst she was having her chemotherapy treatment, we decided to have a try at finding the remains of the two 'Pepper Pots'. Our first attempt followed several blind leads in Broughton. But on a subsequent trip to see the Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway, by one of those curious ironies we spotted, at around 50 mph a large gate post, half hidden in a hedge, on the main A595 that looked suspiciously like what we were searching for for! A subsequent closer inspection, especially of the cut stonework, showed that it matched the top of the left hand tower in the postcard. This was later confirmed by the present owners of Eccle Riggs Hall.

Eccle Riggs Hall was built for the first Viscount Richard Assheton Cross in 1865, a Victorian statesman. He was responsible for carrying through much notable social legislation, including the Artisans' Dwellings Act of 1875 which provided for the first slum clearances, who just so happened to be also a director of the Manchester Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway (later to become the Great Central).

Ashton Old Hall had been the home of the Assheton Family in the past and so, as a director, he would have been aware of, if not directly involved, in the acquisition of the Old Hall from the Stamford Estates. In his position, he was able to arrange for the 'Pepper Pots' to be removed the 104 miles to become a fitting gateway to his new house, as a sort of family keepsake. I expect that the stones would have been transported by train to Foxfield Station, which is about half a mile from Eccle Riggs Hall and thence by cart.



As the final photographs show, only the left hand of the two original 'pepper pots' now remains. At some point in the 1960s/70s, the entrance had been widened, by one of the previous hotels occupying Eccle Riggs Hall, and replaced with a matching gate post but constructed with dry stone walling rather than the dressed stone of the original.

For anybody driving in West Cumbria, who wishes to stop and take a look at this piece of Ashton, it is on the right hand side of the A595, just beyond Foxfield Station.



OS reference is Landranger Map Sheet 96 ref: 218863 or for those with a SatNav the Post Code is LA20 6BN.

Eccle Riggs Hall is private property and owned by CGP Books Ltd. My thanks to Lex

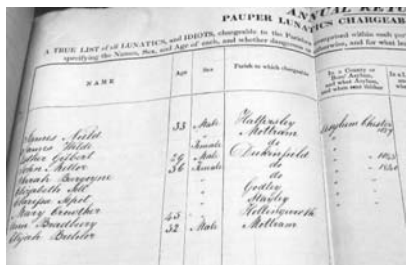
Ward of CGP for the information he provided in putting these few notes together.

Ken Morris

Ashton Poor Law Union

Compiled from correspondence held at the National Archives: MH 12 5413/4/5

The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 took the responsibility for poor relief away from the parish and put it firmly under the control of elected Guardians of the Poor, with a national set of rules, and centralised government at Somerset House. It took 17 years to fully implement in Ashton-under-Lyne. This article concerns some of the peculiar difficulties the Guardians at Ashton had to



overcome. The intentions were good but the implementation often comedic and inept.

The records start with a list of all the persons receiving parish relief in the last full year to **31 December 1833**, completed by James Stanley the Vestry Clerk of Ashton Parish Church.

1835 – A letter was received from Thomas Harrison of Stalybridge, applying for children to work in his mills and a little while later paupers were transferred from the parish of Princes Risborough in Buckinghamshire to work for Harrison and Bayley in Stalybridge.

(Tories). James Stanley the Vestry Clerk had signed a violent petition against the Poor Law Commissioners and anyway, 'he was a cripple as he as [sic] to write with his left hand' and the other, Isaac Jackson, 'was an old man of 70'.

1837 –1 February, the first meeting of the newly elected Poor Law Guardians was held in the Globe Inn and included a list of those elected.

1841 - Frederick Cooke of Denton was appointed surgeon, registrar and vaccinator. Smallpox was prevalent and an article in the ***Manchester Guardian*** 17 July 1844 concerned the loathsome disease being particularly rife in Ashton and Stalybridge. By 1846 they seem to have got their act together having appointed surgeons for each of the wards. In the same year Frederick Cooke provided a medical report regarding typhus in the area and recommended the setting up of fever wards.

Later that year there was a huge court case regarding cellar dwellers at Smiths Court Number 4, Stalybridge. Thomas Pagett had pleaded for help over a period of two weeks and been turned down. Neighbours had tried to help and later had acted as witnesses. In the end his infant son died of malnutrition. John Newton, the relieving officer for Dukinfield, was sacked. 14 January 1847, Samuel Broaderick was appointed to take his place.

1847

- **9 January**, Robert Wood was appointed as surgeon to the workhouse and noted that there were as yet no fever wards. Each year the Guardians made a list of those chargeable to the Union, but who were currently inmates at the Lunatic Asylum at Chester.
- **1 February**, steps were being taken for the immediate removal of Ann Bradbury and Abraham Fielding to the asylum.
- **5 February**, a body was found drowned in the canal. It was unceremoniously dumped inside the gates of the workhouse, on instructions of the deputy constable and against the express wishes of the Guardians: a formal complaint was brought against the constable.
- **17 February**, following his dismissal, John Newton wrote asking for one month's salary
- **25 February**, Samuel Broaderick resigned.
- **27 February**, a task unit was formed to devise a plan to find employment for the able bodied poor, the Highways Department having already turned down a scheme to employ them.
- **4 March**, at the regular monthly meeting a letter is read out from Robert Wood suggesting the Guardians employ a competent person to nurse the sick in the workhouse. Elizabeth Wilkinson was appointed for a period of six months at three shillings per week.
- **18 March**, a list of seventeen children transferred to Swinton Industrial School.
- **23 March**, Elizabeth Wilkinson suffered from severe epileptic fits and Robert Wood recommends that she is no longer suitable and an advertisement for a nurse should be inserted in Manchester newspapers for a salary of £10 per annum.
- **25 March**, it was resolved to find accommodation for fever wards.
- **April**, a nurse was finally appointed for the workhouse. Sophia Johnson was to receive £10 salary plus board and rations. By 25 May Sophia Johnson had died of typhus fever.
- **May**, typhus is rife and the medical officer wrote to the Guardians with recommendations which had been repeatedly ignored by the local police commissioners of Ashton and Stalybridge to remove nuisances and improve

sanitary conditions. A local Catholic priest had also caught the disease attending to one of his parishioners.

- **June**, letter sent to Somerset House asking for relief for the families of Guardians who had died because of the fever. The Guardians took over three houses on Crickets Lane to act as a fever hospital. This was swiftly followed by a huge petition from people who did not want it so close to **their** populated area. Orders were given for the removal of Irish paupers (122) to Dublin. The relieving officer Samuel McCulloch caught typhus fever. This was hurriedly followed by an anonymous letter wondering why the Guardians were reappointing the recently dismissed John Newton. A memorial petition from the Guardians was sent requesting that their families who were sick with the typhus be removed from further infection by Irish settlers. The appointment of Robert Turner as Hospital Superintendent and his wife Jane as nurse. An inspection on 24 June found that amongst the 241 inmates there were lots of admissions with venereal disease. Mr McCulloch has recovered from typhus and has resumed his duties.

Ashton Poor Law Union was now the seventh largest union in the country.

- **August**, there are now only two relieving officers, but the one at Denton and Haughton does not have a horse, so sometimes cannot get to visit urgent cases for two days. At about the same time it was resolved that a new workhouse be built as soon as possible.
- **22 October**, an inspection found the governor in bed due to over indulgence in liquor. This impropriety had extended over 2 or 3 days.
- **November**, stagnation of trade was making it difficult to collect the poor rate. Robert Turner, the superintendent at the hospital, is now guilty of misconduct – inebriation and neglect of duty. Mr and Mrs Charles Ellis appointed.
- **November**, inspections found that there was still no progress with workhouse school and 'labour test'. Inmates are huddled together in mixed classifications. Men are not clean and instructions are given to remedy this. As each week progresses, conditions become more and more cramped.
- **27 December**, one of the inmates selected as schoolmaster dies. Another family expelled from Binn's cellars in Stalybridge is received into the hospital with their clothes covered in lice. Old people in the workhouse complain their rations are short by 4 ounces of bread.
- **30 December**, 15 more children are removed to Swinton School, since both of their schoolmasters are now dead. Several old men are covered in lice, and the master of the workhouse has **so much paperwork** he cannot attend to his duties.

Looking forward to the New Year – smallpox, men are forced to bathe, the final appointment of a school mistress, the guardians refuse to give up a dead body and also try to put their 'labour test' into action.

Gay Oliver

Family History Society of Cheshire

Belgian Girl's Devotion

Travels from Belgium to meet her Brother - 1915

This article comes from newspaper cuttings from the **Mossley and Saddleworth Reporter** and/or **Herald** dated January 1915, held at the Mossley Heritage Centre.

'United at Mossley - A Hazardous and Lonely Journey

It is now nine weeks last Wednesday since the wounded Belgian soldiers arrived in Mossley and great public interest has been manifested in their welfare. Some of them have quite lost touch with their relatives and friends but not so Evariste Decorte.

At his home in Chatelineau he had left a father and mother, a sister and two brothers aged six and fifteen years respectively. Since the Germans occupied Belgium, his people have been living under very strict German supervision. Decorte wrote home several times without result but at length a letter posted by him on the 20 November reached his parents on 13 December.

The Sister Starts

On receipt of this letter it was decided that the sister, Maria, who is 20 years of age, should cross to England to look after her brother. She herself was eager to undertake the hazardous journey, and left her home on 29 December, spending the first night in Antwerp. When she continued her journey on the following day, she was turned back by German soldiers at a place called Putte. She did not turn back any further than she was compelled to and merely changed her direction, with some persuasion and the promise of seven francs (about 6s). She crossed the frontier into Holland in a cart. Then she took a train to Flushing and sailed by night to Folkestone.

Miss Decorte had a card bearing her brother's name and his address in Mossley. After she arrived in England, every assistance was given to her by the authorities. She was allowed to travel on the railway free of charge and someone sent a telegram to her brother that she would arrive by the 3.43 train at Mossley on Wednesday afternoon. Nurse Baines went to the station with Private Decorte to meet both the 3.43 and 5.15 trains but the expected visitor was not on either of them and they went back to the hospital. Miss Decorte arrived on the 5.40 train, however, and showed her card to Cllr Albert Buckley, who escorted her to the hospital at the Technical School (Mechanics Institute).

The Meeting

Decorte was in the dayroom at the time and, hearing his sister's voice, rushed out crying, *'There is Maria, I can hear her voice!'* The meeting of brother and sister was very affecting and they were left alone for a time. Arrangements were then made for Miss Decorte to sleep at the house of the Belgian refugees

(Annville Terrace) and she spent the days with her brother. Miss Decorte is a dressmaker and is eager to do everything in return for the hospitality which is being extended to her. Her experience shows that food is very scarce in at least some parts of Belgium. After the German occupation of Chatelineau, the inhabitants were allowed 250 grammes (about half a pound) of bread per day each. Sometimes even this was not forthcoming and the people have had to subsist for two or three days together on such food as rice and haricot beans.'

Here the report ends.



It brings the question to mind as to the presence of Belgian refugees in Mossley, although it is known that Mossley Council gave permission for the Mossley Ambulance Brigade to use the technical school as a military hospital.

The Mechanics Institute (technical school) had a most valued history. Built in 1840, it ultimately served the town as a multi-purpose centre, used for evening classes, health clinic sessions, County library (1936) and for many civic gatherings. Demolished in 1971, the site is now due to be developed for residential dwellings. To the passer-by an interesting name can be seen on the nearby building (Birkbeck Street). The founder of the Mechanics Institutes was George Birkbeck (1776-1841), who was Professor of Natural Philosophy at the Andersons Institute in Glasgow. Here he held lectures on the 'mechanical arts'. Was this street in Mossley named in commemoration and recognition of his enthusiasm and his dedication to further education for workers in mechanical engineering and related occupations? An interesting thought.

Marie Clues

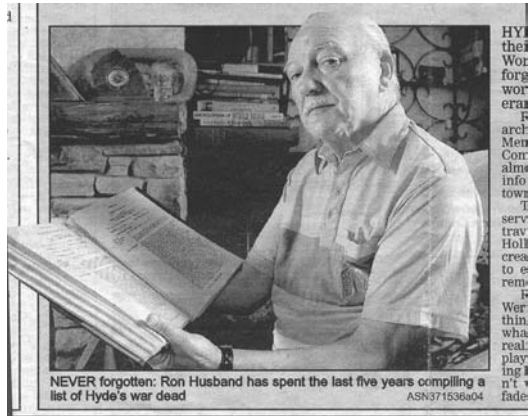
Mossley Industrial Heritage Centre/Civic Society

Ron's Mission to Honour War Dead

Hyde soldiers who lost their lives in the First World War will not be forgotten, thanks to the work of a dedicated veteran.

Ron Husband, an archivist for the Hyde War Memorial Trust, has spent almost ten years collecting information about the town's war dead.

Many people do not realise what the First World War was all about or that their ancestors played a part in it and Ron did not want these soldiers to fade into the background.



Ron served in the Royal Signals and travelled around Holland, Germany and Belgium to create a four-volume record to ensure the heroes are remembered. A valuable source of information was found in newspapers of 1914 to 1920 in the local history archives at Stalybridge (now at Ashton).

The records include names, regiments, ages, theatres of war, home residences, burial details, photographs of many of Hyde's fallen heroes and details of men who were injured and returned home to die. There are in the records a list of those killed in the Second World War, copied from the Memorial Book in Hyde Town Hall.

More than 700 men are commemorated in the books which are available for viewing at the Local Studies Library at Ashton, Hyde Library and the Werneth Low Visitor Centre. Information within the books is not complete and Ron would like to add further information to the records. If anyone can assist Ron with information or photographs, please contact M Minister, tel: 366 7067 or email e.minister@btopenworld.com.

Marjorie Minister
Hyde War Memorial Trust

Photograph reproduced with kind permission from the *Tameside Advertiser* newspaper and by Ron's son, Tony Husband.

A New Development in Audenshaw



'No to Kingswater!' and 'No to Waterside Park!' These were the battle cries against two devastating planning applications put forward by United Utilities, first in 1992 and later in 1995, for an area of King's Road and Debdale on the Waterworks estate in Audenshaw. There were some 30,000 signatures of objection to these applications. The planning applications were eventually turned down by a decision from Parliament.

Today, in 2009, United Utilities have succeeded in obtaining planning permission to develop two smaller sites on the northern end of King's Road. On the western side of King's Road, where the North West Water Authority depot was built in 1970, this depot has now been demolished and in its place some two hundred homes are to be built.

Originally on this site stood the Dean Head Cotton Mill, which appears on the **Land Tax Returns** in 1793. The mill's life appears to terminate under the ownership of a Richard Fish who became bankrupt in 1868, possibly as a result of the Cotton Famine in America around that period.

Beyond this mill was a brewery listed as early as 1845 and titled the Crown Brewery, Audenshaw, in the ownership of Thomas Hallworth and Thomas Saile, later appearing as the Audenshaw Brewery owned by Henry Alexander in 1853. The Hyde Ales Brewery is known to have occupied this brewery.

So, as far back as two hundred years this land has been in industrial use.

Beyond the depot site was the valley known by some as 'Fairfield Clough', which was gradually filled in over a period of eight years in the late 1980s to mid 1990s. This piece of land has now been made into an additional three hole golf course and is being joined onto the Fairfield Golf Course over the clough path.

On the eastern side of King's Road, plans are prepared to develop the strip of land which is bounded by King's on one side and the M60 Motorway on the other side. At the southern tip of this land, a new golf club house for Fairfield is to be built overlooking the present golf course and, alongside it towards the M60, a large residential hotel is proposed. On the site of the now demolished King's Road Farm, is proposed an elderly people's village of bungalows, together with an elderly people's home.

Moving further up the site, to the northern tip of the land, a number of small industrial units are planned, which terminate at the top end of the site. This plot of land was not *green belt*, as it had been reservoir area since the 1870s, and was isolated when the motorway cut through the number three reservoir. The battle was won to save Kingswater and the beautiful, green area beyond this new development remains for all to enjoy.

George Walker
Audenshaw Local History Society



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Buckton Castle – Recent Archaeological Investigations

Introduction

Buckton Castle is the oldest known structure surviving in Tameside and is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. It has long been known that a castle existed on the hills above Carrbrook in Tameside but it was thought to be of a type known as a ringwork, essentially a ditch with an earthen bank formed by the upcast of the ditch enclosing an area. The bank would probably have supported a timber palisade and there may have been buildings on the inside, also probably of timber. Archaeological excavations in 2007 and 2008 have radically altered this assumption.

The castle lies in the lordship of Longdendale which was held by the Earls of Chester during the twelfth century, and recent historical research may indicate that the castle could have been constructed during the periods of unrest centred around the Civil Wars of Stephen and Matilda.

Previous Archaeological Work

Previous investigations gave some indication of the date for the castle's existence, with radio carbon dates obtained from a peat layer lying below the medieval levelling. This date was AD 750-1080 and, along with documentary evidence from AD 1360, which states that there was a castle at Buckton but at that time it was of 'no value', i.e. out of commission, gives a time scale within which the castle existed.

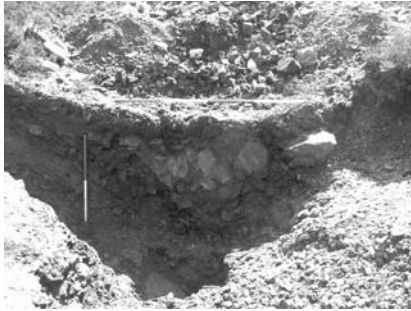
Remedial work, in 2002, to repair damage caused by modern treasure hunters, gave tantalising indications of masonry but it was not until 2007 that, with the financial assistance and encouragement of Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council, it was possible to investigate the castle further.

Recent investigations

Four weeks of excavation by volunteers, under the guidance and supervision of the University of Manchester Archaeological Unit, discovered a substantial rubble filled, ashlar faced wall, measuring 2.8 metres wide (over 9 feet) under the western bank. This wall was also uncovered at the north-western corner of the site, where it formed a right angle turning right towards what is thought to be the entrance to the castle.



The results of this excavation and the enthusiasm shown by the volunteer archaeologists and Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council led to a second season of work at the castle. Having found a wall on the western side, the excavations of 2008 were designed to test if this wall ran around the full circuit of the embankment. This indeed was the case, as a trench over the eastern side revealed another substantial wall identical in style to that on the western side.



A second trench was excavated across the ditch to obtain its profile. The excavation appeared to show that the ditch was cut into the bedrock and was filled with over two metres of material, one of the layers probably being a section of collapsed enclosure wall.

A final trench was opened across the entrance way along the northern embankment. This revealed the northern enclosure wall, with a series of masonry walls at right angles to it. These walls formed an entrance way and a room off the western side of the entrance, suggesting that there was a structure next to it - a possible gatehouse tower. Careful excavation of the floor of the entrance discovered a hard packed clay layer within which was found the only medieval artefacts so far discovered during any excavations. These were four sherds of buff Grittywares pottery dated to the late eleventh to thirteenth centuries, thus narrowing the date range of the castle and placing it within the time period suggested earlier, that of the mid twelfth century.



Conclusion

The recent excavations have created a great deal of excitement and interest locally and nationally and have shown that, what was thought to be a quickly erected, low status earthen defensive site, was in fact a substantial well-built masonry structure, with an enclosure wall and masonry buildings within. Historical and physical evidence have placed its construction within the twelfth to early thirteenth century but internal structures, lack of architectural features and the paucity of artefacts lead one to wonder if the castle was ever completed. Buckton is beginning to reveal its secrets and a further season of work is planned for 2009.

Brian Grimsditch
University of Manchester Archaeological Unit

Albion's Literary Society began in the mid nineteenth century and over the years its lectures and discussions were many and varied. A lecture given by Mr Edwin Kenyon of Marple was reported in the ***Albion Congregational Church Messenger***, price one penny, in April 1907. The experiences of flying in an air balloon led to speculation about the future:

'**AERIAL COGITATIONS** was the title of a lecture given on Monday evening March 4. The lecture, which was profusely illustrated with excellent lantern views, was the narrative of a balloon ascent made a few years ago by Mr Kenyon and friends under the guidance of the well-known aeronaut Captain Whelan. The ascent was made on the occasion of a gala at Dukinfield and the journey was from Dukinfield Hall by way of Stockport to Alderley, where the descent was made. Mr Kenyon gave an amusing description of the claim of the farmer, in whose field they landed, for damages, not only to the hedges and fencing, but through the cows being excited and upset by the balloon, as well as many interesting views of places passed on the voyage. In most racy style the lecture described the sensations and experiences of the journey, where the car appeared to be motionless, and all else rapidly approaching or receding.

The various attempts to improve and regulate the navigation of the air by aeroplanes and other scientific adaptations of the laws of suspension and oscillation were referred to, and the wide differences between the results claimed by their inventors and those actually attained at public trials satirically described. The possible uses of balloons and airships of some kind for purposes of warfare were graphically described, both by word and by picture. The experiences of Langley, Spencer, Maxim, Santos-Dumont and others were interestingly discussed and the conclusion arrived at was that aerial navigation was not yet ready for reliable commercial use.

Interspersed with the descriptive parts of the lecture were many humorous thoughts and reflections on the good time coming, when the conquest of the air should have been accomplished and when people will mount their airship as jauntily as they now enter their motor car. He gave most alluring descriptions (with illustrations evolved from the inner consciousness of a most lively imagination) of elopements by flying machine, of summer tours to the North Pole and of the time when ladies will think nothing of an afternoon's shopping expedition to Paris, returning to London in time to dress for dinner, or to the brisk business man who will slip over to New York to bring off a successful transaction and be back in time to breakfast at home the following morning.

At the conclusion of the lecture, Mr John Bennett, who had acted as chairman, voiced the feeling of the meeting as to the interesting, amusing, and instructive lecture they had heard and Mr C Brooke moved and Mr J Bell seconded a vote of thanks to Mr Kenyon, by whom it was suitably acknowledged.'

Mary Whitehead
Albion U R C Heritage Group

Local Studies Librarian of the Year

Maureen Burns, Assistant Local Studies Librarian in Tameside, has won the 2008 Dorothy McCulla Award for Local Studies Librarian of the Year. The Award is presented by the Local Studies Group of CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals).



Maureen has worked for the Tameside Local Studies and Archives service since 2001. Formerly she worked in Oldham Local Studies and Archives for thirteen years, studying for her librarianship degree whilst working full-time. She has been on the Local Studies Group NW sub-group committee since 2005, editing the NW newsletter and arranging the 2007 day school on Lancashire Dialect. She has recently taken over as Treasurer for the Group.

Maureen is a truly enthusiastic Local Studies librarian but was nominated for the McCulla Award for her work in three separate areas – community engagement, social inclusion and cross sectoral working. She represents Tameside Local Studies and Archives Centre on the Tameside Local History Forum and has worked with the Dukinfield Branch of the Cheshire Family History Society to set up very popular, regular family history advice sessions in the Local Studies and Archives Centre. She worked with the Mancunian Reunion Project to record the history of the Hattersley overspill estate, which has resulted in a series of oral history interviews, collection of photos, a book and an exhibition. This will be an important addition to the Local Studies and Archives collection, as the history of areas like this tend to be overlooked.

She also makes time for her interest in Peterloo and the history of the Saddleworth area.

Alice Lock

Local Studies Librarian – Tameside Local Studies and Archives Centre

A Tour of Sixsmiths, the Organ Builders, in a Former Methodist Chapel on Carrhill Road, Mossley

I was recently on a tour of George Sixsmith & Son, organ builders, in Mossley. All of us were fascinated to see how organs are made, from basic metal for the pipes right through to the latest electronic mechanisms for note control.

The work requires a very broad spectrum of skills. For instance Andrew Sixsmith rattled off the wood they use from all sorts of trees sourced from around the world, used not only for the organ structure, the wooden pipes and fine finishes, but also for other wooden items of church furniture.



Each organ is designed so that it will last for centuries and that requires regular servicing and so they have to build in internal passageways for a person to gain access to every part. If space is tight, they even design it so one part can move out to create a passageway.

The characteristic 'ears', that protrude on each side of the mouth on a metal organ pipe, are there to strengthen the pipe, which would otherwise be weakened by the hole, a typically English feature, as apparently some continental organ builders do not include these ears. What is more, each mouth has its own set of lips & teeth: the teeth are cut into the bottom lip. The top lip has to be adjusted to get the note just right.



The range of pipe sizes also amazed us, right from a very fine piccolo size to massive large pipes. They have had to introduce floor hatches to be able to get the bigger pipes up from the lower floors. Each organ is constructed in the main hall and there it is played to make sure it works perfectly. It is then dismantled

and reassembled at its final destination, which could be anywhere in the world.

Any young person interested in learning the organ building trade can go to www.sixsmithorganbuildersltd.co.uk through which you can contact George or Andrew Sixsmith.

Richard Darlington
Emmaus Mossley Centre

Old Chapel (Unitarian) Graveyard

When, in 1706, Sir Robert Dukinfield granted permission to a congregation of dissenters from the Church of England to build a chapel on the hill in Dukinfield, the congregation also had use of a considerable piece of land to use as a graveyard. The later chapel, opened in 1840, still stands on the same plot, which, with an extension, was conveyed to the chapel trustees in April 1822 by Francis Dukinfield Astley. The graveyard was extended again in 1925, when part of the Fishpond Yard was acquired from the Council.

The plot is now 5532 square metres and it contains not only the chapel and numerous graves but also the school hall, built in 1986 after the sale of the old Sunday/Day School at the corner of Pickford Lane and Town Lane.

Some of the graves in the yard date back to the beginning of the life of the congregation in the eighteenth century and include the raised tombs of the first two ministers of the congregation: the Revd Samuel Angier, born 1639 and died in 1713, and the Revd William Buckley, who died at the age of 63 in 1752. Other interesting graves from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries include one to a nine year old girl who was '*Killed by a motor car*', - the first car to travel through Stalybridge. Evidently the girl had run out in front of the car on Mottram Road. The story goes that her mother wanted the words '*murdered by a motor car*' put on the grave but had to be satisfied with the biblical quotation, '*It is not the will of your Father that one of these little ones should perish*'. Like many other graveyards up and down the country, one of the graves has the familiar quotation:

*Stop here your foot and cast an eye
As you are now so once was I.
As I am now so must you be.
Prepare yourself to follow me.*

Another grave of interest is that of John and Jane Leech of Gorse Hall, Stalybridge, the maternal grandparents of Beatrix Potter, the children's author. Her grandparents were staunch members of the congregation throughout their lives.

There are three larger memorials in the yard. One is the Harrop Memorial. George Edwin Harrop left money in his will to the trustees for the benefit of the Old Chapel Poor Fund, including the condition that his and his wife's grave



should be kept in repair. The second is the Garden of Remembrance. The Garden is there to enable families to scatter the ashes of their loved ones within the chapel grounds. This is particularly important now that the chapel has decided that there will be no new graves. The garden is dominated by an obelisk of rough hewn Derbyshire stone, placed in memory of the Revd Peter Short, a well loved minister, who died tragically young in 1975 after a ten year ministry. The names of those whose ashes are scattered in the Garden of Remembrance are recorded in a memorial book on permanent display in chapel. The third, and largest, memorial is that to Francis Dukinfield Astley. He was a larger than life character and an important member of the Masons in the north-west. The elaborately carved, stone memorial has Masonic symbols and the lodge number 562 on it and is surrounded by a wrought iron fence with a gate.

In the last few years the Dukinfield Group of the Family History Society of Cheshire has made a record of all the monumental inscriptions in the graveyard and in chapel, which they transferred on to a CD, which also includes information from interment registers and chapel history books.

Other features of note in the graveyard include:

- The absence of railings on the wall in front of the chapel. The wall and the original railings were erected in 1901, following a bequest by H H Potter, but the railings were removed when metal was needed to help with the war effort in the Second World War, and never replaced.
- On the outside of the chapel, carved above the vestry door, is the date of the building of the first chapel, 1707, and the names James and Elizabeth Heywood, who were benefactors at that time. Below that is the date, 1839, to mark the building of the current chapel.
- Along the north wall of the yard is a small gateway, not used now, which leads onto Park Lane. When Francis Dukinfield Astley conveyed the land to the congregation, he reserved the right to a private entrance convenient to his dwelling and to a family pew free of charge.
- Also on the north side of the chapel is the entrance to the crypt, in which, as well as the vaults of several notable local families, there is a well of clear water. Nobody knows how the water arrives there, at the top of the hill. But there it is.

Keeping the graveyard in a reasonable condition is an on-going task. Until recently the yard had become very overgrown. However, the necessity of dealing with an infestation of the dreaded Japanese Knot Weed has enabled the chapel, with professional help, and many hours of volunteer labour to clear the graveyard somewhat. The gravestones that are unsafe have been clearly marked, the path has been repaired and widened in places and, although there is still work to be done, the Knot Weed is abating and the graveyard is a pleasure to walk in once more.

Dawn Buckle
Friends of Old Chapel, Dukinfield

The Hollinwood Branch Canal

The Hollinwood Branch Canal was once a busy part of the transport infrastructure in the Tameside area. Horse-drawn narrowboats, loaded with coal from the collieries around Oldham, Bardsley and Park Bridge, made their way through Daisy Nook and Droylsden to Fairfield, where they began the descent of the eighteen locks into Manchester.

Now these travellers exist only as ghosts in the imagination of the walkers and anglers who enjoy what is left of the canal today.

Daisy Nook is a familiar location to many people living in Tameside and a popular area for gentle walking. Visitors will have noticed the canal structures that can be found within the country park, although some may not be aware of exactly what they are. In fact, this area on the boundary of Oldham and Tameside is a real honeypot of historical canal features. These include: the 80 feet high Waterhouses Aqueduct across the River Medlock; the remains of locks, including a lock staircase; Crime Lake, once a magnet for Sunday afternoon trippers; the cutting which was once 'Dark Tunnel'.



The Hollinwood Canal Society was formed to look after the interests of this interesting piece of our local history, with the desire to see the preservation of what is left of the canal now and to prevent both further deterioration of the structures of the canal and also further encroachment onto the line of the canal. The society aims in the longer term to see the restoration of the Hollinwood and Fairbottom Branch Canals within Daisy Nook Country Park, the re-

connection of Daisy Nook with the Ashton Canal and eventually the creation of a new canal link through to the Rochdale Canal.

These are very long-term ambitions, but the Society has already started making a difference by holding regular working party weekends, in which members are joined by volunteers from Waterway Recovery Group. Working at Daisy Nook Country Park, under the guidance of the park rangers, vegetation affecting the stonework along the side of the canal is being removed, helping to preserve the remaining structures. It could be very many years before any serious major restoration projects take place along the canal's route, but without the dedicated



work of volunteers at this stage, there could be nothing left to restore! Why not join us and play a part?



Meanwhile a short section of the canal is now back in water at Droylsden, where it leads to the newly-built marina basin, which will be the centrepiece of the prestigious Droylsden Wharf development. Building work has slowed because of the housing recession but eventually this will be a stunning development, which demonstrates, as in Stalybridge, what an asset a canal can be to an area.

The society has a website at www.hollinwoodcanal.co.uk, which includes photographs of the route and a selection of old photographs, including some showing the canal when it was in use.

Martin Clark
Hollinwood Canal Society

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about Tameside's History?

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John Eaton & Sons, Architects

Two stained glass windows in the North transept at Christ Church, Ashton-under-Lyne commemorate John Eaton (senior) and his family, and were given in 1914 by his two surviving daughters. Georgina and Margaret Marjorie are remembered in a third window on the North aisle - the Faith and Hope window. Outside the windows is a memorial cross marking the Eaton grave.

But who was John Eaton?

John Eaton (senior) was born in Brechin, Forfarshire, Scotland, in 1810. His father, James, was a stonemason. In 1839, with his family, which included his one year old son John (junior), he and his wife, Margaret travelled down to live in Ashton. Here John worked as a mason. By 1851, he was a builder and architect, employing 44 men. In 1871, he is described as a Master Mason. John (senior) died in 1876.



Young John Eaton (later Colonel Eaton) born in 1838, served his apprenticeship with his father. At the Manchester School of Art, he studied freehand and water colours. In 1858, he was awarded a bronze medal for his work. During his student days he would walk to Manchester and back. He was articled to the architects Moffatt Smith for experience, before joining his father's practice in Ashton.

After his father's death, John and his brother James continued the business. Unfortunately, James died and John continued alone. In 1882, he was admitted as a Fellow of the Royal Institute of Architects (FRIBA). Evidence of Eaton's work still surrounds us today and other buildings, now demolished, are easily called to mind. His work includes Hurst Cross, Thompson Cross, Ashton Library, Hartshead Pike, Christ Church schools, the lych gate at St Paul's Stalybridge, St Stephen's Flowery Field, St Luke's Dukinfield, Christ Church Denshaw, and the hospital for Ashton Union Workhouse. An extension and improvements to Ashton Market Hall by Colonel John Eaton date back to 1881, including the Fish Market. In 1930, his grandson Leslie was responsible for the extension with the lions on top and the large, stained glass fanlights.



The jewel in his crown was probably Dukinfield Town Hall, which was described at the opening in 1901 as, *'not equalled by the municipal buildings of any town for miles around'*. Over 100 years later, now restored, the building still looks outstanding.

For four generations, the Eaton family was connected with Christ Church, Ashton. John Eaton (senior) was listed as a subscriber to the fund to build the church in 1848. He was

church warden as was Colonel Eaton. The Eaton name was always prominent at church meetings and bazaars etc. Colonel Eaton's grandson, Leslie, was connected with Christ Church scouts for many years.

John Eaton (junior) was also connected with the Ashton Volunteer Movement which was established in 1859. He joined as a private, was gazetted captain in 1870 and by 1887 was Hon. Colonel. In 1888, the Ashton Volunteers became the 3rd Volunteer Battalion, Manchester Regiment. At the outbreak of war in South Africa in 1899, he was instrumental in raising 109 men and six officers for the front, including his eldest son. Colonel Eaton was awarded the Coronation honour of C B (Companion of the Bath) and was invested at Buckingham Palace in 1902. The award was no doubt due to his lengthy service in connection with the Volunteers and the town's response to the call for auxiliary soldiers. He also possessed the long service Volunteer decoration. When Colonel Eaton died in 1905, there was a military funeral at Christ Church, Ashton. The road, from Strathdene, his home on Taunton Road, to the lych gate on Oldham Road, was lined with mourners. He was buried with full military honours.

If anyone has further information about the Eatons, I would be pleased to hear from you.

Sheila Blanchard - Christ Church, Ashton

Photograph of Col. Eaton reproduced by kind permission of the Manchester Regiment.

Reply to Letter 'Can You Help?' sent by Pat Greenwood HAT Issue 3 2008

Dear Pat

I read with interest your letter in the history magazine. I also played in the garden of the house you write about. Some of my memories are slightly different from yours. The entrance on Lees Street was only a small gate: the house did not have a drive, as the family did not have a car. The main entrance was looking down Turner Lane. It had originally, according to my grandmother, railings and an iron gate, which were removed during the First World War. The property did not go much further back than the rear of the house, as, on the land behind, there were garages, where we used to play with access from the bottom of Elizabeth Street. We lived on Alexandra Road then: my bedroom window overlooked Lees Street to the bottom of Elizabeth Street.

The property belonged to two spinster sisters: Carrie and Janie Williamson, the daughters of the founder of the ticket works. They always wore black and so, consequently, we children thought they were witches. The older boys would climb the trees in the garden and run up to the house to try to look in the windows. I never remember anyone climbing on the chimneys while the sisters still lived there. I was always in trouble, when I went into the garden, as I had bright red hair and Miss Williamson knew my mother and always reported me!

As for the cottages, one of them, in the late '40s, was occupied by Mr and Mrs Proctor; their son Tony went to Elgin Street School with me.

I never knew the name of the house but I suppose its address would be Lord Street. It's a pity you did not put your maiden name to the article, as we may have played together in that garden.

Lynda Adamson, née Knight

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Park Bridge Visitors' Centre
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Tameside Local Studies & Archives Centre

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www.tameside.gov.uk/leisure/new/lh23.htm

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Gee Cross & District WI

Gee Cross and District WI, who hold their monthly meetings in Hyde Unitarian Chapel Sunday School, joined the chapel's 300th Anniversary Foundation celebrations in July 2008 in two ways.

First they invited Alan Rose, Chairman of Tameside Local History Forum, to address their June meeting on the subject of the development of Non-Conformity in the district, a subject on which he is an acknowledged authority, and its application to Hyde Chapel in particular. This talk was greatly enjoyed by the members, many of whom said their understanding of the chapel's role in the Gee Cross community, past and present, was greatly enhanced.

Second was the decision to choose a prominent picture of Hyde Chapel as the focal point of Booth's Well, which is used by the WI for their annual well dressing celebrations in July. The picture of Hyde Chapel, carefully produced in natural flowers, wood and stone, as a decoration for the historic well, was generally believed to be the finest to date – a tribute to the subject, its designer, and to those who worked on its construction, together with the importance of this occasion for Gee Cross.



The 2009 Gee Cross Community Well Dressings will take place on **Sunday 12 July from 2.00pm**. Six wells will be decorated by schools, young people's organisations and the WI, and all wells will be blessed by local clergy of several denominations. Do come and join us.

Gee Cross Village Map

Regrettably the WI was asked to take down the Village Map, drawn, printed and erected as part of the Millennium celebrations and featured in past copies of this magazine, as the owners of the now private house, following the demise of yet another post office, felt it to be an inappropriate site. Gee Cross and District WI are looking for a new location which will display the map in such a way that both residents and visitors can appreciate.

Eileen Bowden
Gee Cross & District WI

Lymefield and Broad Mills Heritage Site - where nature and heritage sit side by side



Broad Mills, originally Broadbottom Mills, were the largest of several textile works, which were established in and around Broadbottom from the late eighteenth century onwards. This industry was largely responsible for transforming a rural landscape into the extensive village of today. The attraction of the area to early textile entrepreneurs lay in the natural resource of the River Etherow, which, when harnessed through the construction of weirs and mill leats, provided a power source for the mill machinery.

Broadbottom Mills were established by William and George Sidebottom in the early 1800s and by 1824 included three large cotton spinning mills. In the 1830s water power was supplemented by steam and the company added cotton weaving to its activities. In 1850, John Sidebottom further expanded the business with the construction of a large weaving shed and warehouse. John's gambling habits later led him into massive debts and he continued to run the mills only, with financial help from his mother. The 1860s, however, brought the cotton famine and the closure of Broadbottom Mills. The community of the village, heavily dependent upon the textile industry, was halved, as people sought work elsewhere.

In the 1870s, Broadbottom Mills reopened under the new ownership of the Hirst family. The early twentieth century saw a change of name to Broad Mills but, in the late 1930s, against a background of widespread decline in the industry, textile production at Broad Mills came to an end. In 1949 fire damage resulted in the demolition of the greater part of the mill complex.

In the 1980s, Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council purchased the Broad Mills site and so began a programme of conservation and archaeological investigation,

which has revealed many of the key elements of this locally important industrial site.

With the closing and demolition of the mills, industry has given way to nature. Where there were once weaving sheds, wildflowers bloom and attract a variety of insects, such as butterflies and grasshoppers. Trees have taken over the sites of the mills and the woodlands are home to birds, such as woodpeckers, great tits and chaffinches. The sweeping curve of the River Etherow forms the boundary of the site and kingfishers can sometimes be seen flying above. The water, which once turned the waterwheels, is now home to ducks, moorhens, damselflies, and the bats from around the site often hunt over the water on summer evenings.

Tameside Countryside Service is responsible for managing the Lymefield and Broad Mills Heritage Site and has a continuing programme of heritage, nature conservation and access improvements. This spring will see the installation of new, outdoor interpretation boards and a new *History Trail* will help visitors to understand and appreciate the fascinating, archaeological remains on the site. There will be a costumed, historical walk for the public at the end of April and sculptures to look out for over the coming months.

Much of the area is wheelchair and buggy friendly and the area is ideal for children's adventurous play. There are picnic areas and open spaces, paths through the woods to explore, nature trails to discover and pond and river banks, where you can watch the wildlife.

For more information on this and other countryside areas contact:
Lesley Bardsley - Tameside Countryside Service Tel: 0161 330 9613
www.tameside.gov.uk/countryside

History Alive Tameside by post

Copies of *HAT* are available by post. Please complete the address form (or a photocopy) and enclose a £1.50 cheque or postal order - payable to 'Tameside Local History Forum' - to cover post, packing and administration.

Name:.....

Address:.....

.....

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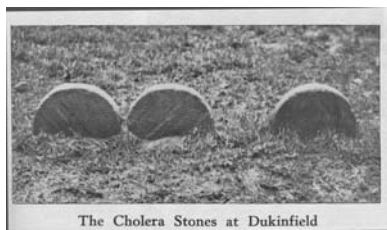
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218 Newmarket Road, ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE OL7 9JW.

The Dukinfield Cholera Stones

For more than 100 years a plot of land in Dukinfield bore testament to a disease, which swept westward from Asia and found a welcoming home in the slums, which sprang up around Britain's industrial centres.

Cholera Morbus was first encountered among British troops in India in 1817. Within six years, it had spread to Russia, by 1831 it was in Germany, and the first case was diagnosed in the East End of London early in 1832.

We cannot be certain that it was this new type of cholera which claimed many lives in Dukinfield in 1833, but, given the timescale, it would seem likely that it was the victims of the morbus strain - spread like traditional cholera through dirty drinking water and unsanitary conditions - who were buried in graves which stood between King Street and Dukinfield Cricket Club.



Reporter Pictorial 1932

Many people remember the low headstones which could be seen, when it was possible to get into the cricket ground by turning off King Street by the side of the Angel pub. They stood in a field, which was used for cattle grazing by a farmer named Reece. An adjacent field accommodated his two shire horses, Captain and Major.

Reece lived at Victoria Farm, Armadale Road - a building which still stands close to Blocksage's playing fields.

In the ***Reporter Pictorial 1932***, an annual pre-war compilation of the newspaper group's best photographs, we are told that so many people died from cholera in 1833 that the bodies had to be interred in unconsecrated ground and that in 1932 there were more than a dozen headstones.

It adds that, in the year of the epidemic, there was a resolution of thanks to the trustees of the late Francis Dukinfield Astley for their grant of land, in such a liberal manner, to build a hearse house, lock-up and cholera ground. More than £100 of public money was spent on meeting the cost of the outbreak.

And what has happened to the stones? No one seems to know. The area is now covered by AWB Motors, Clarendon Fields School, and a new flats development. As it is illegal to build on land where remains are interred, it would seem that the likeliest outcome is that the bodies were exhumed and reburied elsewhere and that the stones, which probably went unrecognised, were removed with the rest of the rubble.

Mike Pavasovic

The Flying Dentist

I will begin this article with a question. What is the connection between missionary work, musical composition, acting, and Formula One racing? Quite a disparate list, I know, but the answer is Dukinfield. Those familiar with Dukinfield will probably know the connection between the first three but what about the fourth? A link between Dukinfield and Formula One racing?

In the wake of the World Championship success of Lewis Hamilton, I thought it only right to pay homage to our own local champion; not the world champion I grant you but he came pretty close. This champion was Tony Brooks; he was known by his fans as 'The Flying Dentist'. I shall digress a little and explain.

During the early years of the National Health Service, schools were visited by a school dentist. The dentist would inspect each child's teeth and then inform them of any treatment deemed necessary. When I was about twelve years old, the school dentist informed me that I needed two small fillings. An appointment was duly made with the dentist my father had attended, a Mr C F S Brooks, whose surgery was at Park Lane, Dukinfield, very close to Old Chapel. I was nervous when I sat, for the first time, in the dentist's chair. My memory of Mr Brooks was of a large, kindly man who treated me gently and although, in those days, a local anaesthetic was not applied, I felt no discomfort. It is due totally to Mr Brooks that the dentist's chair holds no fears for me. After the treatment, my father told me that Mr Brooks was the father of racing driver Tony Brooks.



Charles Anthony Stanford Brooks was born on 25 February 1932, in Dukinfield. He was privately educated at public school and was studying dentistry at Manchester University with the intention of following his father in that profession.

He started racing in 1952 and was an accomplished and successful club racer for three years. He was invited by the Connaught team to drive in his first Formula One race in the Syracuse Grand Prix. He stated that it was because there was no-one else and they were scraping the bottom of the barrel. He accepted the challenge although, he said, he had not even sat in a Formula One car before. His mind was mostly on passing his final dentistry exams and he studied on the flight to and from Sicily. In spite of having no experience in Formula One and with very little practice, he won the race, beating far more experienced drivers.

In 1957 he joined the Vanwall team as a team mate with Stirling Moss and Stuart Lewis Evans, sharing victory with Stirling Moss in the British Grand Prix.

1958 saw Tony Brooks win at three classic circuits, Spa Francorchamps, the Nurburgring and Monza. That year saw Mike Hawthorne take the world championship driving for Ferrari; it also meant the end of the Vanwall team when Tony Vandevell, dispirited by the death of the third driver of the team that year, disbanded it.

Tony Brooks joined the Ferrari team and his first victory was at Rheims in the 1959

French Grand Prix. He went on to win the German Grand Prix and went off to Sebring in the USA for the last round of the World Championship with a chance of winning, as had Stirling Moss and Jack Brabham. Having seen many drivers lose their lives and having suffered several injuries himself, his philosophy on racing had changed. In two of his accidents he had been aware that there was something wrong with the car and eventually he made a firm mental decision never to try to compensate for a car's mechanical deficiencies. During the race he was hit in the rear wheel by his team mate, Taffy von Trips, and he tells what followed:

After von Trips had run into me at Sebring, my natural inclination was to press on. Believe me, that would have been the easiest thing to do, but I made myself come in to have the car checked over. I lost half a lap doing that, and still finished third. As it turned out, Moss retired that day, and Brabham ran out of fuel near the end, so probably my coming in cost me the World Championship.

He was never to win another Grand Prix and in 1961 he retired. He had raced with and against some of the legends of the time: Mike Hawthorne, Juan Fangio, Stirling Moss and Jack Brabham to name just a few.

Tony Brooks may never have become the world champion but then neither did Stirling Moss. He was a modest and gentlemanly man and perhaps not 'pushy' enough. Formula One is a very dangerous sport, more so in the era of Tony Brooks. The death toll was very high and many drivers, including Tony Brooks, sustained severe injuries. The courage shown and the dedication to their sport were admirable.

When asked if he was running a Grand Prix team and could have any two drivers from history in his cars, Stirling Moss replied, 'Jimmy Clark and Tony Brooks'. He went on to say:

I suppose that my choice of Tony would be a surprise to some people but to my mind he is the greatest 'unknown' racing driver there has ever been - I say 'unknown', because he's such a modest man that he never became a celebrity, as such. But as a driver, boy, he was top drawer.

NB: To those not familiar with Dukinfield the answer to the first three subjects is as follows:

Missionary work: Mary Smith, a Dukinfield lass, married Robert Moffat who became an African missionary and their daughter was to marry David Livingstone.

Musician/composer: Ronnie Hazlehurst was born in Dukinfield

Actress: Kathy Staff of Last of the Summer Wine fame was another Dukinfield lass.

Reference: Most of the information on Tony Brooks' racing career was gleaned from four different web sites:

8W forix.com Fomula1.com 4mula1.ro/history Ddavid.con/formula1/story

Valerie Bowker

Photograph courtesy of Becky Simm, Personal Assistant to Stuart Pringle of the British Racing Drivers' Club

The Greater Manchester Churches Preservation Society

The society was launched on 28 October 2006 at the Fairfield Moravian Settlement in Droylsden under the auspices of the National Churches Trust (then known as the Historic Churches Preservation Trust). The society has the support of the leaders of most of the main denominations in Greater Manchester and is under the patronage of the Lord-Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, Warren Smith, Esq. JP.

Its aims are both educational and practical: educational in raising awareness of the rich variety of church buildings in Greater Manchester and practical in the longer term by raising funds to allow the society to make grants for repairs to those buildings.

The society invites individuals, churches and corporate bodies to become members, on payment of an annual subscription. In return the society will issue a regular newsletter and invite members to a series of evening or day event, which will explore and explain some of our rich stock of buildings of all denominations. Events will be held around Greater Manchester in the buildings themselves.

As a member of the Tameside Local History Forum, the society has taken over **the Tameside Stained Glass Project**, the aim of which is to compile a photographic record of all the stained glass in the buildings of Tameside, both secular and religious. Alongside the photographic record, it is hoped that details of the artist and maker of the glass can be recorded together with any other relevant information.

A start has been made but a great deal remains to be done and the society needs the help of others who can photograph and record the glass in their local churches and other buildings. In view of the number of churches that are closing, it is vital that a record is made before vandals and others destroy the glass in redundant buildings.



Please contact GMCPs if you can help.

Photo:

Naomi & Ruth Window in the west end of the north aisle St Michael & All Angels Mottram-in-Longdendale

Rev'd Brian Hartley
The Greater Manchester Churches Preservation Society

Photograph © GMCPs

Currier Lane: Can You Help?

Aims of Clara – to promote the interests of all residents in the area by maintaining the quality of life and the environment with particular reference to the heritage aspect of the Currier Lane area.

The active members of our group are still researching and collecting information relevant to the aims of our organisation as stated above. With a central theme that Currier Lane has been the highway to Ashton-under-Lyne from the Pennines for many hundreds of years, one would think that folklore would be teeming and much more available but this apparently is not so!

At some stage, however, we hope to produce a booklet with a more clearly defined purpose to our subject, mainly the 'History of Currier Lane'. We hope to link certain personalities (where known), who have had national recognition and, at some stage in their lives, have had associations with the houses on Currier Lane.



Where facts have been established over the years, we have had to accept them as being authentic. Hearsay and anecdotal stories will add to the romantic colour of any forthcoming content of our booklet but it is unfortunate that an area, which must have played an integral role in the history of Ashton-under-Lyne, is so devoid of established fact.



If any readers have stories tucked away in their memory, which could be of subsequent interest to the future generations, perhaps they would be good enough to pass them on to us. Postal, telephone and e-mail contacts are given below.

In the meantime the Currier Lane Heritage Walk, which is a biennial event, will take place this year on Saturday afternoon, 12 September and Sunday afternoon, 13

September, as part of the Heritage Open Days in Tameside.

Contacts: Jack Patterson, 29 Sunnyside Grove, Ashton-under-Lyne, OL6 6TN
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Johnny Barlow
Currier Lane Area Residents' Association (CLARA)

Railways and the Growth of Stalybridge and Ashton-under-Lyne

By 1820, the Manchester textile industry was well established with as many as 66 mills in the city spinning and weaving cotton. This growth was due partly to the development of machinery, steam power, canal transport and improvements in building technologies. Further expansion was limited only through the constraints imposed upon further canalside building and the rising cost of suitable land. From 1830, as railways began to flourish, it was possible to expand the centres of textile production to other towns near Manchester, with relatively cheap land, and railways began to supply raw materials and to move finished goods. Ashton-under-Lyne and Stalybridge are examples of transport-led changes in urban form and fabric.

Ashton's population at the 1801 census was 7,855 in a Georgian and Regency grid-patterned town. The Huddersfield canal opened in 1797 and passed through the southern part of Ashton, almost parallel with the River Tame, where early mills had been built to take advantage of the water power from the fast-flowing river. The canal made it possible to ship coal from nearby collieries and steam power began to be used extensively. By 1799 there were a recorded sixteen working textile sites in Ashton, and Stalybridge, with a population in 1801 of 1,055 was also a textile centre, although much smaller, with just ten sites. The first use of steam power locally was in Stalybridge around 1790-93 (Old Soot Poke Mill) and from the 1800s most new mills were built using steam as the sole source of power. Canalside building enabled the factories to use the transport facilities as well as a supply of water for the condensers of the early 'atmospheric' engines. Thus, apart from the Turnpike Trust roads, the canal reigned supreme until the railway construction era post 1825.

Ashton-under-Lyne more than doubled in size from about 1820, under plans by the Stamford Estates, the largest landowner in the area. Baines' **Directory & Gazetteer** of 1824 shows building development to the north of a proposed gasworks site: closely packed dwelling houses to accommodate the increasing population as textile factories increased. The expansion did not go according to plan but was compromised by the building of the railway from Manchester to Stalybridge in the 1840s, effectively separating this proposed new area from the medieval core of the town. By 1821, the census showed a population in Ashton of 13,049, an increase of 66%. In Stalybridge, this was 1,609 and 43% respectively, indicating the much greater importance of Ashton at that time.

The new transport technology of railways affected the built environment of towns – with railway stations, rights of way, goods sheds, level crossings, bridges – and the emerging industrial economy. To some extent railways facilitated processes that were already under way. Most of the railway system in this area was built during the first boom in construction, in the 1840s. Ashton had quite a complicated railway network and four different companies were involved in its construction. Railways reached the outskirts of Ashton with the opening of Guide Bridge station in 1842 by the Sheffield, Ashton-under-Lyne & Manchester Railway (SA&MR). An Act of Parliament gave permission to construct a branch line to Ashton and Stalybridge in 1845 with a station at Park Parade in Ashton. This company changed its name in 1846 to the Manchester, Sheffield &

With the arrival of the railways, changes in land use in their vicinity occurred. Warehouses were built and sidings were constructed to allow for the marshalling of goods wagons into trains and to avoid *demurrage* (a charge levied by the railway companies on the owners of railway trucks when stationed on their tracks). Passenger needs were met by four stations in Ashton (Park Parade, Charlestown, Oldham Road & Dukinfield) and two in Stalybridge, as well as Guide Bridge. The Stalybridge stations were alongside each other, the L&Y being a terminus and the L&NWR a 'through' station. The 1845 contract for Stalybridge station was at a cost of £2,079, and that for Ashton £1,484.

The L&NWR line from Stalybridge crosses the town along a stone-built viaduct from the station and enters a tunnel under Cocker Hill. The goods yard of the MS&LR was sited to the east of Park Parade with facilities connecting road, canal and railway.

Locomotive development in the 1840s and 1850s advanced at a fast pace. Mr Isaac Watt Boulton established an engineering works in Ashton close to the OA&GBR Railway & L&NWR branch to which it was connected by his siding. There he adapted unwanted locomotives for use of contractors and smaller railway companies. He also constructed stationary engines and special locomotives, amongst them the '*Ashtonian*' for Park Bridge Ironworks. As the railway companies expanded they built their own locomotives and Boulton's sidings declined and were taken over in the 1880s by the National Gas & Oil Engine Company.

The Summers family, making clog irons and nails in Dukinfield, expanded rapidly and necessitated a move to a new site in Stalybridge. There the Globe Ironworks was established with a connecting line to the L&NWR. Further technological development, from production of wrought iron by puddling to the use of the Bessemer process in the 1860s to produce steel, resulted in further expansion and eventually the company moved to Shotton on the Dee estuary to become one of the largest steel companies in the UK.

Samuel Lees had established an industrial site at Park Bridge, to the north of Ashton, at the latter end of the eighteenth century, producing wrought iron. A branch of the Ashton canal at Fairbottom connected to the site in 1797. Eventually the company, now Hannah Lees & Sons, began producing fluted rollers for the textile industry and this expansion culminated in the building of the OA&GBR across the Medlock valley with a station, branch line and sidings to the works. The spectacular, brick viaduct was opened in 1861. The company's own railway transported materials around the site, connected to the main line, and used the specially constructed locomotive, the '*Ashtonian*', built by Boulton for the purpose, having to traverse a tunnel only six feet in height.

The Railway Age was a time of urban growth, a dramatic transfer of population from country to town. Initially, small towns had no power to control the development of railways and many companies rode roughshod through areas in which they were interested. In conclusion, it must be said that the railway was the biggest contributory factor to change in urban form and fabric.

Roy Needham - Ashton-under-Lyne Civic Society.

Tameside Museums and Galleries

Tameside Museums and Galleries Service has six sites across the borough. Portland Basin Museum, Setantii Museum, Museum of the Manchester Regiment and Central Art Gallery are all in Ashton-under-Lyne. Astley Cheetham Art Gallery is in Stalybridge, while the Rutherford Gallery is in Hyde.

The Rutherford Gallery opened in 2008 inside Hyde Library and is dedicated to the work of Harry Rutherford, who was a contemporary of L S Lowry. The gallery features paintings and sketches from the borough's collection, including *Mill Girls* and *Northern Saturday*, which both depict local scenes. Other works have been loaned in, to show the full range of Rutherford's talents. Visitors can also see Rutherford's own easel and paints in a mock up of his studio.



Other new developments include the opening of Portland Basin Museum's newly refurbished Industrial History Gallery. The gallery features items of machinery that were either made or used locally, such as a National Gas engine and the original valve from the first Longdendale reservoir. Old favourites, like the displays on hatting and gloving, have been kept, while new displays about cotton, donkey stoning, dairy farming and Jones' sewing machines have been added. A new interactive canal boat links the museum building to its roots as a canal warehouse.



Each site has a programme of changing exhibitions and family friendly events and activities. Admission is free.

Please visit www.tameside.gov.uk/museumsgalleries or telephone 0161 343 2878 for more information.

Rachel Cornes – Social History Curator, Portland Basin Museum

The History of the Stalybridge and District Sunday School Billiards, Snooker and Whist League

If you have no link with the above league, you may not know that we are looking to celebrate its centenary in the 2010/11 season and we are looking to do so 'in style'.



During research, it came to light that the league was formed for friendly indoor sport during the winter months between men's societies linked to religious and secular associations. The Sunday School not only pioneered education in the nineteenth-century to working class children but was part of the social scene

Sunday schools were well structured, and the vast majority of children and their families were involved up to the 1960s as they formed the social life of the community. The children were organised into classes and their teachers were supervised by a body of superintendents. This was fine for the younger children, but what about those in their teenage years? They normally joined as junior members of the Young Men's Bible Class or Ladies' Circle, listening to visiting speakers each Sunday expounding ideas from a Biblical text. From the Young Men's Class sprang a secular arm: the Young Men's Society, Institute, Guild or Club. They were designed to promote fellowship through sports such as football for autumn and cricket for summer. The indoor sports were usually table-tennis and billiards. Snooker was not chosen as it was thought to have an 'upper edge' to it, and was unsuitable for respectable Sunday school institutes. Likewise, whist was chosen over less suitable card games.

Sunday school football and cricket leagues evolved as did local Sunday School billiards and whist Leagues in Stalybridge and District, with each league being politically and administratively independent. Many such leagues formed, and some merged, as did Mossley with Stalybridge in the mid 1900s, as leagues struggled to keep members and teams from moving to better established and stronger ones.

The Stalybridge Snooker League kept the majority of its members until the start of World War Two, when teams were suspended for the duration, then lost, before gradually picking up again. Such leagues included the Stalybridge Orme League, Stalybridge and District League, Ashton Social League, and the Ashton and District League. Sadly, most have now folded including the Hyde and Salford leagues – although research has discovered that the Burnley and District Sunday School Snooker and Billiards League, formed in 1923, is still going strong. Our league covered most of Tameside, and initially the first members were from Stalybridge, Mossley, Ashton and Dukinfield. Little has changed although now we have only seven teams. The original members were St John's Dukinfield, St Peter's, Hob Hill Congregational, the Social Centre, New St George's, Holy Trinity, Christ Church, SHMD, and Booth Street [all Stalybridge]. Ashton Parish Church was the first league champion. Currently, only one of the original members remains in the league, albeit under a new name. Over the years, Dukinfield has been well represented with leagues from the Baptists, Moravians, Old Chapel and, more recently, Lime Street Club. Hyde has good representation: St Thomas', Hyde PSA, and currently the Sportsman on Mottram Road, although they are now based at the Staley Vegas Snooker Club in Stalybridge.

The league played five billiards games a night with the highest aggregate being the winner. But, in the 1970s, things changed. Snooker became more popular, and the format changed to two single billiards, two single snooker matches and a final double game of snooker. Snooker was therefore added to the title, and that format remains to this day. Originally, games were played in church or Sunday School rooms but, since the 1950s, more comfortable venues, with bars, have been used such as Tameside District Police HQ in Ashton, community centres, public houses and social clubs [such as the Beaconsfield in Ashton]. The matches used to stop at 9:30pm with tea and biscuits offered by the home team. The most famous tea-maker was Jjack at Hob Hill. Sometimes a short prayer was offered.

The league starts in October with the George Fletcher Memorial Trophy final between the league champions and the winners of the Berry Cup, and ends in May the following year with a presentation night. Matches are played in a friendly, competitive manner, making Thursday evenings very enjoyable. Since the league began, we estimate that we have between 40 and 50 clubs in the league which highlights its strength, as it has survived by long term memberships. Our current members are St George's Stalybridge A & B, Mossley A & B, Christ Church, the Sportsman SV, and Park Bridge Institute. We have also had some very good snooker and billiards players in our ranks: one of them has just celebrated 50 years as a member of the league.

The research has revealed some very interesting details, but we are always on the look-out for more information: data such as photographs, press cuttings or journal entries would all be added to our web-site. This was started three years ago to promote our achievements – it can be found under **Stalybridge Snooker League**.

Ian Hopton

Webmaster and Press Secretary

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Sir John Bayley and Bayley Hall Hyde

Sir John Bayley was born on 21 December 1852 in Newton, now part of Hyde. On leaving school, he first worked for George Brownson, a well known tailor, whose line could be traced back to the days when one of his family had been a retainer of Mary, Queen of Scots.

As he grew older, Bayley took an interest in education and entered the profession, becoming a teacher at Flowery Field School. It was during this time that he determined to have a school of his own. In time he became founder and builder of Wrekin College, Salop, and, from 1880 until 1920 was principal of that establishment.

Not content with this, he became president of the Private School Teachers' Association and was, for a time, a member of the Council of College Preceptors. He was organiser and a member of the school board at Wellington, Salop, and a governor of Wrekin and Canford public schools. This was what you may call his scholastic life but, apart from this, he was also a county councillor and alderman, serving and advising on a number of committees.



Tameside Image Archive t07887

He never, however, forgot his humble roots and so he built Bayley Hall in Hyde Park in December 1939. The contractor was the prolific Thomas Warrington of Hyde and the architect was Percy Howard of Stalybridge. The site chosen was where Newton Lodge still stood, an impressive, stone building, with a large portico whose pillars now form part of a memorial to those who fell in the two World Wars.

Bayley placed a covenant on the building and he also suggested that a sum of £1,000 be invested, so that the interest would pay for the upkeep and maintenance of the building. The local council agreed that they would follow this course. In reality this has not happened.

The double doors at the main entrance were among the worst affected areas and Tameside Council, who have indeed spent much money on the restoration of Bayley Hall, did eventually replace these doors. The replacements, however,

although constructed of hardwood, are not comparable in quality with the old ones. Times change and sadly today's architects seem not as keen as the aforementioned Percy Howard.

Let me therefore give you a rundown of how the doors were originally constructed: Ronald Clark and I spent over two hours turning planks of oaks to find matching grain and figuration. Ronald next cut and planed them and our shop foreman, Alfred Titterington, marked them out. I myself then cut out the mortice holes. Finally, Fred Gee and I assembled the doors, Percy Howard insisting that I sandpaper them and finish and scrape them with glass, so that no scratch marks from the sandpaper remained.

Fred Gee and I then hung the doors, which took us all morning. In the afternoon, Percy Howard arrived and, taking a penny from his pocket, proceeded to run it down the rebate, along and under the bottom of the doors, to check clearance. I am sure he would have checked the top if he could have reached! This gives an indication of the standards we were expected to work to.

Percy was a hard man to please!

Harry Lever

Three Hyde Coincidences.

Earlier this year we went for a few days holiday to Northumberland: an area new to us. We stayed on a working farm not far from Morpeth.

The first coincidence happened as we came down the stairs from our room. On the wall were a series of original Harry Rutherford sketches, signed but untitled, all of characters probably known to Harry. The farmer's wife, who owned them, had bought them some time ago from Harry Rutherford's niece.

The second coincidence happened at dinner that night. There were only four of us at the table (the other couple came from Twickenham) but it transpired that Michael had been a lecturer at Manchester University at the same time as John Grundy and had frequently visited him and Kathleen at home on Joel Lane. Both Michael and Joy, his wife, remembered Werneth Low and Hyde.

The third coincidence was perhaps the most bizarre. William, a traveller who lives in York, stays at the farm regularly on his visits to customers in the north-east. We asked him where his firm was based; he said it was unlikely we would know but it was in Hyde! At which all four of us laughed. When we explained the reason for the hilarity, he too was surprised as he stays there only once or twice a year. His firm is located on the Broadway industrial estate.

So much for getting away for a few days!

John and Rosemary Butterworth Living Memories of Hyde

To Riot or To Rot?*

Stalybridge has had a chequered history and was a place of passion and persuasion until its absorption into Tameside. Chartism, Bread Riots, the Murphy Riots, a mention in the Disraeli novel *Coningsby*, all placed this 'little' town in the centre of the successes and problems of the cotton trade. It gave rise to poets whose passion was the people in the centre of a storm, which brewed as a result of the cotton famine of the 1860s.

Stalybridge Police Force was formed after Incorporation in 1857. At the beginning of 1863, there were thirteen men serving: this was raised to 25 by June. Six cutlasses had been purchased for them early in the year but by April, 24 more had been bought (with belts) at a cost of £26.15s.0d. The display of 30 cutlasses in Stalybridge Civic Hall** should not be viewed as a sanitised artefact but as the means of keeping order in a town riven by dispute and confrontation.

The American Civil War led to unemployment and destitution for many of the country's textile workers with mills being closed or working part-time, even though some mill owners were keeping stores of cotton back until times improved. But this only added to the general decline in trade. By November 1863, 60% of the labour force was idle. The Rev Joseph Rayner Stephens denounced the cutting down of relief in March 1863 and the decisions of the Relief Committee to issue tickets instead of money, and to retain one day's relief *to help in accounting*. He used a pair of ragged trousers donated for the poor to emphasise his point. The workers made a resolution to stop attending school and, the following day, refused the new tickets demonstrating outside Bates' Mill, smashing windows and some machinery. Windows in the police station were also broken and relief stores taken. The police charged and took prisoners but they were driven off by the crowd. Enter two companies of hussars, and the reading of the Riot Act. Eighty men were arrested on 20 March. Twenty nine men were committed for trial, and on the following day most of the shops remained closed. Despite the Riot Act, the workers did assemble outside the police station and the soldiers leading the prisoners were attacked with stones. There ensued a running battle, the foot soldiers fixed bayonets, and the cavalry moved in. On Monday 23 March, the refusal to take the tickets was backed 1,700 to 80. The workers demanded bread from the bakers but were denied by the military. An account in the **Daily News** of 24 March denies any involvement by the men of Hyde and strongly suggested that the trouble was caused by a small group, who were, by and large, unsupported by the masses, who only went to observe. The 'mob of idle lads' is described as full of 'notorious blackguards' as opposed to the 'noble patience and self control' exhibited by the majority against 'this wretched Irish riot' supported by only one 'English journal' whose 'highly coloured version of the alleged grievances' was encouraged by a 'reckless chartist agitator'. Collier William Cheetham appeared on remand with a scalp wound caused by one of the cutlasses, after he had struck a policeman with a stone. He was committed for trial at Chester. Contingents of police had been brought in from Lancashire and Cheshire. 360 men were arrested that year: 146 Englishmen, 212 Irishmen, one Welshman, and one Scot.

Similar riots occurred in Ashton, Dukinfield, Hyde, and Stockport and Oldham where a large number of Special Constables were sworn in. Revd Thomas Floyd, of Holy Trinity, Stalybridge appealed to the Mansion House, London, which intended to send £500 to Stalybridge for pay in cash – not tickets, but the Manchester Committee refused to give in, even when the Stalybridge Committee tried to resign. Ultimately there was a compromise: the relief was reduced to two shillings (10 pence) per head - half in tickets, half in cash.

There were articles in the *Illustrated London News* on 28 March 1863, 'The Disturbances in Stalybridge, More Details on the Riots, and The Disturbances in the Cotton Districts'.

The Public Works' Act of 1863 was planned to fund urban improvements which would provide paid work for the unemployed. Too little too late.

William Murphy, born in Limerick in 1834 and baptised a Roman Catholic, had been sent by his father to a Protestant school in County Mayo. Thence he travelled to Liverpool, then to London where he was recruited by the Protestant Electoral Movement. During his travels, he became militant and was renowned for his lectures which incited violence: lectures to which no women, or men under 21, were allowed. Intolerance finally took hold in 1868. In April, men at an anti-Catholic lecture in Ashton were ambushed by Irishmen, who had put out the street lights and placed ropes across the roads. The Protestants attacked a Roman Catholic Chapel in Ashton-under-Lyne only to find it guarded by hundreds of stone throwing protectors and a priest with a rifle. It took the authorities two days to restore order. In May, 200 Irishmen attacked the Orangemen, who counter attacked, damaging a Catholic Chapel and leaving twenty cottages without furniture. Yet again, the cutlasses were used. The men taken prisoner and committed for trial were mostly from Ashton, their ages ranging from 17-58.

As a long time resident, I had been aware of the cutlasses displayed on the wall of Stalybridge Library from my childhood and was incensed when, along with other memorabilia of the town, they disappeared, almost overnight, and certainly without fanfare, to Ashton: Portland Basin Museum, in actual fact, although that was unknown to many then. It was with great pleasure that I heard that Stalybridge District Assembly planned to bring them 'home' and I was proud to be invited to their reception on 11 July 2008, when they were unveiled in their new display cabinet – even though it would have been preferable to see them unrestrained high on the wall. But in these days of blame and, conscious of the insurance culture and of those to whom they would not be part of history but modern weapons, they are better behind glass. They are an ever present reminder of the days when brutality was commonplace – on both sides of the argument, when relatives were on opposite sides, both willing to use force to 'persuade' the opposition. So, not objects of history, but a lesson of today: 30 very sharp, compelling reasons why debate and discussion should always be our main tools of argument.

Councillors K Welsh and
C Meredith at the unveiling.



* From ***Spinning the Web*** Michael Rose

** For many years, they were on show in Stalybridge Library following their display there in 1956. Later, they were taken to Portland Basin, but returned home on 11 July 2008.

Kathryn Booth

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Colin Pilkington: **To play the man: The Story of Lady Derby and the Siege of Lathom House, 1643 – 1645** (Carnegie Publishing 1991)

I bought this book in the hope of learning more about Colonel Robert Duckenfield's role in the Civil War in the north-west, but he earns only one minor mention. On reflection the reasons are straightforward – this is a Lancashire story, not a Cheshire one, and of the First Civil War, whereas Duckenfield was more prominent in the later phases. Nevertheless, the story is fascinating and local names mentioned include Colonel Richard Holland of Heaton Hall (and Denton Hall) and Ralph Assheton of Middleton.

The book traces the ownership of the large estates of Lathom and Knowsley from before the Conquest to the Lathom family up to the fourteenth century and the Stanleys subsequently. By the end of the fifteenth century, Lathom House, near Burscough, was so imposing as to inspire Henry VII to instruct that Richmond Palace, then being re-built, be modelled on it. By the early seventeenth century, Lathom was at its peak, along with Knowsley, the symbol of and the reality of the power in Lancashire of the Stanley family, now Earls of Derby. There were people on the Parliamentary side obsessed with wiping out that history, obsessed with reducing the house (eighteen towers, three courtyards, two great halls), '*as if it had never been*'. They eventually succeeded, to the extent that the exact site of the house is still disputed (or was when this book was written), with at least three rival theories.

In May 1643, after the fall of Warrington had signalled the triumph of the Parliamentary forces in Lancashire, the surrender and sequestration of Lathom House was demanded. The house had but a small garrison and was of no military significance. The Earl of Derby, whose principal residence was Lathom House, was in the Isle of Man. The Countess of Derby was in charge. She was Lady Charlotte de Tremouille, from a powerful French Huguenot family, related to half the royal houses of Europe. A poor defenceless woman, as portrayed by Victorian novelists? Mr Pilkington's judgement is far more inspiring: '*As devious as Elizabeth I, as inflexible as Mrs Thatcher, and with the physical presence of an Amazon....proving a far more dominant personality than her ineffectual husband.*'

And so she refused to surrender the house and garrison and a thirty month siege began. There is a painting in Knowsley Hall of Charlotte tearing up the letter demanding her surrender (and another of the Earl gazing wistfully across the sea to the Isle of Man). She made a stirring speech promising to ignite her goods and the house and that she, her children and her soldiers would, rather than surrender, seal their religion and their loyalty in the same flame. As a newspaper reported, '*The Countess of Derby...it seems stole the Earl's breeches, when he fled...to the Isle of Man, and hath in his absence play'd the man...*'

One year into the siege, in May 1644, news of the approach of Prince Rupert and Lord Derby (back from the Isle of Man) was enough to cause the small besieging force to retreat, to be routed in the Massacre of Bolton. In June, both Lord and Lady Derby were packed off to the Isle of Man by the Prince, whilst he marched to defeat at Marston Moor.

Then began a second siege of Lathom House. Once again the only Royalist enclave in Lancashire, it held out until December 1645, despite Lady Derby being no longer present. However, more troops were quartered there and they commanded a larger area of ground – but it was still not a strategic threat (it never had been). Only in June 1645 did the outer estate properties fall. Lathom stood alone once more. They were praying for rescue by the King himself, but his defeat at Chester in September put an end to that and the King advised the garrison to seek terms. They were allowed to return to their homes. Plunder followed of the very fabric – timber and lead worth money, stone and brick cast into the moat.

In 1651, our Colonel Duckenfield took the Isle of Man from Lord and Lady Derby: his Lordship was beheaded on a scaffold partially built of timbers from Lathom House. The block, a chair, is in Knowsley Hall. The execution was outside the Man and Scythe pub in Bolton – go and call in!

After the Restoration, the new Lord Derby lived in part of the house, ruin though it was. When the direct line died out, the Stanleys gave up Lathom and sold the estate. The new owners built a Palladian mansion in 1734, which in turn was largely demolished in 1920.

By the way, Knowsley Hall, still occupied by the Earl of Derby, is a crucial part of the history of the County Palatine. It is not open to the general public but I went on a pre-arranged trip with the local branch of the National Trust. Anyone who thinks the politics of the Civil War are long forgotten will be shaken to hear the passionate pro-Royalist presentation by the guide. I'm sure a visit by the Tameside Local History Forum would prove stimulating.

PS You may recall that last year I wrote about St Helen and her search for the True Cross, as depicted in a story by Evelyn Waugh, *Helena*, and mentioned the remains of the Magi in Cologne Cathedral. Wishing to move my life on to more mundane matters I decided to abandon historical pursuits and put in a new bath instead. I read in the catalogue of a German manufacturer, *'Enamel is extremely resistant to ageing: the shrine of the 'Three Kings' in Cologne Cathedral [thirteenth century], which is adorned with decorative enamel provides impressive proof of this'*. They know how to sell, those Germans, but my bath will not be that grand...

Ex-Blue Badge Tourist Guide - Roy Parkes

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Boyhood Memories: Football 1936-1939

Having no grass areas to play football, our pitches were the quiet streets around the corner from Powell's chip shop in Kemp Street, Hyde, known to locals as Clay Hole. Coats were placed on the roadway as goal posts. Further along Victoria Street to Holford Street, known as Bennett's End (a rough, unsurfaced, unpaved, uneven roadway leading to Cook's garage and coal merchant's yard), there was a five-barred gate leading into Mr Stafford's field and this gate was used as the goal. Coats were again placed on the ground but this time lower down the road from the other goal area.

Along Holford Street to the right was a high wall and fence, a no-go area as this land, once an engineering works, was then owned by the ICI (Rexine) which had a large works situated at the top end of Newton with boundaries along Talbot Road, Victoria Street and Cartwright Street. This private land was being used for storage purposes. If the football was kicked over the wall, lots were drawn as to who would venture over to retrieve it. Other players kept a sharp lookout for either of our two local bobbies: Constables Simpson and Jackson, who always seemed to appear from nowhere if you were up to mischief.

I do remember once, having drawn the short straw going over the wall, on returning, just before reaching the ground, a large hand clutching the seat of my trousers and a voice, *'Aren't you young Ehrenfried? I'll be in to see your father'*. I suffered with diarrhoea for a few days as a result of this but Constable Jackson never called to see father: the threat to do so was punishment enough.

Another incident to do with football was when playing in Kemp Street with my new leather football. As a neighbour was passing, the ball came to him, he kicked it, there was a sound of breaking glass and everyone disappeared- there was only me. Mr Saxon appeared: his window in the fanlight over his front door was broken. I was blamed and then marched home to the shop, protesting all the while that I hadn't kicked the ball. Father reimbursed Mr Saxon for the cost of a new window. He was not happy and I got a good telling off. I cannot remember the fanlight being replaced with glass, just cardboard. Many years later the culprit admitted he had been responsible but the cardboard remained, until the house was demolished many years later.

Hyde Butchers 1930-1939

In the 1930s butchers shops in Hyde were thriving: there were approximately fifty-five in the town, serving a population of thirty-four thousand; it was estimated that Hyde had more butchers' shops per head than any other town in England.

These businesses provided an important and vital service to the local communities with daily deliveries to a great number of homes. Every morning, the weather being no obstacle, the hardy butchers' boys (usually the sons and apprentices of the butchers) could be seen pedalling the heavy carrier cycles around the town and nearby areas with baskets full of orders and, when delivering, would collect a further order for delivery later in the week. There were few domestic fridges before the war. Most people went home for a cooked meal

at midday, there were no canteens at work and only a few children were allocated school meals with dinner tickets.

Mondays were known as 'Resurrection Days': housewives would use up the leftovers from the weekend joint to concoct a meal of stew or hash. The butcher's boy was responsible for collecting the money for his deliveries. When he returned to the shop he checked to see if it was the correct amount. Odd tips of one or two pence from customers were gratefully accepted, as the weekly wage for most boys aged fourteen was ten shillings a week (fifty pence in today's money). With over fifty shops there were a lot of butchers' boys; therefore as Monday was a half closing day, they met at Hyde Baths in Union Street for a couple of boisterous hours of swimming and general fun.

Not all master butchers bought their meat from Manchester Abattoir; many had their own slaughter houses behind their shops. They bought the livestock from local farmers or cattle auctions. A common sight on a Sunday morning would be cattle or sheep being walked by their drover on to the main roads through the town to various slaughter houses or to small fields to graze until required.

Alan Ehrenfried Living Memories of Hyde Society.

Fresh Hope, Fresh Air: Starting a New Life in Hattersley by Rachel Gee, Sharon Power and Dick Richardson. 96pp. 2008 £5.95 inc. DVD

A Manchester overspill estate at Hattersley was first proposed in 1952, but it was 1963 before the first families moved in. Inspired by an earlier project for Gamesley, near Glossop, this book records the memories of residents who moved to Hattersley in the 1960s and early 1970s and describes how community spirit was gradually created in an area where shops and social amenities were slow to arrive. At first there was suspicion and hostility from some of the locals in Mottram and Hyde, which, perhaps, has never quite disappeared. Here

we have vivid glimpses of how people from the back streets of industrial Manchester made a new life for themselves in the very different environment of rural Longdendale. There is a wealth of illustrations ranging from the Manchester terraces, the blizzard of 1969, the tower blocks now largely demolished and ending with signs of the welcome regeneration currently taking place. A lively and well produced publication.



Alan Rose

Scuttlers

Below is a brief extract from the book **Manchester Boys. Sketches of Manchester Lads at Work and Play** by Charles E B Russell, published in 1905.

No review of the various types of Manchester lads would be complete without an account of the 'ike'. Perhaps some of my readers have never made his acquaintance. The 'scuttler' they have heard of, as a vague danger of our less reputable streets, but of the 'ike' they know nothing. Well the 'ike' is the successor of the 'scuttler', who has now almost disappeared from our midst. Let us recall him for a moment. You knew him by his dress. A loose white scarf would adorn his throat; his hair was well plastered down upon his forehead; he wore a peaked cap rather over one eye; his trousers were of fustian, and cut – like a sailor's – with 'bell bottoms'. This fashion of the trousers was the most distinctive feature of his attire and make-up.

The 'scuttler' of years gone by was the victim of his own high, animal spirit. He must find scope for his powers, and he had no legitimate field in which to exercise himself. When the day's work was done his energy was not exhausted; how was he to amuse himself? This is a question which touches many people, and the answer is often hard to find. The 'scuttler' answered it in a natural way. He must have society and he must have something to do. He loved romance. So he banded with his fellows and made a gang. Here, at any rate, was company. But what to do? War was his amusement and his advocacy, and he must make war upon his neighbours of the next street. His gang must show its prowess by thrashing all other gangs. The warfare was not always glorious, though they resented attacks made on individuals of their own gang. 'Scuttlers' were not unwilling to combine against a single representative of a rival force, or to put him through a strange ordeal; it used to be no uncommon thing for a poor fellow who had been cornered, and yet had fought successfully in one round, to be driven to fight, one after another fresh warrior from the opposed army, until he was utterly worn down. The gravest troubles usually arose from attentions paid to the sweetheart of a member of one gang, by a member of another, - a casus belli of first importance, and most dangerous consequences. Gangs, twenty or thirty strong, armed sometimes with heavily buckled belts and mineral-water bottles, would from time to time engage in set combat, in which serious injuries were often inflicted. The captaincy of a gang was usually granted to a lad who had most distinguished himself in these affrays, and had proved his worth by beating in open fight most of his own chums.

All this was very bad, and it has been put down, not without trouble, by vigorous action on the part of the police.

Scuttlers feature in a new book **The Gangs of Manchester. The story of the Scuttlers Britain's First Youth Cult** by Andrew Davies, which is available for consultation at the Local Studies and Archives Centre, along with Russell's

Manchester's Boys. Similar gangs existed in London (hooligans), Birmingham (Peaky Blinders) and other big cities, all with their uniforms and tendency to violence. Another new book describes the modern day equivalents, the Perry Boys (Ian Hough *The Perry Boys. The Casual Gangs of Manchester and Salford*, 2007).

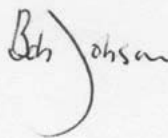
There is a wealth of material for the study of youth and crime. The exploits of Scuttlers were reported in the **Gorton Reporter**, which can also be consulted in the Local Studies and Archives Centre. While youth gangs do not feature prominently in the histories of the towns of Tameside, William Chadwick's **Reminiscences of a Chief Constable** describes the footpads and garroters of a previous era. His stories are echoed by Thomas Smethurst's **Reminiscences of a Bolton and Stalybridge Policeman 1888 – 1922** (1983), which makes the link between neglected children and crime. Efforts to provide alternatives for local boys included the founding of Hyde Lads' Club by J W A Danby, the Chief Constable, and its records are also available for consultation along with many local nineteenth-century chief constables' reports.

The youth culture of Tameside's towns is awaiting its historian!

Alice Lock

Local Studies Librarian - Tameside Local Studies and Archives Centre

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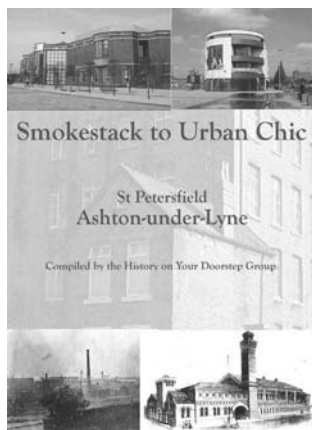
Smokestack to Urban Chic. St Petersfield, Ashton-under-Lyne.

Compiled by the *History on Your Doorstep* Group. 106pp. A4. 2008 £10.

Available from Tameside Local Studies & Archives Centre, Portland Basin Museum and Tameside Local History Forum via www.tamesidehistoryforum.org.uk.

This well designed book is a very useful addition to the printed histories of Ashton. It came about as a result of the successful regeneration bid for the West End that has led to very dramatic change in that part of Ashton. Luckily the *History on Your Doorstep* group, headed by Alan Rose and Jill Cronin, has recorded the area before the change.

The group has worked hard to uncover this past, using documents in the Local Studies and Archives Centre, oral evidence and material held in private hands. The book provides a detailed description of the buildings in the area, including prominent buildings such as the old Ashton Baths and the Henry Square Methodist Chapel. The final chapter brings the story up to date with an account by Eric Wright, with the help of John P Boydell, of the new architecture resulting from the regeneration, the 'urban chic' of the title.



Ashton's links with the cotton industry are well represented with good accounts of the local mills and of the impressive offices of the Ashton Weavers' Association, on the corner of Old Street and Cavendish Street until demolition in 2007. This union covered a wide geographical area and was important because many of its members were women: its records can be consulted at the Local Studies and Archives Centre.

The book also records some of the well remembered businesses of the area from Williamson's Ticket Works, through Scholfield's Brewery, Roebuck's and RoDO Brushes to the Model Shop. All the pubs are recorded, including the music scene at the Witchwood, and other leisure venues such as one of the earliest Indian restaurants, the Ajanta. Many of the photographs taken for this book are an important record of the lost townscape of the west end of the town.

A Victorian newspaper account of the Murphy Riots of 1868 is reprinted in the book and gives us a vivid description of the conflict between Protestant mobs, stirred up by the anti-Catholic William Murphy, and the Irish Catholic inhabitants of the town. Both St Mary's and St Ann's churches were badly damaged during these riots.

This book is an interesting and important record of part of Ashton which has been changed forever.

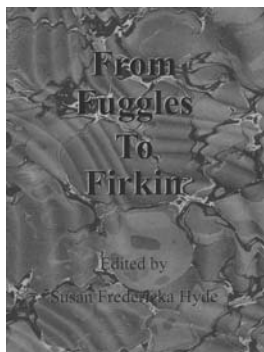
Alice Lock

Local Studies Librarian - Tameside Local Studies and Archives Centre

From Fuggles to Firkin: the Pocket Diaries of a Manchester Man 1890-1899, Charles Frederick Hyde of Ardwick, Head Brewer

Edited by Susan Fredericka Hyde. 206pp.2008

Available from www.authorsonline.co.uk or authors online Ltd. 19 The Cinques, Gamlingay, Sandy, Bedfordshire. SG19 3NU



Charles Frederick Hyde, a renowned local brewer, left a series of pocket diaries covering the majority of 1890s, which have been transcribed and published by his granddaughter. Personal diaries generally have limited interest to anyone beyond the descendants or anyone interested in local experiences, weather, prices etc. Despite the abrupt note-like entries you do get a sense of the man especially his 'concern for his health which borders on hypochondria...' These diaries also contain a great deal of technical information, which will be a boon to anyone researching the brewing industry. Susan Fredericka Hyde has undertaken an enormous amount of

research on her grandfather. As well as a biography of Charles Frederick Hyde to set the context, there is also an extensive biographical cast list of people and companies, an annotated gazetteer, photographs, letters, maps and ephemera. This supporting material unlocks the text of the diaries and it becomes more accessible to the reader. Although the diaries themselves are still a hard read, they have served to initiate a valuable piece of research.

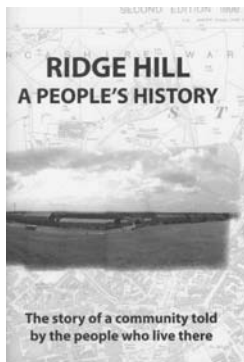
Maureen Burns

Asst. Local Studies Librarian, Tameside Local Studies and Archives Centre

Ridge Hill: a People's History

iv, 5 +[v] pp 2008 £3 plus £3 for DVD

ed. by Aidan Jolly and Sophie McKreith



Sam Hill sang the praises of Ridge Hill in the nineteenth century, when it was a rural retreat from the smoke and industry of Stalybridge town - and notorious for illegal cockfighting. In the twentieth century it was the scene of successive waves of council house development and this attractive booklet brings together the experiences and recollections of some of the present population, many of whom moved here as a result of Stalybridge slum clearance. It is a pity the booklet does not give a clear account of the phases of the development and the takeover by New Charter but it is well illustrated and full of human interest.

Alan Rose

Broadbottom 1795-1975: A History

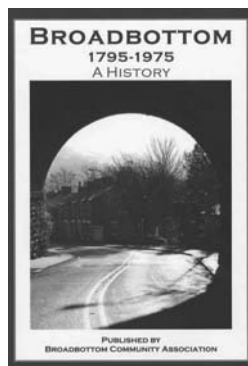
Mollie Sayer for Broadbottom Community Association. 92pp. A4. 2008. £10
Available through Tameside Local Studies and Archives Centre.

'A Living Heritage: a Living Community'. These words on the title page sum up well the feel of the book. Mollie has lovingly compiled a book of photographs, plans and maps with plenty of supporting text. The quality of the photos and the attractiveness of the publication itself, with its colourful cover, add to the value of this book.

It all stemmed from an exhibition in 2007 and, after research, interviews with local people and the generous contributions of local historians, Mollie has told the story of the emerging community in 1795 from the birth of the cotton mills through the boom years, the time of famine, recovery and their demise by the 1930s. Included are the dyeworks and the printworks. Included also are the important local families plus a valuable chapter on their servants. Leisure, housing, shopping and churchgoing are all there, as well as the war years.

This book is a welcome introduction to the close community of Broadbottom and fills a gap in the books about Tameside.

Jill Cronin

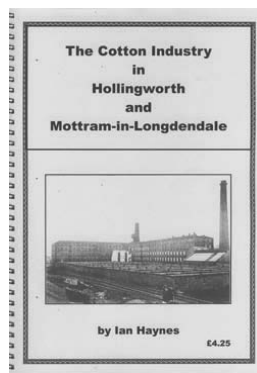


The Cotton Industry in Hollingworth & Mottram-in-Longdendale

Ian Haynes. 36pp. A4. 2008. £4.25. Available from Tameside Local Studies & Archives Centre or from Ian Haynes 0161 308 3092 or i-haynes@hotmail.com

In 1987 Ian compiled his first book about the cotton mills of Tameside. Over the next 20 years he went on to produce, at regular intervals, more books about the history of cotton manufacture in Tameside. With this publication about Hollingworth and Mottram, Ian has recorded all the cotton mills in every town of Tameside.

This book, as usual, is well produced and well researched with plenty of illustrations and plans, plus detailed text. First he outlines the history of cotton manufacture in these two areas and then goes on to produce a directory of all the mills and finishing works. Each mill has its own potted history with illustrations. He includes detailed notes and references and an index of the mills and finishing works, plus one of the individual owners and firms.

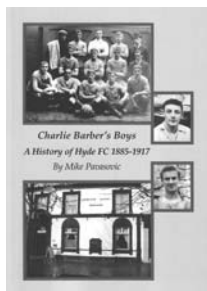


Ian has completed a fine and valuable record of one of Tameside's most important former industries.

Jill Cronin

Charlie Barber's Boys: A History of Hyde FC 1885-1917

Mike Pavasovic. 108pp. A5. 2008. £5 Available from the club at Ewens Fields on Grange Road, Hyde Library and Tameside Local Studies & Archives Centre.



In this the first of what is promised to be a four volume work, Mike Pavasovic tells the story of Hyde United from its earliest beginnings to a time near the end of the Great War. Starting off as Hyde FC in July 1885, when a preliminary meeting of 40 to 50 men had taken place at the White Lion in Hyde, he describes an advertisement in the **North Cheshire Herald** for a general meeting to take place on 4 August at 8 o'clock, again at the White Lion, to make rules and form a committee.

Much of the early history of the club has been lost or simply not been seen as important enough to record in detail: obviously the record 26-0 drubbing by Preston North End in an F A Cup match still remains a fact which will not be forgotten. The first Hyde club was to fail around ten years after it first began, due to overspending on players' wages in an attempt to achieve success. The club was refounded in 1896, Charles Barber being a driving force in its rebirth - hence the use of the name Charlie Barbers' boys in the title. This team was to remain in existence until 1917 then again to be reborn, this time as Hyde United.

Mike has made a huge effort to collect as much of the early history as possible and presents it in a readable and enjoyable way. There are photographs of the early teams, league tables and match results from the earliest days. The book is littered with many interesting facts which any Tigers' fan will thoroughly enjoy reading.

Paul Cronin

Stalybridge in the North West of England vol 3: Religious History of the Town

Judith D Heap. 39pp. A5. 2008. £2.50. Available from Tameside Local Studies & Archives Centre

No part of Tameside has had a more complex and tempestuous religious history than Stalybridge. Leaving aside the anti-Catholic riots of 1868, when Caroline Street ran with blood, there were divisions among the Baptists, mayhem among the Wesleyans when Rayner Stephens resigned as a minister, a prolonged battle between Old and New St George's and splits at St John's. So it is brave of Judith Heap to try to untangle the web in less than 40 pages. She has given us a very useful and comprehensive account of each place of worship, past and present, with a small illustration of nearly all of them.

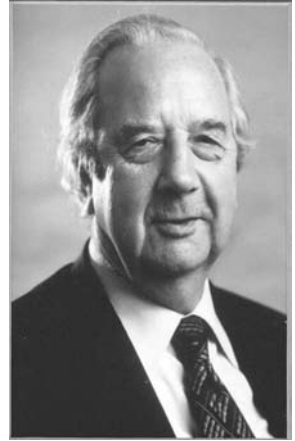
Inevitably there are some slips--e.g. Grenville Street Chapel, Millbrook, was built in 1885, not 1872, and there is some confusion about Chapel Street Sunday School. More could be said about St Matthew's, Lord Street, the result of yet another Anglican row, and no mention is made of the second rebuilding of Old St George's in the 1880s. Nevertheless, this is a good starting point for anyone looking at Stalybridge's churches and it is remarkably complete---how many are aware that there was a Presbyterian chapel in Blandford Street?

Alan Rose

Sir George Kenyon 1912-2008

THE death of Sir George Kenyon has severed Tameside's last link with the Victorian era, when Liberal industrialists dominated the towns that now make up the borough. Hyde had the Ashtons, Stalybridge had the Cheethams, and in Dukinfield the Kenyons were deeply involved in the cultural, educational and religious life of the community, while playing a leading role on the old town council.

Although Sir George was not a Victorian, his birth, in 1912, came only 22 years after the death of William Kenyon, who had founded the family firm, William Kenyon and Sons, in 1866. And he would often speak of the torture he suffered at the Moravian School at Fulneck, near Leeds, where he was held against an open fire by older boys, as Tom Brown was in Thomas Hughes's classic book of 1857.



photograph courtesy of the family

Sir George's grandfather, George Henry Kenyon, was mayor of Dukinfield from 1904-06, and from 1912 until his death in 1917, when his wife, Elizabeth Hannah, was asked to see out his term of office. In 1919 she was one of Dukinfield's first three freemen and remains the only woman to have received the honour. In 1998, Sir George matched her achievement by being made a freeman of Tameside.

Arnold Kenyon, Sir George's uncle, was also a Dukinfield councillor and the driving force behind the construction of the Jubilee Hall in the 1930s.

Considering he was born into such a prominent and prosperous family, it would seem fair to assume that Sir George's path in life was an easy one but his success was in no way the result of privilege. He displayed an ability to learn from his earliest days and in 1932 gained Manchester University's top first-class honours degree of the year in engineering. As his elder son, Christopher, said at the post-funeral appreciation of Sir George's life:

He was naturally gifted with a robust physique and exceptional mental powers; he had an excellent memory for facts and figures and for people and places; his temperament was outgoing; he was enthusiastic; he was entertaining; he was fluent; he was decisive; he could see the wood for trees; he could summarise; he was full of common sense; he was approachable, seldom pompous; he had presence; you knew he was there, you heard him; in short, he was cut out to be a leader.

Sir George's achievements were many and merited a sizeable listing in **Who's Who**. As well as running William Kenyon and Sons, he was director of concerns such as the Royal Bank of Scotland, William's and Glyn's Bank, Tootal and the Manchester Ship Canal Company. He also maintained a long-standing association with Manchester University, which he served in several capacities including, chairman of the council and he was rewarded with an honorary doctorate in law in 1980.

Sir George's public service began during the Second World War when he joined the Hyde Youth Employment Committee. He also served as a magistrate, being chairman of the South Tameside Bench, and was also High Sheriff of Cheshire in 1973-74 and a deputy lieutenant of both Cheshire and Greater Manchester.

Beyond this he was a member of the Manchester Regional Hospital Board in 1962-68 and the Cheshire Association of Boys' Clubs Committee in 1969-71. His love of archaeology was reflected in his work as a treasurer and vice-president of the Civic Trust for the North-West and his presidency of the Arkwright Society, which is engaged in the conservation of industrial monuments.

At a Tameside level, Sir George was involved in Tameside Local History Forum, was honorary president of Theatre Royal Onward in Hyde, president of Willow Wood Hospice, president of Hyde Lads' Club, president of Ashton and District Probus Club and an honorary Rotarian. In 1968 it was through his efforts that Newton Hall, a fourteenth-century cruck-framed building off Dukinfield Road, Hyde, was saved from destruction and restored.

One of Sir George's proudest memories was accompanying the Queen on her visit to Dukinfield and Hyde in 1968, when she came to see the effects of 'Operation Springclean', which was devised to spruce up much of the grime left by a century of industry. However, he already had experience in dealing with royal visitors, the Duke of Edinburgh having been to Kenyon's Chapel Field works in Dukinfield in 1964.

In many ways, Sir George Kenyon was a man ahead of his time. He was a proud Hydonian but also referred to himself as a Tamesider, because he was fully aware that his business was based in Dukinfield while his family had originated from Hurst.

But his greatest achievement has to be that he guided a company, established in mid-Victorian times, through the depression of the 1930s and the Second World War, and into the final decade of the twentieth century. The fact, that William Kenyon and Sons remains an independent entity in this global era and is still a family firm after 142 years, is his greatest memorial.

*Sir George Kenyon was born in Hyde on 10 July 1912, and died in Alderley Edge on 2 June 2008. His wife, Christine (nee Brentnall), whom he married in 1938, died in 1996. He leaves sons Christopher and John, and a daughter, Elisabeth. He was knighted in the Birthday Honours of 1976.

Mike Pavasovic

My Friend Sir George Kenyon

Last year saw the passing of Sir George Kenyon, a man who had continued, throughout his long life, the Kenyon family's past liberal and tolerant attitudes.

I have known George for many years, and seen him treat friends, great and small, in the same kindly and generous manner.

He was so proud of the restoration of Newton Hall, and of his family and the members of Kenyon's staff who had a part in it. My husband and myself were lucky to be invited to the lunch which George gave at the end of the restoration. Since

then, he took great delight in allowing interested groups to see and enjoy the hall and its history.

When he knew the time had come for him to retire from Kenyon's, he handed over the reins to his family. This was a big move for him, as it must be to all who have been in charge of a thriving concern for many years. But, as was his nature, he filled in his time with other voluntary duties. He accepted the Chair of the Medlock and Tame Valley Conservation Society, which he enjoyed, and became friends with the Countryside Wardens at Park Bridge and the rest of the members. George always came to me for coffee and scones, whenever he was in the area, and usually went home with an apple pie.

After he reluctantly left the family home at Hyde and went to live in Alderley Edge, he and I started a weekly newsletter, me to tell him all the local news and discussions we had at the 'History on Your Doorstep' class, which I attend at Ashton Central Library, especially the Manchester and Hyde news.

George always responded immediately and was able to add any of his own memories (I said we should make him an honorary member of the class).

This correspondence has lasted and been mutually enjoyed all the time he has been in Alderley Edge. We would talk of his old business associates and his Manchester University friends - his mind remained clear and interested to the end.

I shall miss seeing the familiar Kenyon envelopes coming into my letter-box.

Mavis Defley **History on Your Doorstep Group**

Alan Ward of Denton Local History Society & Denton Golf Club

News of Alan's sudden death in December last came as a great shock to us all. Alan was always there to give us his help and advice and he and his wife Brenda worked hard for Denton Local History Society. They compiled the information boards we provided for Victoria Park in Denton and also the school education packs about the park, which were presented to every school in Denton. They had just embarked on a new project about the history of the west end of Denton.



Alan was also the archivist for Denton Golf Club, where he and Brenda were active members. They produced the history of Denton golf club, after painstaking research. This book was the forerunner to the club's centenary celebrations this year. It is so sad that Alan has not lived to see the events, which he helped to organise and to plan.

He will be sorely missed by both our society and the golf club, not least for his sense of humour and fine research skills.

Jill Cronin

Albert Warren

17 September 1913 – 14 April 2008

Albert was born on 17 September 1913 at the family home, 9 Duncan Street, Ashton-under-Lyne, and was one of thirteen children, twelve boys and a girl. He attended the Gatefield C of E school until he was fourteen. He commenced work at Park Road Spinning Co of Dukinfield in 1927 and worked there for about 30 years. Afterwards, Albert went to work for Harry Dunning's Engineers, Audenshaw, for about four years from 1961-1965.



In 1965, Albert began work at Morningside Adult Training Centre for people with learning difficulties in Droylsden, first as an instructor then later as deputy manager, a post he held up until his retirement. He would often speak with great affection about his time at Morningside and the wonderful experiences he had shared, helping others less fortunate than ourselves.

Albert had a great love of working with people with learning difficulties. For many years he was a voluntary driver and used to go around picking up people and taking them to the Gateway Club, as well as being a great supporter of MENCAP Association. He was also a volunteer driver for Age Concern, would collect elderly people and take them to the Day Centre every week. His work was recognised in 1982, when Albert was presented with the Tunstall Telecom Caring Award in recognition of his caring attitude.

As all his friends know, his faith was very important to him and he was a life-long member of Charlestown United Reformed Church. Albert had a life-long connection with the 4th Ashton Boys Brigade Co at Charlestown. He was their captain for about 30 years, after which he was made a Life Member of the company. Albert could recite many a good story he had picked up on his travels: there is a lot more about Albert I could tell you but it would fill this magazine!

He helped with some stories for the **Charlestown** book produced by the History on Your Doorstep group and, not long before he died, contributed some of his memories to their **Smokestack to Urban Chic** book. I think there will be many readers who have their own story to tell about Albert, a *Perfect Gentleman*, a mentor and friend: he was a lovely man. He lived a good and honest life; everybody loved him and he is sadly missed.

Pat Greenwood

Joseph Peter Schofield 1944-2009

Peter was associated with Stalybridge Historical Society from its first meeting in May 1961 until his recent death. Born in Stalybridge, he attended St Peter's RC School and West Hill, before joining the office staff of SHMD. After much part-time study he acquired an administrative post at Manchester University where he spent the rest of his working life as a valued member of staff. After retirement he was recalled on a short term contract. A life long member of Stalybridge Historical Society, he served for many years as Secretary and latterly as Chairman. He was also for a time Secretary of the Friends of Tameside Museum, a school governor and an active member of the local Conservative Party, as well as a devoted member of the Roman Catholic community. He leaves a wife, Kathleen, four children and two grandchildren. He will be remembered for his quiet and devoted service seasoned with a gentle sense of humour.

Joyce Raven and Alan Rose
Stalybridge Historical Society

Edith Brocklehurst: An Appreciation

With the recent death of Miss Edith Brocklehurst, aged 95, Stalybridge Historical Society, has lost its oldest member.

Descended from an old Cheshire family, Edith Brocklehurst had a deep knowledge of Stalybridge history and its people. She had a clear recall of the social, religious and cultural aspects of the life of the town in the early years of the last century. This knowledge she brought to the society from its foundation in 1961. Edith Brocklehurst's family knew personally the Leeches of Gorse Hall, who were the maternal grandparents of Beatrix Potter.

Edith Brocklehurst was the one person, who kept alive the Potter link with Stalybridge. She conveyed this knowledge to the author Jonathan Goodman, when he was writing his book on the Gorse Hall murder.

Eileen Wood
Stalybridge Historical Society

Riversvale Hall. Richard Unwin. 40pp. A5. 2007. £4.50
Available from Tameside Local Studies & Archives Centre

Riversvale Hall was a grand house in extensive grounds on the south side of the Medlock in Bardsley Vale. The house was demolished soon after the Second World War and the grounds now form part of the Medlock Valley nature reserve. It was built in c.1843 by Legh Richmond, steward of the Stamford Estates and newly married, although Mr Unwin seems unaware of all this. At the end of Victoria's reign, the hall was occupied by Charles T Bradbury and his remarkable daughter, Kate, botanist and Egyptologist. The excellent illustrations of the home and family are the best features of the booklet and there is information about others who lived at Riversvale.

Alan Rose