

## HLHS Members Newsletter

Summer 2023

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We would like to hear from you! Please send any news, details of events and books, requests for information and comments that you think may be of interest to other Huddersfield Local History Society members to [publications@huddersfieldhistory.org.uk](mailto:publications@huddersfieldhistory.org.uk)



*Undated photo-postcard of the Tolson Museum*

Welcome to our summer newsletter – we hope you enjoy it. The next newsletter will appear in late September, before our opening meeting of the new season.

*David Griffiths & Dave Pattern*

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our own web site,  
Huddersfield Local  
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not responsible for the  
content of any web sites  
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in this newsletter.*

## Our autumn programme (and your subs!)

Our Monday evening talks for the new season get under way on Monday 25 September at 7.30 pm at the University of Huddersfield, with a talk by David Taylor, **Where did you get that hat? Music hall entertainment in Victorian Huddersfield.** You may have enjoyed his related article, 'Pedanto, the Great Pedanto, the daring Pedanto!' in our [2023/24 Journal](#). The *Journal* also sets out the full programme for the year.

As will your membership card, which you'll receive when you pay your 2023/24 subs, which are now due. Do please check whether you have a Standing Order in place already. If not, you can set one up, send a cheque, or pay securely online by PayPal (including card payments). All these methods are set out on the [Membership page](#) of the website.

### **A Public-House Without Drink**

**I** WONDER how many of my older readers remember a sign outside a building in Upperhead Row many years ago! The building, opposite Messrs. Fisher and Co.'s offices, was at one time the Cambridge Music Hall, but later was taken over by the temperance body, and run as a "dry" public-house. An old reader tells me that as a youth he passed the place daily, and saw its sign so often that the words have always remained in his memory. They are:—

Here's a public-house  
Without the drink,  
Where men may talk,  
Sit and think,  
And thus true pleasures learn.  
Come leave the beer  
And pipes behind;  
Enjoyment better  
Here you'll find,  
Then safely home return.

*extract from the Huddersfield Daily Examiner (10 Aug 1933)*

## Heritage Open Days – 8-17 September

The Society continues to work with others to co-ordinate the annual Heritage Open Days programme across Kirklees. This year's programme offers well over 90 events, with 40-plus new this year, and 20 or so linked to the Kirklees Year of Music. The full programme [can be found here](#), including details of how to book for those events where numbers are limited, and the print brochure will be widely available from about 21 August. Events within and beyond Kirklees can also be searched on the national website, [www.heritageopendays.org.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk)

Direct HLHS involvement this year comes as part of the closing event, **Heritage in the Hudd**, on Sunday 17 September, when we will be running a stall as part of a Huddersfield High St Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) event. From 1.0 to 4.0, Huddersfield Open Market will host a family-friendly afternoon of films, art, food and drink, stalls and exhibitions linked to Huddersfield's heritage, with a Carnival performance at 3.30. The film screenings will include:

- The Town That Bought Itself
- INTERWOVEN Soundscape
- A New Life in Huddersfield – Memories of Partition and Migration
- Round and Around: The Story of Shoddy and Mungo in Song
- A Journey of Faith

Discover Huddersfield will also contribute three free walks to Heritage Open Days – details in the brochure, booking via [www.bit.ly/42Clji](http://www.bit.ly/42Clji)

## Our History Day – Saturday 4 November

With the title **A Square for the Town**, this will focus on St George's Square and launch our new book, *Meet me at Harold Wilson*, supported by the HSHAZ. Full details and a booking form will follow in September, by email or post.

Crucial to the appearance of the Square, of course, are the Railway Station and Lion Chambers, both designed by **James Pigott Pritchett**. A colloquium on his life and work will be held at York Cemetery on Saturday 21 October. Priced at £10, tickets are available from [admin@yorkcemetery.org.uk](mailto:admin@yorkcemetery.org.uk)



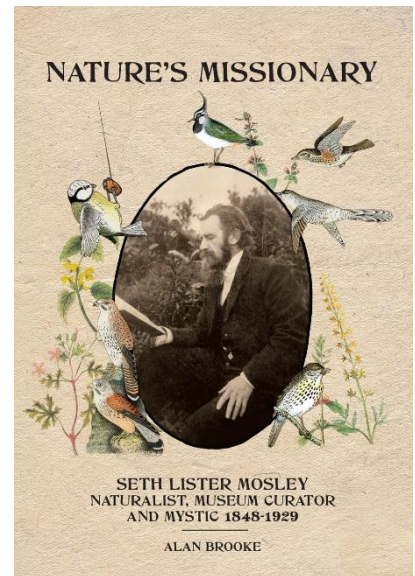
## Museum developments

The much treasured Bird Room at the Tolson Museum reopened earlier this month, and curator Frances Stonehouse has updated us as follows:

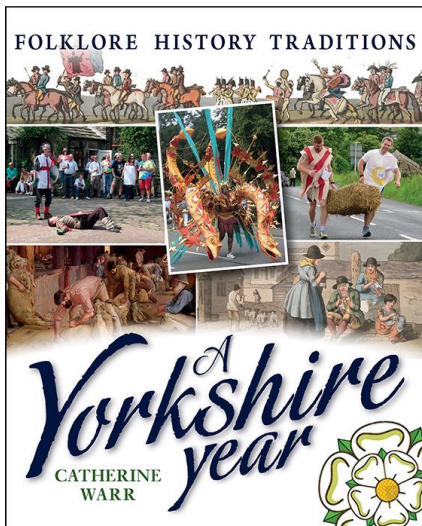
We were hoping to have the room completed for our summer opening hours as we know how well loved it is. We've been able to get the dioramas back in position and reglazed but have run out of time to add in the interpretation and other elements. We'll be undertaking this work as and when possible over the next few months. We haven't been able to add back in all the cases but are looking at ways to incorporate these, possibly into the corridor area, in the future. As with all our collections, we're happy to facilitate study visits to view these items.

Alan Brooke's biography of founder Seth Lister Mosley. *Nature's Missionary*, is now on sale at the Tolson along with several other titles, and the staff hope that later in the year a range of new shop stock, based on Seth's drawings and the Bird Room, will be on sale.

Meanwhile, you may have read of fresh doubts about the extent of the new Museum proposed for the town's Cultural Heart, in view of the Council's difficult financial position. Informal consultations have taken place with several other interested societies and we hope to have more to say about this in the autumn.



## New books of interest



Catherine Warr, who spoke to the Society in March on *A Yorkshire Year: Folklore, Customs, and Traditions*, has notified us that her book of the same title has now been published and is available from bookshops and from [www.carnegiepublishing.co.uk](http://www.carnegiepublishing.co.uk)

And a new book from Amberley, *Clock Towers of England* by Kevin Newman, features Edgar Wood's Lindley Clock Tower among its 37 examples from around the country (though sadly only eight of them are from North of the Watford Gap). It's available from [www.amberley-book.com](http://www.amberley-book.com) Both publishers offer a wide range of local history titles.

## Musical heritage celebrated

TOWNSOUNDS is a free public exhibition charting how Huddersfield and the wider Kirklees district and its music have grown, hand-in-hand, through the voices of the people who have made it. It displays the remarkable diversity of musical expression which has flourished here, reflecting the many different groups and communities who have made it their home. The exhibition runs at Huddersfield Art Gallery (Unit 7 on the Piazza), every Wednesday to Saturday, 11am until 4pm, until Saturday 9 September. It has been made possible with the support of the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Kirklees Council.



## Photography competition

The British Association for [Local History photography competition](#) is back. The theme for this year is 'Up My Steet' and, they say, 'we are encouraging you to look at the stories behind the area in which you live, work or study'. Entries can include a street view, a building, street furniture or a little detail on a wall or pavement. The deadline for submissions is Monday 11 September 2023.

# Huddersfield 70 200 Years Ago!

In May 1878, the *Huddersfield Examiner* published a series of three articles by “Native” (later revealed to be lead pipe manufacturer John Hanson of Folly Hall) titled ‘Huddersfield Seventy Years Ago’ which described the town in the first decades of the 1800s. Portions will likely be familiar to many of you, but seemingly the entire full text of the articles is not available online. So, with apologies for any minor transcription errors, here is the first part...

## HUDDERSFIELD SEVENTY YEARS AGO.

### NO. I.

It may not be uninteresting to the present generation to learn a little of what Huddersfield was upwards of seventy years ago. It was then but a village compared with what it is now. Great and wonderful has been its development within the allotted span of life; so great indeed that young Huddersfield will scarcely credit what I am about to narrate. I who write this am a native of the town, but I have no pretensions to be considered a chronicler or historian. I shall merely relate a few things that came under my own observation when I was a boy. I will do so with as much truthfulness as memory will allow. As to time and date I shall not attempt to be precise.

It cannot be expected that I should know much about them as I was but a youngster at the time of which I write.

My first sketch shall be of New Street as it was in those days. Between the bottom of High Street and the foot of Cloth Hall Street there were but two shops. In one Tommy Ludlam, whitesmith and ironmonger, supplied the Huddersfieldians with kettles and pans, and in the other Tommy Bradley, Saddler, plied his needle and waxthread. These two were near neighbours. All the rest were wool marts and warehouses or private dwelling houses. At that time we had no King Street. The old shambles and slaughter house stood where now King Street joins New Street. I well remember standing when a boy, on a butcher's cratch, and looking out of the grated window of the slaughterhouse into the fields below, where the late Shambles afterwards stood. There, behind the building, was a large pool of blood and refuse which had run from the slaughter-house. Such a nuisance, in these days of sanitary inspectors and district medical officers, would not be tolerated. The fields below were at that time called the Bone Crofts. Soon after this the old shambles and slaughter-house were taken down, which might be about 1807. The bricks of which it had been built were taken to Chancery Lane to build what were called the Livery Stables. There they remained for a number of years, until they were sold and taken away to do duty again, I suppose, in the erection of humble cottages. After the shambles had been removed cellars were dug for the buildings which now stand on the right as one looks down King Street. In the course of their operations the excavators laid bare a number of very large tree roots and some trunks of trees. These still remained perfectly sound and were as black as ebony. The cabinet makers bought them for use in their work. The corner shop, next



to the Boot and Shoe Inn, was built by the late Mr. Joe Kaye, builder. The next to it, was, I believe, erected by John Eastwood, dyer. The large room of this house was the only theatre we had for some years. Godfrey Berry and Doctor Wrigley built the houses which stand on the other side at the top of King Street.

But I must get back to New Street. On the bottom side were some old buildings which were converted into a cotton factory by the father of the late Mr. John Sutcliffe, wool merchant. Here he put up a steam engine, which, I believe, was the second steam engine erected in Huddersfield. I have a lively recollection of sitting, whilst quite a little boy, on the engine beam as it lay in the grass in the fields below. After the works were running, I saw two women, with a stick in each hand, battering away at the cotton as it lay on a table of wickerwork, and a terrible clatter they made. The cotton was opened by this primitive process, and afterwards picked by women and children. They had no scutching machine in those days. I believe that the first steam engine in Huddersfield was put up at Mr. Fisher's factory at the top of Chapel Hill. Now the number of temples to Cotton and Fleece, the deities of the place, erected within one man's remembrance may be counted by tens, nay, almost by hundreds. Let us return to New Street. The large block of buildings extending from Smiles's to the Yorkshire Bank was built by Sir John Ramsden. They were formerly called the New, or Brick, Buildings, and were let at £20 a year for each dwelling house, and that was thought a great rent. After a while the rents were raised to £22, whereupon, as I was told by one who knew the circumstances of the case, old Tom Walker, the tubber, said he would have to quit, as it was impossible to pay such rents and live. The house at the corner of Cloth Hall Street and New Street, now in the occupation of Mr. Smiles, was let as a cloth finishing establishment, at that day called a cropping shop. I used to sit on the doorstep, and watch those inside at work. A stream of blue water ran down from the door, across the causeway and down into the street. Two men used to work at a dubbing board, scraping down the cloth with teasles to raise the pile. I also heard the hand shears at work in the chamber above, taking off the superfluous nap from the cloth. Modern machinery has changed all this. The original windows in the so-called Brick Buildings have almost disappeared. The only shop that retains them is Walton's cigar shop. The name of Walton is still there as it was upwards of seventy years ago. The shop was then kept by Neddy Walton, leather breeches maker. This said Neddy Walton was the only constable we had in Huddersfield at that day. Whenever his official services were required he was sure to be at hand. Did any fight or disturbance of any kind occur, there was the constable, a little consequential man, proud of his authority, and brandishing a little staff in his hand. At the low side of the Market Place there were some old buildings, with shops below and separate dwellings above. The way into the houses was by some steps which led to a gallery supported by stone pillars. One of these pillars is now at the Royd's Farm, near Belle Vue, where it supports the roof of one of the cowsheds. As might be imagined, it is of very rude workmanship. Near the gallery stood the old "Brown Cow," kept by Daniel Armitage. Thither Cockle Jack used to come from Leeds once or twice a week, with a bag of cockles and mussels to sell. On such occasions the bellman was sent round, with the following announcement:— "There is a large quantity of fine fresh West country cockles and mussels brought into town, and at the

Brown Cow Inn they are set down, and will be sold at fourpence per quart." The only other source of fish supply for the town was a fish-stall kept by an old woman named Bradley. Her stall was a little round table with a few fish upon it. It stood at the bottom corner of the Market Place. This Mrs. Bradley was grandmother to Mrs. Porter, of the Cloth Hall Market. The fish trade has been in the Bradley family ever since. About that time, say 1804, we had but one watchmaker, or rather mender, in the town. This was an old woman of the name of Wilson, grandmother to the wife of Mr. Joe Wood, fishmonger. Her little shop stood about where the Wellington Inn now stands. We had another remarkable woman about that time in the person of old Mrs. Murgatroyd, who did all the business of the Post office. She marked the price on each letter, for at that time they were paid for on delivery, and one old woman, named Brooksbank, had all the delivering to attend to. Afterwards, her daughter Betty took the work in hand, and held the position of letter carrier to the district for a long time. Our post office was then down in Old Street, at the right hand corner of the passage going down what is called the Old Post Office Yard. Where would the two poor old women be now in an attempt to discharge the postal duties of our greatly increased and rapidly increasing town? Perhaps Mr. Smith might give an adequate answer to the question. In my early boyhood we had a theatre down that yard, an old laith or barn converted from its original uses for the purpose. It was a good size, and held a large number of people. John Stanton, the celebrated scene painter, was the proprietor. But to return to the Market Place. Where the West Riding Bank now stands, there stood an old public-house, commonly called the Doll Hole, kept by Thomas Paking. On the top side, where Crossley's stationer's shop now is, was once a butcher's shop, kept by a certain Tommy Green. The inhabitants of Huddersfield were then badly supplied with water of very inferior quality. Godfrey Berry, a leading man in the town, proposed a scheme whereby a larger supply of water might be obtained. His project was as follows:— A large reservoir was to be constructed in the Old Market Place, into which the Bradley Spout water was to be brought. Then there were to be four pumps, one at each corner of the Market Place, from which the people might fetch water. Well, Godfrey and his colleagues set to work with a right good will at the new waterworks. A large hole was dug, which might be, I dare say, thirty yards by seven. This they built round and arched over, and when all was ready, they made the astounding discovery that water would not run up-hill. The project was therefore dropped. A considerable amount of public money had been spent and nothing accomplished. The large vault, however, is there still, and when Huddersfield becomes a bonding town it may come in useful.

At one time we had but three draper's shops in Huddersfield. One, on the Upper side of the Market Place, was kept by John Stock; another, opposite the Old Church, by Sammy Clay; and the third, at the bottom corner of the Market Place, by a Mr. Atkinson. The name is now Cooper and Co. We had also but two druggist's shops, one kept by Thomas England; the other, at the Corner of Cross Church Street, opposite the church, by S. Booth.

I must now say a little more about New Street and Cloth Hall Street. What I am about to tell did not come under my own observation. It was communicated to me by one who had seen the state of things he described. My informant was Thomas Coldwell, sergeant in the old volunteers, a very respectable man. I don't know that I can do better than give the



narrative in his own words as he gave it to me, standing near the spot at the time. I remember, said he, when I was a boy we had no cart road from New Street to the Cloth Hall. There was only a footpath through the fields with hedge-rows on each side. To get into the footpath we had to go up two or three steps, and then stride over a flagstone set on end, called a lipping or stepping stone. I well remember searching for birds' nests and getting hips and haws in the hedgerows that divided the fields. One of the gate-posts was slotted out, to hold the edgestone in its place. These gate posts have a further history, which may be interesting to some. When taken from the bottom of Cloth Hall Street they were removed to the top part of the town to be gate posts for the garden of old Mrs. Batley, who kept the Red Lion Inn. They remained there for a number of years, and when the railway companies required the ground, they were removed to Highfield, near the chapel, there to do duty as gateposts in John Marshall's field. That was the last place I saw them in, but they did not rest there long. They were doomed to be again disturbed. When the ladies' seminary was built there, they were removed further into the late James Marshall's field, near the barn. There I believe they are at the present day. My informant also said that if one would look through the iron gates of Joe Haigh's (now Mr. Learoyd's) warehouse yard, one would see a quantity of green grass growing at the back, which grass is a part of the green fields I have been speaking of. I myself well remember seeing that neighbourhood a plot of green field many years after the time of which I have spoken. Cloth shops are now built upon it. Opposite the White Hart Inn was a wide open space of ground, extending from Whiteley's paper warehouse to the Green Dragon, broken only by one warehouse. A few saw pits and a timber yard occupied part of it. I remember a large menagerie of wild beasts exhibiting opposite the White Hart. From the Cloth Hall to the bottom of Macaulay Street was one open field with tenters in it for the drying of cloth.

I will now move on to High Street and Buxton Road. I can remember that "when that I was but a little tiny boy" I went, along with some other boys, to see some rabbits and guinea pigs in a cottage that stood opposite the Wool Pack Inn. Of these cottages there were two, of the kind commonly called one-deckers. One was occupied by a person named Cliffe, a shoemaker. The present generation will perhaps be surprised when I tell them that those two humble cottages comprised the whole of Buxton Road and the greater part of High Street. All was open fields and hedge-rows from the bottom of High Street to the top of Chapel Hill. We had no Albion Street, no John Street, no South Parade. The green expanse was unbroken save for hedge-rows and trees, and a footpath which ran across the fields to Outcote Bank.

*Parts two and three will be included  
in future newsletters.*



Huddersfield in the 1770s, reproduced from Roy Brooks' *The Story of Huddersfield* (1968)