Huddersfield Local History Society

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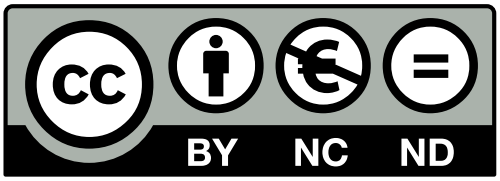

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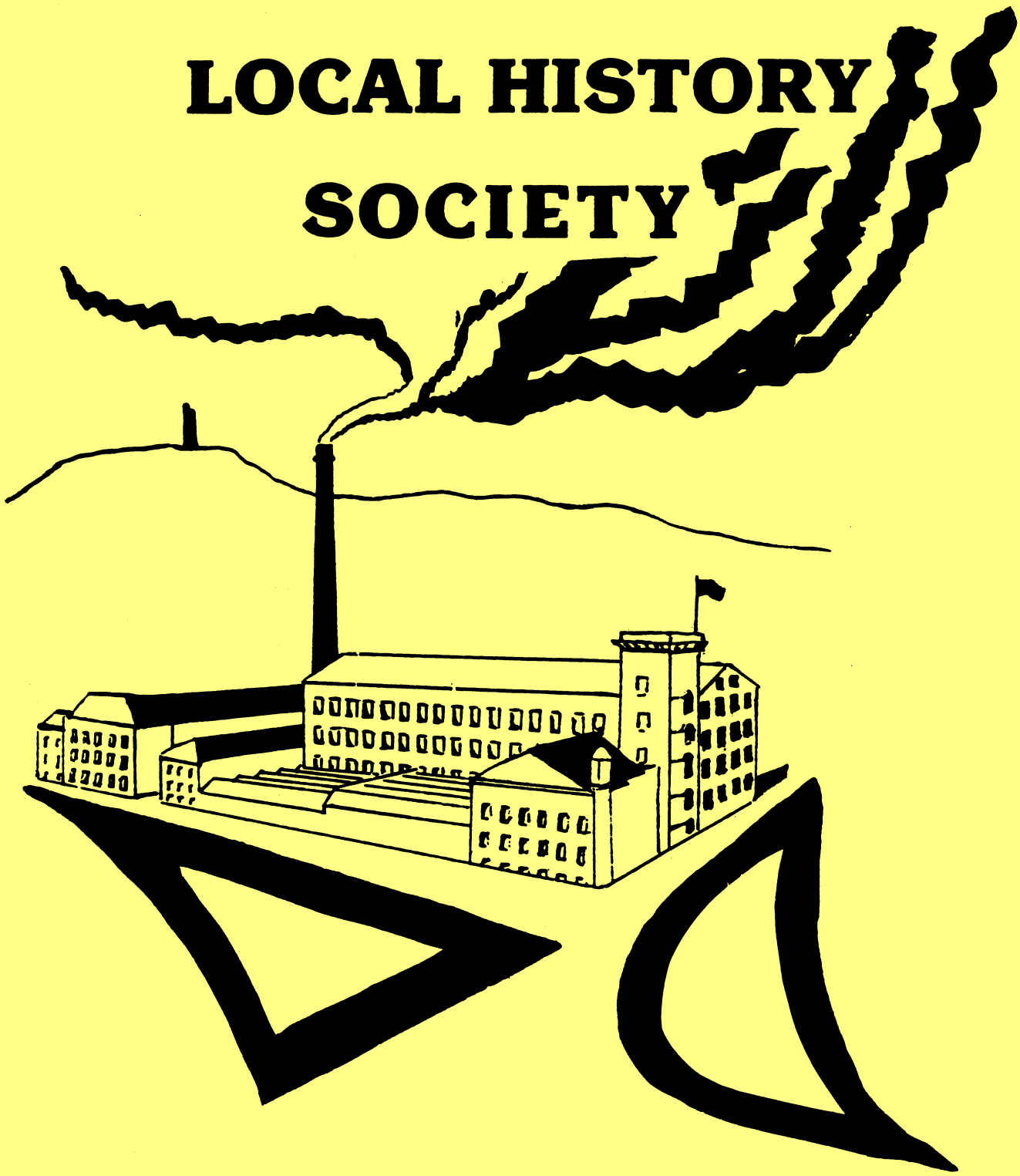

JOURNAL

No. 16 Winter 2004-2005

A Small Celebration

This year, the Society's periodical comes of age, historically speaking for it was in 1983 that the first issue of the Newsletter was published by the Huddersfield Local History Workshop, as we were then known. Under the editorship of Dr D M Jones, of the University's predecessor, the Huddersfield Polytechnic, it set forth with a statement of intent that still applies today.

In launching this Newsletter it is the hope of the Committee that it will become a means of communication for the Membership as a whole.

We would like members to look upon it as a medium for the publication of their articles and also historical notes and queries arising from their research which they wish to bring to the attention of the Workshop.

Appropriately, the very first article was written by one of the founder members, the secretary, Hilary Haigh, and investigated the history of Huddersfield's land-locked Shipping Company.

SOME NOTES ON THE HUDDERSFIELD SHIPPING COMPANY AND ITS ASSOCIATES

by E. A. Hilary Haigh

For a shipping company to be found in Huddersfield today seems unlikely. In 1824, when the *Rules and Regulations of the Huddersfield Shipping Company*[1] were published, Huddersfield stood beside a transpennine waterway.

The Sir John Ramsden Canal from Cooper Bridge to Kings Mill, near Aspley, Huddersfield had been started in 1774 and was navigable by 1778, thus linking Huddersfield with Selby and Hull. The Huddersfield to Ashton canal had linked Aspley in Huddersfiled with Ashton-under-Lyne and the Manchester Ship Canal to the west on the opening of the Standedge Tunnel in 1811. By the time Edward Baines published his *History Directory and Gazetteer of the County of York* in 1822 four firms were providing conveyance by water from the canal Wharf. Widow Welsh and Sons conveyed goods by fly boat daily to Manchester in 24 hours, the Aire and Calder Navigation Company conveyed goods regularly to Hull, Edmund Buckley and Co's fly boats went daily to Dewsbury, whence goods were conveyed by land to Leeds, and J. & L. Marsden's boats went daily to Manchester. Richard Clay was the agent for Sir John Ramsden's Navigation.

The Huddersfield Shipping Company was formed because "much convenience and advantage would result from the trade betwixt London and Huddersfield being carried on in Vessels adapted to the whole line of Navigation, so that goods may be transmitted in one Bottom, with being subject to transhipment, as has been hitherto done...." The capital stock of the Company was to be £8,000, divided into 320 shares of £25.00 each. At the Annual General Meeting to be held on the second Friday of September, five directors were to be elected from amongst the shareholders. Also at the Annual General meeting a manager was to be elected, along with a wharfinger for London.

The document mentioned above[1] is the only one so far traced which was published by the Huddersfield Shipping Company. It would be interesting to discover if any working documents exist which were actually produced by the Company. The Rules provide for books to be kept and balance sheets to be issued to shareholders.

The company did take form, however, as the following reports from the *Leeds Mercury* indicates:

> On Thursday week The Huddersfield Shipping Company launched a very fine sloop built at Huddersfield by Mr Bradley Clay called the "Ramsden" intended for their London trade.[3]

Mr Bradley Clay may be said to be a product of the canal era. In 1818 he was the agent in Huddersfield for the Aire and Calder Navigation Company, which shipped goods to Hull. By 1830 he had become a timber merchant, rope manufacturer and lime burner, as well as a

carrier to and from London and the Agent to Sir John Ramsden, Bart at Aspley. His boats sailed daily from the Navigation warehouse to Selby 'and from thence by the New Shipping Company's Briggs which sail to Symond's Wharf, London every four days'.[4]

When Bradley Clay's property was sold in 1834, Lot 3 was described as 'All that Timber and Boat Builder's yard with the timber sheds, workshops and the dry dock therein situate at the bottom of Dock Street in Huddersfield ... adjoining to Sir John Ramsden's Canal there and where the Business of Timber Merchant and Boat Builder have for several years been extensively carried on'.[5] The purchase price was £400 and the purchaser Mr Luke Marsden (of J. and L. Marsden, carriers by water to Manchester etc).[6] Presumably it was in this shipyard that the "Ramsden" was built in 1825.

1825 was an optimistic year for the Huddersfield Shipping Company. On 13th June a "superior sloop" was launched by them at Barugh Lock near Barnsley and on the 20th June a further two sloops were launched at Mirfield; these were built expressly for their London trade.[7] 1828 saw the building of their sloop the "Perseverance" [8] and by the time Parson and White published their Directory[9] in 1830 the Huddersfield Shipping Company of Engine Bridge, Huddersfield could offer sloops direct to and from Irongate Wharf, London. It also operated fly boats daily to Saddleworth, Stayley Bridge, Ashton-under-Lyne, Oldham, Stockport and Manchester, whence goods were forwarded to Liverpool, Chester, North and South Wales, Staffordshire and to all parts of the South of England, also to Wakefield, Leeds, York, Hull and all parts of the North of England. The Company's Agent was Richard Robinson of Aspley.

By 1837 the Huddersfield Shipping Company was, perhaps significantly, less ambitious. Its traffic was eastward to Selby and London, but under the same heading in the Directory appeared 'and L. Dyson to Manchester etc. twice a week'.[10]

Law Dyson was to become a significant figure in Huddersfield transport. He founded his business in *c.*1829 and operations gradually expanded. In 1830 he was a book-keeper in Dock Street.[11] By 1890 his son Herbert presided over one of the largest fuller's earth merchants in Yorkshire.[12] Law Dyson & Sons, Agents for Yorkshire for the Fuller's Earth Union Ltd., were manufacturers of white and tarred ropes, spun yarn, cords and twines, wagon, cart, boat, stack and horse covers. The firm had large stores at Huddersfield, Thornhill Lees and Goole, ready for transport to all parts of the West Riding and elsewhere.

Their Huddersfield warehouse at Aspley was erected in *c.*1781 and was one of the original carriers' receiving houses for the town. In 1890 it was described as being 'situated on the canal wharf just off the main street'. By 1853 Law Dyson's vessels went daily from the wharf to Manchester and Liverpool,[13] and this daily service continued into the 1860s, The cover shops were also at Aspley Place and the rope and twine works were at Bradley Mills. When Law Dyson died l'.[14] He must have been a man to move with the times! By 1874 he was also a director of the West Riding Union Banking Company.

By this time the Huddersfield Shipping Company had long since disappeared. Ten shares had been sold off in 1827.[15] It last appeared in the 1837 Directory and by 1842 disappeared, leaving only its *Rules* to evoke its memory. Unless any reader knows more ...

References

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4. Parson and White. *Directory of the Borough of Leeds and the Clothing District of Yorkshire*. 1830.
5. Letter from Mr. Heap to Messrs. Fenton and Jones, Solicitors, 29th November 1844. DD/RE/c/6 in Ramsden Archives, Kirklees Archives Department, Huddersfield Library
6. Ramsden Estate Rentals. 1831-1837, Ramsden Archives
7. *Leeds Mercury*. 25th June 1825
8. *Leeds Mercury*. 13th December 1828

9. Op. cit. 4
10. W. White. *History, Gazetteer and Directory of the West Riding of Yorkshire* ... Volume 1 1837
11. Op. cit. 4
12. *Industries of Yorkshire*. Part 2 1890
13. W. White. *Directory and Gazetteer of Leeds, Bradford, Halifax, Huddersfiled, Wakefield and the whole of the clothing Districts of the West Riding of Yorkshire.* 1853
14. Obituary of Law Dyson. *Huddersfield Weekly Chronicle and Huddersfield Weekly* Examiner. 31st October 1874
15. *Leeds Mercury*. 16th June 1827

In 1990, volume 10 of the *Newsletter* was succeeded by volume 1 of the *Journal*, a transition seamlessly bridged by consecutive chapters from the late Clifford Stephenson's popular autobiography.

In this second extract from his unpublished memoirs, Mr Stephenson recalls the bustling street life of Huddersfield in the early 1920s, and savours the pleasures of shopping at the local Co-op. Once very numerous, but now reduced to a shadow of their former selves, it is not easy to remember the Co-ops as the force they once were. In 1910, the year of its jubilee, the Huddersfield Society alone had a network of 23 branches plus the department store in Buxton Road, while the surrounding villages and suburbs boasted more than 30 societies of their own. All of them, whether a one-branch Society or major chain, had that special relationship with their owner-customers that gave a special flavour to shopping at "t'co-op"

THE STREET SCENE.

Seventy years ago streets were much livelier places than they are today. People walked in them instead of speeding quickly by in a car. The large child population used them as play-grounds, there were no motor cars and therefore no risk to the children. They were noisy too, the noise of children playing -the street was often their only playground- of horses hooves and iron shod cart wheels on the stone setts of the road surface, and of the shouts of numerous street traders crying their wares. There were the regulars; every day the milkman with his horse pulling the two wheeled 'milk float'. A large metal churn at the back of the float had a tap near its bottom from which the milkman refilled the portable open-topped can which he carried to the door of his customer; there he ladled out by the half pint (locally a 'gill') or pint measuring ladle with a crook handle, the quantity of milk required, into his customer's jug. The 'milk jug', holding a pint or a quart, was one of a 'set of jugs' which every self respecting housewife had in her cupboard -the ubiquitous milk bottle seems to have replaced them.

In summer the jug of milk was covered by a circle of fine mesh net, held in place by the weight of beads sewn round its edge, to keep out the ever present flies. Flies were both a real nuisance and a cause of disease. Swatting them with a purpose made 'fly-swatter' or a folded Examiner was frequently resorted to; there were always some which the revolting sticky fly-paper hanging from the gas bracket, failed to catch. No one questioned the purity of the milk which usually had been produced by the milkman on his local farm. Pasturisation was something for the future. In the large churn was a long rod with a perforated plate attached to its bottom end, which good milkmen plunged up and down at frequent intervals to ensure even distribution of the cream in the milk -otherwise the end of the round got most of the cream which had stayed at the top..

Competition for customers was keen, and as many as four milkmen would have customers in one short street, an inefficient and costly form of distribution which was rationalised during the War by allocation of groups of customers to one milkman; an arrangement not always popular with customers as some milk was better than others. There was concern in Stainecross Avenue when we were allocated to a supplier whose milk was good but his hygiene suspect, but there was nothing we could do about it, and I am still alive.

Several times a week one or other of the local greengrocers came round with his flat cart, shouting his arrival. The local housewives gathered

round choosing the vegetables and when in funds, the fruit, they wanted to buy. In our area, there were no 'butchers-carts', though these are still seen in some country districts.

The 'pot-man' made a weekly visit with his horse and cart, on which there were not only 'pots' -the then usual name for what we now call crockery- but a range of pans and other utensils, and household requisites such as brushes. Always he had a supply of 'scouring' stones (commonly known as "Donkey stones" -the brand name stamped on the most popular kind); the soft brown or white stone, used to outline the edges of stone steps, 'flags', and window sills; a practice very common locally until fairly modern times. A housewife's reputation as a good housekeeper was dependent on the cleanliness of her steps and flags and her neat application of the white or brown edging. To have "mucky flags" was the hall mark of the sloven and "her flags are mucky" the ultimate condemnation.

Two other commodities always carried by the pot man were paraffin and wash liquor. Wash liquor was the whitener added to the wash-day water in the days before Daz and the like. The last of the 'pot men' eventually owned a good crockery shop and became a Councillor.

Of more interest to little boys was the large canvas sack in which he put the 'rags' -old clothes and material- for which he gave balloons in exchange.

Another street vendor was the 'fish-man'. One I remember started with his stock in large baskets carried in the crooks of his arms, he progressed to a small two wheeled cart that he pushed, and finally prospered enough to substitute donkey power for his own foot power.

The postman was seen frequently as there were at least three, sometimes four deliveries a day, though the quantity of postal items received by families was small compared with today, when we are inundated by publicity and sales literature, football pool lists to many homes, and sundry other types of mail. The postman did his round -still known as his "walk"- on foot -not as now, when he uses a van, which in our case he actually brings down the short drive to the very door. The policeman was frequently to be seen walking even the residential streets -truly a community policeman. Little boys, even though innocent of wrong doing, were scared of "the Bobby". "I'll tell the bobby" was a potent threat.

At a time when every house had only a coal burning fire another of the regular traders was the coal-man. He came with a horse drawn waggon laden with 1 cwt sacks of coal. Receiving an order, he backed himself against the edge of his waggon, seized the 'ears' at the top corner of a sack and hoisted it on to his back, a back covered by a stiff leather back-apron. With a heave and a deft twist of his shoulders, the sack was dumped, mouth downwards, on the top of the chute to the customer's "coal oil" as the coal place was known. Canny housewifes demanded, and honest coal men volunteered, that each empty sack be stacked for counting as proof of quantity to be paid for. It was not unknown -though hard to prove- that 'short measure' was delivered by dishonest coal men who 'couldn't count'.

The coal in sacks, called 'nuts', was usually of poorer quality but cheaper. These were however more suitable for bagging. The 'best' coal, at Lockwood known as 'best Wallsend', was dearer and in much bigger lumps known as 'cobs'. I once weighed a cob, it was 65 lbs. These, sold by the ton, were delivered in a two wheel coal-cart, the box top of

which was so nicely balanced that, released by a catch, it tipped back and shot its load, usually on the 'flags' or across the causeway in front of the customer's house. No one seemed to object to the inconvenience caused to passers by. Following the cart was a somewhat disreputable man carrying a large semispherical wicker basket and a shovel; for a shilling he was willing to lift and carry the ton of coal from the tipped heap and shovel it down the coal chute and sweep up afterwards. It was a hard earned shilling. More often, if there was a man in the household, the pile of coal stayed until his return from work, and then he did the hard work, but saved the shilling.

There were other less regular visitors. Beggars calling door to door, sometimes pathetically offering bootlaces or other trivial items ostensively for sale, though commonly it was "no thank you but take this", this being a half-penny or a penny. One old lady dressed in black with a bonnet and a beaded cape, walked slowly up the back streets - never the front, mournfully singing a doleful dirge, one I remember began "You'll never miss your mother till she's gone, till she's gone". Children would be sent out with a penny to give her -and to encourage her to move on.

Occasionally there were visits from Mormon missionaries, usually young men. Frightening stories -completely untrue I'm sure- were told, accusing them of abducting young girls for the white slave traffic.

More welcome were the German bands, three or four musicians playing lively music as they stopped from time to time to give a brief performance. When the War came, it was widely rumoured that these musicians had been German spies. There was little enough to spy at Lockwood anyway -so it was very unlikely to be true.

There were numerous casual and irregular interval traders and sellers of goods and services; all crying their wares. The scissor and knife grinder with his treadle operated grind-stone which could be upended on to its wheel to transport it. "Tubs to mend" was the cry of a man carrying iron hoops over his shoulders which he fitted on the 'peggy' tubs needing repair; and then the man who shouted "props -props -props" carrying a bundle of eight foot long square wooden poles with a notch at one end to fit the clothes line they were designed to "prop up". The small stock he could carry, sold at a very low price, must have produced a very poor living -'hard earned'.

Occasionally there came the 'Salt man' with his pony and cart on which were stacked blocks of salt about eighteen inches long by eight inches square. This was an economical way to buy salt, though it involved laborious crushing on the white wood table, with a rolling pin. In damp weather the salt stuck together, free running Cerebos was a long time in the future.

On Friday nights, the 'Oat cake man' made his weekly round -(I wonder what he did during the rest of the week?) From his bulk stock in a carrying basket he counted out the customer's order on to his left fore-arm. The cake was soft and limp, as delivered.

Very occasionally we were visited by a hurdy-gurdy man, with a monkey in a red waistcoat perched on the top of his organ, on which he churned out popular tunes by turning a handle.

A HARD AND ROUGH LIFE: THE MINER'S STORY

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the bitter battle between the miners and the Government of Mrs Thatcher. The rump of an Industry that survived that confrontation bears little relation to the industrial colossus of the early Twentieth Century, so it is particularly timely that we can print this personal account of life on the coalface eighty years ago.
Sam Carter was just sixteen years old when he began work at Lepton Colliery in 1920. This is his story.

Below ground

The pit was not a shaft sunk vertically. It was a drift, driven horizontally into the side of hills, starting usually where the coal seam outcropped. This type of pit was known locally as a "dayhole", and the entrance to my place of work was within 400 yards of my home. By the time I started my work, years of mining had exhausted the coal, worked inwards from the entrance, and the actual coal face then being worked was some two miles underground from the entrance. For a mile or so, there was a double rail track where the tubs of coal were hauled to the surface, attached to a thick wire rope, which was pulled by an engine stationed at the pit head.
One track was for the full tubs, the other for the empties entering the pit. The colliers and their "trammers", ie the boys who pushed the tubs from the coal face to the rope, were provided with small four wheeled bogies, or trams as they were called. To the point where the main rope ended, one entered the mine by a steady down gradient. Beyond this point, a fault had developed in the seam of coal, and to reach the lower level a steep drift was driven down until the seam was encountered again.
This drift, known as the "Throw", was about 1 in 6 gradient, and this passage had a single rail track on the higher level. The same rope let down a "run" of empty tubs to the end of the main gate or passage in the pit. Workers, both men and boys, made the journey into and out of the pit on the trams.
Entering, one knelt on the wood platform, hands gripping the front of the tram, with clogged feet sliding on each rail to act as breaks. The degree of braking employed varied with the individuals. The miners usually travelled very steadily, but it was a point of honour with the lads, who varied in age from fourteen to twenty, to make the journey in record time.
This resulted in several bad accidents as well as hair raising escapes, but it was always a very exhilarating experience when we had become facile in controlling the tram.
Each lad took a great pride in the speed of his own tram and they were often to be seen, before and after entering the mine, greasing the axles to get the little extra in the next journey.
Our equipment was simple. We had a leather strap buckled about the neck into which was hooked a safety lamp. These were oil lamps and were the only illumination once one entered the pit until the shift was over. No one was allowed to carry matches and occasionally we were searched before we went in to work. We had knee pads to protect the knees, a belt around the short trunks we wore when working and we wore clogs, heavily ironed on the soles.
We had to be at the coal face by 7am and we finished at 2pm, taking a short

interval known as "snap time" to eat the sandwiches and drink the cold tea each had brought along.
The seam of coal was from 14" to 20" thick and to gain access to the coal face with the tubs a certain amount of stone below the coal had to be removed. From the main haulage gate, subsidiary gates were driven off at right angles. These were made rather higher by "ripping" perhaps a foot thick of stone above the coal, and on each of these a line of rails was laid.
Running off these gates were a series of narrow passages at right angles to the gate and parallel to each other. These were spaced some 30 feet apart and were allotted to individual colliers, whose job it was to get out the coal for fifteen feet each side, and to prolong the little passage which allowed the trammer to get the tub to the point of loading
As the coal was hewn, the cavity had to be filled in with waste material and the roof had to be supported at intervals by wooden props.
The collier, laid on his shoulders on a wood board, slightly inclined, hewed at the bottom half of the seam all across his thirty feet of face and the trammer had to shovel this into the iron tub. There was rarely above three feet of height in the gate, and with the tub reaching two feet high, it was an expert and exhausting operation.

Getting started

I should have mentioned that the colliery management "let" the "benks" or gates to the individual colliers. These were paid so much per ton, out of which they had to pay their own trammers. There was, therefore, a good deal of competition for the best trammers, upon whom the earnings of the colliers largely depended, and, in turn, the better trammers were better rewarded.
I was allotted to a collier newly back from the War, and I was fortunate in this, that he had also to get acclimatized to the work, while I was new and entirely unacquainted with the conditions under which I had to work.
At the end of the first day, I willingly would have died. The skin had been taken off my backbone almost from top to bottom from catching the roof while pudshing the tub in the low passages. I ached all over from working in the cramped positions it was necessary to adopt, and I had been derailed on several occasions. This meant attempting to lift one end of the 5cwt. Tub either from a kneeling position, or, as one became expert, bending down, putting ones posterior against the end of the tub and hands between legs onto the drawbar and heaving.
If it was the front end which came off the rails, it was necessary to attempt to crawl past the tub and in the very narrow space this was sometimes impossible. Added to this the difficulty of keeping the lamp which I carried around my neck from getting knocked, when it promptly extinguished and left me in stygian darkness, added to my agonies, and, not surprisingly, I wished most heartily that I had hearkened to my mother's forebodings.
To add to these frightful conditions, water ran through the roof and I was soaked in a very short time.
On the first day I made the journey from the "pass by" to the "hole" (the place where my collier worked) eight times. By the end of the day I don't know who was the most exhausted, but I literally crawled out to daylight and wished most fervently that I had never to go back again.

My mother was still very cool towards me although she had prepared a good dinner for me, but when I stripped off my shirt and she saw the raw flesh of my back, still bleeding, she thawed instantly and set about bathing the sores. I pretended of course that this not a matter of great concern, but she could not resist the temptation to say "well, I told you so, and if you come home completely skinned I shall never attempt to persuade you to give it up."
She made it quite plain, however, that she would not tolerate the dirt associated with mining. There was a place for my working clothes and it was going to be a bath every day and a change into decent things.
Obviously I could not have a bath in the middle of the afternoon in the kitchen where my mother was working. It must be explained that in practically every home, certainly of working class people, bathrooms and hot and cold running water were unknown. Baths were large zinc affairs that, in our case, hung in the large commodious farm house cellar when not in use.
We had to compromise on this by getting a weekly bath when I came home on a Friday, and during the week, I first washed all my body down to the waist, and my hair, in a large bowl in the sink, my mother washing my back. I then had a large bowl in which to wash my feet and legs. I pulled up my shorts as far as they would go, and, with my mother superintending, I washed away all the grime accumulated during the day.
She was not satisfied with this, and while under protest she turned her back, I surreptitiously washed my buttocks until I was positively clean once more.
This process recurred every day while I remained in the pit, varied occasionally by my mother washing my legs and feet. The hot water was obtained from an iron boiler which was part of the kitchen range, and one had to be exceedingly careful in ladling it out with the "piggin" not to scrape the sides or bottom, otherwise the water was red with rust.
Having donned clean clothes and refreshed by the bath, I regained some of my confidence and I resolved that at all costs I would not show the white feather. I even fell to boasting to my brothers how much work I had done and how I enjoyed it, and my father listened, with a quiet enigmatic smile upon his face.
The next and succeeding days were hard but I was strong and getting together, and my first week's wage of 35 shillings was double what I had been getting at the office. I handed this over unopened to my mother and she rewarded me by a rare demonstration of affection when she kissed me heartily and then shed a few tears. I knew it wasn't the money and I felt very proud and happy. I knew also that all the fire and brimstone she had breathed when I gave up the office job was over and done with, and henceforth she patched me up whenever I got "shigs" on my back, or damaged in the many scraps I got into.
I soon learned that a good trammer was not just a willing filler who could handle a tub dexterously and took the minimum of time to travel between pass by and benk. On the "ending" or "gate" which was being worked for the coal there were eighteen to twenty lads doing the same job as I. There were a number of my own age, two or three poor beggars who were younger, and about six or eight older lads who were approaching the age when they themselves would become colliers.
The full tubs were taken to the pass, by which was a high gallery down which the water flowed ankle deep into the sump further down, from whence it was

pumped out of the pit up a special shaft. To this point also came the "run" of empty tubs which had come down on the wire rope which ran through the "throw" or fault.
Often all the lads were awaiting the arrival of the run, and while in theory each should take his turn, in practice, the biggest, oldest lads grabbed the first tubs and the last half dozen were fought for by the ten or so lads that were still waiting. After ineffective resistance on the first few occasions and getting roundly cursed by me collier who was waiting to load in the coal he had cut, I stood up for myself on every occasion and challenged all and sundry for my rights. When it was my turn for a tub I stuck like a leech and fought it out if necessary, and eventually, even the biggest, oldest lads let me alone.
This mine was not a bed of roses either for the collier or the lads. The thin seam resulted in very low gates and often it was not possible to get the first tub up to the coal face, the roof having sunk, due to the excavations during the night.
Every operation, from filling the coal to fetching and taking the tubs was a really arduous business, and it was no uncommon sight to see the younger lads crying from sheer fatigue or frustration, the latter when the full tub derailed and the youngster was not strong enough to hump it back on to the rails.
The collier too was working in shocking conditions hewing out the coal from an eighteen inch seam, with water, which reeked of sulphur, constantly dripping on him, and in which he had to lie for the whole of the shift. There was small wonder then for the outbreaks of temper between the trammer and his collier, occasionally resulting in physical violence.

The school of hard knocks

This only once happened to me. The coal was extremely hard at the point where we were working and for days the man for whom I worked had barely earned his daywork wage. As a result I had lingered on my journey, and when he started to cuss me for not getting back to help him, I replied, probably very cheekily, and he came skidding off the "benk" to lay into me with his fists. I had a rather short temper, and I was so infuriated that I seized a pick and struck at him.
He evaded the blow and scrambled on the "benk", I following, with murder in my heart. In and out of the props we scrambled, and, but for the timely arrival of the pit manager, who dragged me onto the gate by the scruff of the neck, I should certainly have done him grievous harm.
The manager was a mountain of a man, who was a local preacher of some note, and was as strong and tough as an ox. He soon quelled the rebellion and left me in no doubt about what I should get if I did not quieten down. My temper having cooled and realising that discretion was the better part of valour, I returned very sullenly to my work and, apart from doing all I could to aggravate him for the next few days, my collier and I never spoke to each other. He gave in first, on learning that I had asked to go to another man, and after that we were reconciled and worked harmoniously together for the remainder of my time in the Black Bed Seam.
He was very proficient, and indeed he had a manager's certificate, and eventually he was chosen to open up an old gate which, some years

previously, had been closed owing to the prevalence of gas. This meant shift working, one week days, succeeded by afternoons 2.30 to 10pm, and then a night shift 10.30 to 6am.

Driving a gate, or an "ending", involved opening up access to a seam. The rock was broken down over the seam of coal for about eight feet wide, the coal got out, and then eighteen inches or two feet of stone dug out from under the coal seam. This provided a gallery some five foot high and it was a relatively comfortable working space.

Payment to the collier was on a contract basis, ie so much per yard, plus extra for shift working, but the roof was very bad and there were constant falls of stone often so heavy that it took days to clear.

On one occasion during the night shift, a large fall occurred along the gate where we were working, and it was so extensive that a relief party working from the back of the face took six hours to remove sufficient stone to enable us to crawl out.

When the fall occurred there was a rush of gas, always prevalent in that particular mine, which promptly put out the lights on our "Davey" Safety Lamps. It is difficult to convey the depth of darkness, so intense that it hurt one's eyes attempting to see, and the horrifying fear that another fall might entomb one before the fall could be removed.

It was east to make light of the event when one got above ground, but, apart from the gruelling I got at the time of my playing truant from school, it was my most shattering experience.

As things turned out, there were further falls so extensive as to decide the owners to close the mine, and with the other employees I was transferred to another pit a mile or so away.

T this pit I teamed up with two lads some years older, whose job it was to haul a "run" of empty tubs up a very stiff incline to a higher level seam, from where the younger trammers took them singly to the "benks" where their colliers worked. We worked on contract direct to the mine owners, and, of course, we had to bring down the fully loaded tubs also.

I was proud to have been selected for this job as, apart from earning capacity, it was reputedly a job for the best trammers only. Up to the time when the other colliery closed, my two colleagues had managed on their own, but with the influx of men, traffic was vastly increased and we were soon earning more than we ever had done before.

This era of pit work was the most physically exacting of my whole life. Moving twelve to fifteen empty iron tubs up the incline to the seam was a Herculean task. To effect this, the front tub was spaced some eight feet in front of the remainder, to which it was attached by a chain. Two of us pushed at this tub, using the well worn wooden sleepers which held the rails as toe holds, while the third, at the extreme rear of the run, heaved with might and main.

In retrospect it looks incredible that three young men, two of whom were nineteen and I only just turned seventeen, could shift such a huge weight, but with bulging muscles we rarely failed to take the full train to the top. Indeed it was always a point of honour not to give in, and only on the occasions when we found a tub which had the wheels worn almost square or had developed a hole in, did we succumb.

To bring the" run" down was a job which called for the utmost agility. Twelve tubs full of coal, together with their own weight, meant that after leaving the

flat level where they had been accumulated by the trammers, about five tons of weight was in rapid motion. To check the speed, one man crouched beside the track at the top of the incline and two others hung on to the tub, each sliding on a single rail and hanging back with all their might. The man beside the rail had iron bars, some fifteen inches long with a curved end, known as "sprags", and as the "run" swung over the top of the incline he expertly inserted into the wheel, to lock it so that it did not revolve.

The operation had to be accomplished expertly and fearlessly, and in time so that this third man could seize the other two around the waists and slide down the rails behind them. The run literally hurtled down the incline, which was some 150 yards long and through the rubber doors which kept the air flowing in the proper direction in the mine, and emerged into the "pass-by" where the haulage rope connected them.

This was the period of my mining career which I really enjoyed. It was a hard and rough life. I gloried in my strength and physical fitness, and Iliked my two workmates. Above all, at eighteen I was earning as much as a qualified hewer working on piece work.

THE END OF AN ERA

THE STONE MASON'S YARD - BERRY BROW

The huts of the stone mason's yard can be seen above the quarry just off centre of the picture.

No longer shall we hear the tap tap of the mason's hammer and chizel as we wait for the bus to Town at the top of Station Lane, Berry Brow. Mr. J. A. Lister, the Monumental Mason has given up his tenancy of the site (October 2003) and is going into semi-retirement to work on smaller projects from his home.

This quiet unabtrusive site has been a stone mason's yard since 1849 and possibly before this. The site is situated next to a quarry and just above the railway line. It is possible that the quarry was opened by the railway for stone to build bridges, tunnels and walls when the line came through Berry Brow in the second half of the 1840's. There are two bridges and four tunnels for pedestrians and the longer tunnel that the trains run through called Robin Hood Tunnel from Park Lane to Honley. The stone from the blasting of the cutting, which is across from the yard went to build Lockwood Viaduct. So what better place to have a stone mason's yard.

Mr. Lister has some old record/invoice books from the early years of the business and they make fascinating reading bringing to life what went on in a stone mason's yard and personally in those days.

Mr. George Edwin Ainley started the business in 1849 and his sons followed him and their sons followed on etc.

In late 1874 early 1875 Mr. John Ainley must have died, as his wife Elizabeth received £25 on the 12th January 1875 from the Railway Hotel (the public house across from Berry Brow Railway Station) Money Club on account of her late husband John Ainley's Shares in the above Club. This money presumably would be for funeral expenses. Elizabeth herself then took over the running of the business. Maybe her son or sons were too young to do this for themselves.

The Ainley's lived at Lockwood but there was a family called Stocks living in Berry Brow who were Builders, Contractors and Stone Merchants and had premises on Deadmanstone. We find from an Invoice dated 11th June 1878 that William Stocks worked 19¼ days @ 6/4d. an hour for the Ainley's. It was members of this Stocks family that carved the two railway engines in the rock at Berry Brow Railway Station. One of the carvings now being at Ravensknowle Museum, the other is still in the rock above the old station amongst the trees and shrubs that have grown over the area.

In 1908 Mr. George Longbottom, a Farmer and Carter of Fields Farm, which is about 100 yards up Birch Road from the top of Station Lane, was carting stone for the Ainley's. He would collect stone that had come by train to Berry Brow Station and deliver it to Ainley's yard at the top of the hill. It took one horse four hours to take a memorial stone or stones to Newsome Church and two horses two hours to Woodfield Park, Lockwood. Whether he erected the memorials as well it does not say.

October 9th 1908

George Edwin Ainley

To: George Longbottom

		£	s.	d.
July 10	1 jurney from Station	0	0	6
Sept 30	1 load from Station	0	1	0
Nov 2	1 load from Station	0	1	0
" 4	1 horse 4 hours Newsome	0	4	0
" 18	1 load from Station	0	0	6
" 20	1 load from Station	0	0	6
May 5	2 horses 2 hours, Woodfield	0	4	0
" 18	1 load from Station	0	0	6
		0	12s.	0d.

Settled October 22nd 1908
George Longbottom

If you take a walk in Salem graveyard on School Lane, Berry Brow, the gravestones have been laid to make the pathway and the name Ainley can still be seen on the corner of some of the stones.

Mr. Lister went to work for Mr. Eric Ainley from George Mallinson's of Lockwood Road in 1952. Mr. Eric Ainley's brother Harold was the sculpter and engraver at that time and engraved the plaque that is on Holme Moss Television Mast (now a radio mast). Mr. Eric Ainley lived in the Shepley/Stocks Moor area and knew to a second when to leave work and step onto the train home.

When Mr. Eric Ainley died in 1968 Mr. Lister took over the business. He has thoroughly enjoyed working on his own in a quiet, peaceful green corner of Berry Brow.

It is also the end of an era for three farms in the Berry Brow/Newsome area. Goodham Farm is now empty, strangely silent without the cattle and animals around. The Skelton's have finished farming at Cold Hill Farm and the Coates family have given up farming and gone into holiday cottages. All these in the last two years 2002/2003. Stirley Farm has been empty for quite a few years. The hillside from Berry Brow to Castle Hill has looked very empty this year without the cattle roaming the fields and without the haymaking being done, the grass has gone to seed. The only farming that is being done in a small way is at Lower Park Farm. The difference to their green fields and the other empty fields is considerable.

The other company locally that gave up business this year, Summer 2003, is A. & W. Chambers, Dripping Refiners, of Taylor Hill.

The Colne Valley

Jean Lunn's personal recollections of Slaithwaite's history.

A few interesting items about the Colne Valley, mostly Slaithwaite, because I lived there for part of my life.
Perhaps it is best known for its Narrow Canal, which has recently been re-opened. The most important feature being the Tunnel (Standedge) which takes it through to Lancashire.
A gentleman I once knew, unfortunately dead now, used to tell us when he was a boy living in Marsden, it was a huge treat for him to sail down to Slaithwaite with his uncle to deliver goods to the wharf in Slaithwaite. This was known to us as the City Tea Co., now it is an Indian restaurant.
He said they left Marsden at about 10am and arrived back at about 4.30pm, due to all the locks that had to be operated.
It is a very pleasant walk from Slaithwaite to Marsden, and a lot can be learned from the Visitor Centre at Marsden.
I did also know a gentleman who used to be a legger, which meant that they laid on their backs and used their legs to propel the barges through the tunnel, now a boat with an engine tows the barges through.
A lot of the barges were towed by horses, which then walked over the tops to meet the barge as it came out of the Tunnel.
There used to be a Spa on the flat fields below Manchester Road at Linthwaite. I understand that this was a very popular place for people to meet and have their leisure times. The area is now called Spa Mill Bottom, and Spa Fields used by the Saracens rugby team of Slaithwaite I believe.
There were quite a number of mills in Slaithwaite. I remember as a young girl some were woollen and some were worsted.
Clough Road Mills known as the silk mill, and the Colne Valley Tweed Company. It was built in the late 19th Century and celebrated one hundred years in 1947. It has been used by Schofield and Smith since 1970 and worsted weaving is still done there, though when it was the C.V.T., spinning, weaving, scouring and finishing were carried out there.
Crowthers also had a mill at Crimble, which is now a housing complex called Crowther Close.
Pogson's Mill down Bridge Steet is also sadly gone, and Spa Mill was used for a time by the Littlewood's Catalogue people.
The Globe, however, is still working. In the 1950's at least eight coaches of Barnsley girls were ferried in each day to work there.
Elon Crowther on the canal bank also survives, though I am not really sure what it manufactures today, and Brookes Mill functions mainly as a dye house..
I can remember them all working, which made Slaithwaite a very busy shopping centre. When I went to live there in 1957, there were six butchers shops, and two more in Hill Top, fish and chip shops, plus one in Crimble and one on Hill Top. Two bakeries, one of which baked its own bread on the premises, and a crumpet bakery which was only seasonal.
There were two chemists shops, a wool and needlework shop which sold almost everything you could think of. Grocers' shops included the City Tea Co., The Co-op, Wallaces and two small privately owned ones.

The Co-op boasted Grocery, butchery, greengrocery, haberdashery, hardware, a chemist shop and the Post Office.
There was also a privately owned shoe shop called Parkins, who did repairs as well. Not to mention the two pairs of plumbers and electricians.
We have a Manor House first built in 1560, known as "the Hall", and the Mansion House built in 1583.The date 1570 is carved into one of its beams, and it cost £180 when first built. The Manor House is now used as offices for Carter Jonas, who run the Estate of Lord Dartmouth who owns most of the land around Slaithwaite and some in Marsden.There is a round stone in the gardens thought to be Roman,and brought from Clough Mills of Hill Top (one I forgot to mention earlier).
Part of the Manor House was tenanted up to a few years ago and next to it is the "lock up", built in 1834, but never used for its intended purposes.
Not far from the Manor House is a turreted Home which strarted life as a free school, founded by Robert Meeke in 1721. This has quite a little history of its own.
A lot of the history of Slaithwaite was made into a tapestry by the Women's Institute, and calendars were made with a little history of each section.. This tapestry is well worth seeing and is on permanent display in the Community Centre, formerly the old Church School, next to St James Church 9another fine building).
I think I have covered quite a lot of Slaithwaite and shall perhaps do more at another time.

The passing years impart mixed emotions to the festive season, bringing reflection as well as celebration to those of mature years, as this wistful dialect poem published in 1934 explains.

A MERRY KERSMISS

Owd Toime has twirled his whirligig araand agean, owd lad,
An' Kersmiss Day in iverything it means is here wi us once moor;
An' wol I wish thee ivery joy, it makes mi rather sad
To know another yer's been taaen from loife's fast dwindling stoor.

Aw wonder if tha ivver thinks ut t'other lads an me,
Ut used to goa tut schoil wi' thee, a half a century sin
When loife worall afoor us, an' as far as we cud see
Held nowt but youth an' gladness, an big prizes we cud win.

Among us ther' wor Jack o'Thoms, an Billy ut Moor Side
An Sam o'Betty's, Doad o'Ned's, an Jooa ut Daisy Lee'
An mony moor, but ivery one has crossed the Great Divide
But nah of all that jolly craad ther's nobbut thee an me.

Loife's ammost all behind us nah, it's varry nearly done.
W'in bowt its joy an' pleasure, an' in pain wiv paid the cost
An' struggled for its prizes, an' while some on um wiv won,
Aw cannot help but think, owd lad, that t'best on um wiv lost

Us Kersmissus have cum an' gooan, an happen this is t'last
But let's enjoy it nah its here, for still us hearts are gay:
An' sow aw give thee t'greeting just as in the years gone past,
The sweetest tenderest greeting that can cum from human tongue.

A.N.Onymous

THE SUN HAD HIS HAT ON – AT NOT INFREQUENT INTERVALS

Modern Bank Holidays seem to have lost much of their original character, becoming standardised shopping festivals, with little sign of their original social or religious origins. But only a few decades ago, they were major events for people to whom other holidays were still something of a novelty. Perhaps none more so, than the now almost invisible Whitsuntide, a time for Spring to finally break out of the winter doldrums and for people to celebrate – hopefully.

May 1934 didn't quite live up to the Holme Valley's expectations, but it did provide the opportunity for a display of true British character. For, as the local paper noted with some satisfaction, "many people liked the uncertain sunshine and cool breezes of this Whitsuntide much better than the sweltering heat of the last"

The Sunday Schools United Sing at Holmfirth was dogged by "puckish" weather, forcing a quick change from Victoria Park to Holmfirth Wesleyan Methodist Church and back again. Over 6,000 people assembled in Mollicar Woods to sing Whitsuntide hymns, the "Roses" cricket match between Holmfirth and Thongsbridge took place, and some brave souls even managed to "frolic" in the Lido (doubtless determined to make the most of those season tickets at one guinea each).

Most activities, however, concentrated around the Sunday School walks, where the weather was once more made a virtue of – no scholars finished tired and thirsty this year!

"Hundreds of kiddies, many clad in new summer dresses and suits" formed processions, led by bands who also appeared to be "wonderfully happy", perhaps in anticipation of their teas. These included a special delicacy, "school cakes", large round cakes with richly glazed tops , "crammed full" of currants and raisins.

Suitably refreshed, they played games, including cricket, football, hoop-la and Aunt Sally, though Hepworth and Mount Tabor, forced to cancel their outdoor gala, made do with the "capital conjuring and magical entertainment" provided by Mr James Dixon and his assistant from Penistone. Fortunately, this filled an hour with "mystification and amusement".

Brass band music accompanied most of these activities and the bands were out in force: Hepworth Silver, Holme Silver, Hepworth Iron Works, the Stanley Subscription Band, Holmfirth Zion Methodists and Denby Dale Brass all took part.

Despite this intense participation, some people did actually go away for the Holiday and trips to Buxton, Belle Vue, Ilkley and Castleton were recorded.

In short, a "joyous" and very British Bank Holiday.

The stiff upper lip and John Major-esque tone of this report, now seems rather amusing, but summer events often had a serious underlying purpose, and the Holme Valley's pre-occupation at this time was raising money for The Holme Valley Memorial Hospital.

Despite the uncertain weather in May, the Hospital day in July was "the best so far" and over 1,000 people took part in a procession led by the previous year's Holme Valley Rose Queen. While five times that number watched the crowning of her successor at the cricket pavilion.

Holmfirth Sunday School Old Students held a rag day, featuring Dick Turpin and a Rag Mag entitled *Caah Pah*. This was a novel concept to some, who appear to have been less than impressed by this refugee from the world of academe and a supporter was forced to admit that "fully realising that many in this district may never have experienced the hilarity of a Rag Day and its accompanying Rag Magazine .... The tanner it cost was in a good cause and not wasted".

Local dramatic societies produced short plays, tradesman produced turn-outs and the ironmonger, Mr Kaye, displayed "an ingeniously contrived pyramid of ironmongery and hardware, on a trailer"..

Hepworth launched its "gigantic effort" in August, with a distinctly Scottish air. Bagpipes, Highland Dancing and the Scottish Regimental Association of Yorkshire providing a background to the coronation, somewhat unusually, of a carnival king, "King Hal".

Other villages added their own festivities and the eventual target of £5,000 was raised in a welter of baby shows, flower shows, open air dancing, garden parties, tennis tournaments, whist drives and pie and pea suppers and even a miniature "Blackpool lights".

As the affronted academic of Holmfirth had said, it was all in a good cause.

BOOKSHELF

The most substantial work of a, so far, rather quiet year, is Chris Heath's latest book on the area to the south east of Huddersfield. *Denby & District 2: from landed lords to inspired industrialists.*

More concerned with Denby Dale than its predecessor, it also covers Ingbirchworth, High Flatts and Birdsedge.

Packed with facts, figures and numerous quotations from original documents (from 12thC Pipe Rolls to 19^{THC} Log Books) it is more of a reference library to dip into, rather than a story to read as one narrative. Lists of tradesmen, lists of publicans, biographies of the prominent industrial families: Brownhills, Hinchliffes, Nortons, Kenyons, Naylors., the facts and figures tumble off the page. With over 200 photographs and nearly 300 pages, this makes very good value for £14.99.

After this cast of hundreds, if not thousands, comes a work centred around just one life. *Forty years* on by Mary Sykes, follows her life and times as a nurse in Huddersfield and the Colne Valley. Born in Golcar, with a career beginning in 1945 at the Halifax Royal Infirmary, her career saw many changes in medical practices. The booklet is short, but packed with detail, interesting, though not for the squeamish.

Not that the medical profession has a monopoly of important issues, for according to the well known quotation, the game of football is not just a matter of life and death, it is more important than that. Which viewpoint helps to explain the continuing significance of Huddersfield Town's brief period of national glory some eighty years ago.

Huddersfield Town; Champions of England 1923-4, 1924-5.1925-6 by Jim Brown considers this "footballing fairy tale", when Town became the first Club to win this particular hat trick. It is a solidly academic type of book, published as part of a lengthy publisher's series of football club histories. But there is interest for the general reader also, not least in the photographs, which depict flat-capped players playing cards and golf, riding on the horse-drawn roller and training against a background of smoking mill chimneys. There is even the 1922 Cup Final song "Oh! It's our night out again". Very different from today's affluent and sophisticated scene it might appear – or perhaps not. There is a darker side; dubious transfer deals, the mysterious death of a former manager and (relatively) high living. Perhaps more a case of plus ca change!

The pre-industrial history of this area is all too rarely visible, with evidence having to be extracted piece by piece. The Huddersfield Archaeological Society literally dig for evidence and the fruits of some particularly significant labours are published in a recent pamphlet. *The iron makers of Myers Wood: a medieval enterprise in Kirkburton, Huddersfield. An archaeological summary.*

Discovered in 1998 and excavated from 2002, these important discoveries on the University's Storthes Hall estate have been the result of a collaboration between the HDAS and the University of Bradford's Department of Archaeological Sciences. The works at Myers Wood, which are associated with Cistercian grange activities in the area, are of the shaft furnace type, often referred to as a bloomery. The iron bloom itself comprising a mixture of iron and slag.

Some 15 trenches have been excavated, and are described here in considerable detail. The site is a complex one, with evidence of charcoal production, iron smelting and smithing, ore roasting and ironstone mining. All taking place mainly in the thirteenth century. It is hoped that future, more detailed work, will confirm this site as one of National and European importance.
(For information about the Archaeological Society itself visit www.ichuddarch.co.uk)
Nostalgia casts a rosy hue over many strange things, and one of the more unlikely subjects is the police telephone box. Once an integral part of policing, and numbering 37 in Huddersfield alone, they have now been reduced to just one local example, in Northgate Almondbury. Designed as a "boon to the public", who could use them to contact the central police station and to the officers, who had a handy little office plus sink and kettle for that well-earned break, the boxes were a prominent part of the street scene from the late 1920s. By the 1960s they were still familiar enough to star in television's "Dr Who" as the "Tardis", but technology soon took its toll. Almost gone, but not forgotten, thanks to articles such as Peter Williamson's in the Yorkshire nostalgia magazine *Down your way*. no81, 2004.

The modern book trade is notorious for its rapid turn round of titles, within a few months of publication many titles leave the book shop shelves to be returned to the publisher and a dubious fate. Fortunately, the second hand book trade is thriving and even a cursory glance at a small specialist area such as Huddersfield's history reveals a thriving "afterlife".
Second hand bookshops and fairs are now supplemented by internet sites, many dealers have their own and these often link to larger sites such as www.abebooks.co.uk . Whilst this can't replace the pleasure of browsing amongst actual books, it does offer an opportunity to compare prices from a range of dealers.
A modest example of this is Roy Brook's *The story of Huddersfield* 1968. Prices on the site range from just £12 to £38.50 and the other Roy Brook's *Tramways of Huddersfield(* First edition)1959 rise from £6 to £20. Some sell for slightly more than the current retail price, like Hilary Haigh's *Huddersfield; a most handsome town.* which commands £40 from the Leeds branch of Oxfam (who are, incidentally, now a major player on the second hand scene). Stepping back a little further in time, Taylor Dyson's *History of Huddersfield* runs to £50 for a 1932 edition and £60 for its 1951 version. To obtain a copy of the earlier *History* by DFE Sykes could set one back up to £80. But there is more serious money for rarer titles
Joseph Hughes' *History of the Township of Meltham* illustrates how condition is another factor in the price. An ex-library copy from a Wakefield dealer costs £75 for an 1866 edition, while a less sullied copy from a Manchester firm commands a cool £125, and Mrs Jagger's *History of Honley* in its original 1914 edition was offered for £95 from a Leeds dealer.
Not all prices are so elevated of course, a Huddersfield Corporation bus timetable for 1971 could be had for little more than a modern bus ticket, just £3, and should the Martians ever decide to land in Huddersfield, they will find the way well prepared with numerous copies of Mike Harding's work of that tile, on offer at £2.50 each. Joking apart though, the second hand market is large and expanding with plenty of scope for the curious bibliophile.

SOCIETY NEWS

This year two visits have supplemented the winter programme of indoor meetings. In May, a small group visited Longley, and a month later, a much larger party made the most of a blustery evening at Caphouse.

At home with the Huddersfield House Detectives

Taking Longley Old Hall back to the future.

In 1920, it cost Huddersfield Corporation, over a million pounds (then an enormous sum) to take its town out of the Ramsden Estate. Today, for a tiny fraction of that amount, it is possible for the visitor to put a little bit of Ramsden history back into the town. For, in a remarkable marriage of restoration and entrepreneurial flair, the Ramsden's first home in Huddersfield is slowly revealing its hidden history.

Purchased by its present owners, Christine and Robin Gallagher only half a dozen years ago to showcase their antique furniture collection, a programme of cautious discovery has since revealed a structure of national significance. It is an architectural jigsaw, with stone walls encasing and extending a venerable timber frame. Just how venerable, has now been confirmed by carbon dating, which fixes the oldest timber work to the fourteenth century, although none of these particular timbers is still in its original position. That honour goes to a section of the west wing, where a fine example of timber roof framing is on display, and to some wall studding in the east wing. More recent work on the kitchen ceiling has now exposed late medieval floorboards that have attracted admiring visits from conservation experts.

After the Ramsdens acquired the property from the Wood family in 1540, substantial changes in shape and construction took place. Extra rooms, staircases and stone cladding created the mansion that was soon to be superseded by an even grander residence, the New Hall, lower down the hillside.

The inevitable subdivision into separate residences followed and, by the mid-Nineteenth century, George Searle Phillips was able to describe in his *Walks around Huddersfield.* "a long, narrow house, with a kind of Gothic doors and windows" notable only for "a long narrow piece of wood" carrying the biblical text "All flesche is as grasse...." Which dates from the Tudor period and is still on display in the Hall.

But salvation was at hand, in the shape of Sir John William Ramsden, no less, who wished to return his ancestral home to its former appearance. So, in 1884, new windows, doors and, above all, gables, transformed the Old Hall into its present incarnation, certainly a rather more impressive house than the one that Canon Hulbert had described a few years earlier as having "the general character of a respectable yeoman's household".

Today, that work continues, most obviously outdoors, where a knot garden is being created below the main frontage.

The end result will never be a stately home in the accepted sense, but with the New Hall submerged in its Victorian school and the great house at Byram Park being demolished as recently as 1955, it is certainly one of the most interesting houses remaining to Huddersfield and its once dominant family.

For the visiting public, this isn't a conventional country house museum either; there are no scholarly display boards, audio guides – or bored attendants. What is on offer though, is architecture with ambiance; an enthusiastic guided tour, lubricated with a glass of something warming, soothed with softly playing period music and rounding off with a supper in the kitchen. History at its most homely.

Mining and Memories

Homely isn't an adjective usually associated with coal mines, but for an evening visit to Caphouse, home is very much the heart of the event.
Now officially branded as the National Coal Mining Museum for England, this expanding complex boasts some impressive features, including the new exhibition galleries that tell the story of this once vital, but now fast disappearing, industry.
From tiny day holes to vast automated pits, from the appalling underground disasters to the light relief of knur and spell, nipsey and numerous other sports, from the callousness of coal owners to the miners' own welfare clubs, the once commonplace is immortalised and analysed.
But for that elusive human feel, the Museum presents a mini-drama of its own. An evening with "Mrs Lockwood" and her "family", miner's wife of 1949, and her "family" (of instant" volunteers") presents a journey in nostalgia that even those who never swung a pick in a twelve inch seam could empathise with. Hard times, ration books and a rousing rendition of the "Ovaltineys" signature tune struck plenty of nostalgic chords, while a discussion on the local dialect names for that those staples of the long winter evenings, rag rugs, ensured even more audience participation.
For an evening's entertainment it was all very professional and light –hearted, though for the truly authentic voice of local mining life, the answer, perhaps, lies closer to home. As "Mrs Lockwood" herself might say "E'lads and lasses, tha'd best ask our Ernest abaht that!"

Both venues have an active programme of visits, for further information consult their websites; www.longleyoldhall.co.uk and www.ncm.org.uk

HUDDERSFIELD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Publications for Sale

John Benson Pritchett
First Medical Officer of Health for Huddersfield — **J.B. Eagles** — **£ 1.50**

Joseph Kaye
Builder of Huddersfield c. 1779 to 1858 — **Edward J. Law** — **£ 1.75**

Queen Street Chapel & Mission Huddersfield
— **Edward Royle** — **£ 3.00**

Public Lives
The Family of Joseph Woodhead a Notable Family of Huddersfield — **Pamela Cooksey** — **£ 4.00**

The Diary of a Quack Doctor
Being the Last Diary of John Swift, Aurist of Newsome,
Huddersfield 1784 – 1851 — Edited **Jennifer Stead** — **£ 6.00**

Huddersfield Local History Society

Programme 2004 - 2005

27 September	*Almondbury The Development of a Pennine Village* Dave Weldrake
*16 October	Study Day at Newsome South Methodist Church *Aspects of the Textile Industry*
25 October	*Earl of Ripon Viscount Goderich an MP for Huddersfield 1853-57* Pam Cooksey
	Incorporating the Annual General Meeting
29 November	*'Beautiful Stone' Sculptured Stonework in Buildings Around Huddersfield* Albert Booth
* 8 December	Annual Dinner at Durker Roods Speaker: Philip Horn *"The History of Magic"*
31 January	*Huddersfield a Closer Look* Peter Bray
28 February	*'Bailey's Bath' and other Local History Films* Huddersfield Cine & Video Club
#21 March	*Votes for Women – The Suffrage Campaign in Yorkshire* Jill Liddington
25 April	*Other Folk's Rubbish* Chris Helme
#23 May	*History of Denby Dale Pies* Kenneth Dunwell
*22 June	Excursion. Details still to be arranged

All Meetings except those marked * and # will take place in the Children's Library, Huddersfield Library at 7.30 pm
#Meetings in the Light Reading Room at 7.30 pm

The 2005-2006 series of talks will commence on Monday 26th September 2005

Membership Subscriptions: Single £6 : Joint £10 are due at the start of the session

Hon. Secretary
Mrs Freda Hollingworth

Editor: Mr. K. Brockhill,
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Huddersfield.