

NEW MILLS LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

the new millne



Detail from a 17th century map showing the location of
Beard Mill or Now Mill

EDITION NO. 2 - SPRING 1989

EDITORIAL

We hope that you will agree that we have enjoyed an interesting and varied Autumn Programme. A brief resume of the lectures is included in this edition of our Newsletter for those who might have missed them.

In our forthcoming season we again offer variety from Manchester, Glass and Chinley to Coalmines and Fans. Something to suit all tastes. So please put a note in your diary now and come along to give us your continued support in the New Year.

We have been a little disappointed with the response to our plea for articles to be included in the Newsletter from ordinary members. Please don't feel that you have to be a historical genius to contribute. Any items of interest, anecdotes, genealogy, memories of childhood, poems, etc etc would be most welcome. Contributions for inclusion in the Autumn 89 Edition should be submitted to the Editors by the end of May.

M A Cooper A Turnock

COFFEE MORNING

The Society is holding a coffee morning at Sett Valley House on Saturday 28 January 1989. The proceeds will go towards the purchase of microfilms which can be viewed in the library.

Contributions of bric-a-brac, books, raffle prizes, cakes, etc etc will be gratefully accepted by any committee member. If you are able to offer any help on the day that will be most welcome.

FROM THE TREASURER

Would you like to help NMLHS financially at no extra cost to yourself? If so, you can do so quite easily by paying your subscription under a Deed of Covenant, provided you pay income tax, however little. This is all you have to do.

Before you pay your next subscription, you sign a Deed of Covenant by which you promise to pay £3 a year to the society for each of the next 4 years. No other personal details are required except your name and address. When you fill up your next tax return you must enter in the appropriate section that you have signed this covenant, and for the first year only you are asked to fill in a form certifying that the money has been paid. Not a lot of trouble, and no expense to you but we can reclaim the tax on your £3 which you have already paid; at current tax rate this is £1. Easy! And if every eligible member of the Society covenanted we could well increase our annual income by £50 or more.

Worth considering? Well, why not decide now to covenant next year's subscription? It's a painless (and perfectly legal) way of helping to increase the resources of an organisation in which you are interested and so making further projects possible. I will gladly supply the necessary forms.

THE COMMITTEE ELECTED IN APRIL 1988

Co-opted Members	
Chairman	Derek Brumhead
Vice-Chairman & Publications Editor	Ron Weston,
Secretary	John Symonds
Treasurer	Olive Bowyer
Archivist	Roger Bryant
Ordinary Members	Rowena Clarke
	Margaret Cooper
	John Humphreys
	Barbara Matthews
	David Pitcher
	Alicia Turnock
Co-opted members	Eileen Miller
	Walter Kelly

MEDIAEVAL & LATER BUXTON (1100-1800)

We started this series of Autumn lectures with Mr John Leach, on the subject of Mediaeval and later Buxton.

A Staffordshire man by birth and from a background of agriculture and railways, Mr Leach first came to Buxton in 1971. Following redundancy in 1984 he joined the Derbyshire Museum Service, and is based at Buxton Museum and Art Gallery.

He described the development of the village of Buxton and the Fairfield area, with the aid of some excellent photographic slides. By the twelfth century Buckstones had a name and belonged to the Peverils. After 1153 the Benedictine nuns settled in the area of Fairfield, so called because it was fair, open land and good pasture. They had numerous outlying farms called Granges, supporting both convent and monastery.

The first known map of Buxton is dated 1631, showing the field system, part strip, part enclosure. Gradually the town developed from this, and even today evidence of the earlier field names and boundaries can be seen. By the sixteenth century the Springs at Buxton were famous and once Mary Tudor had been allowed to take the waters the Spa had never looked back. During the seventeenth century the second Duke of Devonshire rebuilt the Old Hall and with the coming of the turnpikes and later the railways the town's future was assured.

Mr Leach during his talk demonstrated many times the importance for researchers of returning to source material as so often errors are compounded by presuming other people's material was accurate.

M A Cooper

CORN MILLS IN CHESHIRE FROM DOMESDAY TO THE REPEAL OF THE CORN LAWS

Mr Oliver Botts, who works in the Cheshire County Planning Department, illustrated his talk with slides of maps showing the distribution of early corn mills throughout Cheshire and the growth of corn milling during the Middle Ages.

He demonstrated how the evidence of old water mills was often to be found along

the banks of Cheshire's streams and rivers. The existence of wind powered mills was less easily detected as usually all that remains is the field names. Mr tBott concluded his talk with some photographic slides of the mills that are still to be found in the Cheshire countryside, notably Rate Mill at Lower Withington, Nether Alderley on the A34 and the recently converted Stretton Mill. not far from the River Dee.

I visited Stretton Mill earlier this year. You can watch flour being ground by the power of two water wheels turning the old wooden gear trains. One set has wooden teeth which can be replaced individually and easily if they become damaged. The other set is cast on metal requiring the whole cog to be renewed. It was also very notable how much quieter the wooden gears were. I can thoroughly recommend a visit to the mill as it is a fine example of an early manorial mill.

MA Cooper

"THOMAS, RALPH AND SAMUEL WAILER, MILLOWNERS AND METHODISTS IN MANCHESTER AND MELLOR", A LECTURE BY ANN HEARLE, WEDNESDAY 9 NOVEMBER 1988.

Thomas Waller, 1780-1863, began his career as a cotton manufacturer in Manchester, together with his two brothers, Ralph and Samuel. In 1817 he began operations in Mellor and by 1824 the whole of his cotton textile enterprise was centred on a substantial mill he had built at Moor End. From that time Thomas, his brothers, and subsequently his son, Thomas, and his grandson, Thomas, played extremely important roles in the life and livelihood of Mellor, not only as employers and property owners but also as moral and spiritual leaders, for they were devout and active Methodists.

Ann Hearle began her lecture by telling us that the story of the Wailers had all the ingredients of a novel: the unfolding narrative of succeeding generations; the rise and fall of a manufacturing concern; a succession of spectacular family feuds with much litigation; the strong medicine of religion undermined by a sensational marital scandal and not least, a whiff of fraud. With the consummate skill of a born story teller, Ann enthralled her audience with this family saga, a story wrested from the prosaic evidence of press cuttings, deeds, rate-books and affidavits, which are the raw material of local history.

The Chairman rightly praised the high standards of scholarship that had gone into producing the story of the Wallers; Ann Hearle's lecture was an example of the very best kind of history: of "scholarship lightly worn", of research which never loses sight of the fact that history has no purpose if it fails to elucidate the people of the past.

Ron Weston

My lecture makes use of these press cuttings to shed light on the details of everyday life in New Mills, such as what people did with their leisure, their working conditions and living standards. I also refer to the accounts of the more extraordinary events that took place in New Mills in that half--decade, notably the many attempts by ordinary working people to better their lot by fair means or foul, through Christian action, self-help or, in extremis, rebellion against authority.

Ron Weston

SPRING PROGRAMME 1989

All meetings are held in the Library Lecture Room on Hall Street, and commence at 7.45 pm.

WEDNESDAY 18 JANUARY: "A Manchester Family in Glass" - Mr Tom Percival.

Mr Percival's great-grandfather started a glass manufactory in Ancoats, Manchester, in 1844. He will mention the types of glass produced, the methods of manufacture and the industries in the area at that time. He will bring along some pieces from his collection for us to see.

WEDNESDAY 15 FEBRUARY: "The Growth of Chinley - 1865 to the present" - Mr Alan Watson.

Chinley resident Mr Watson will discuss the development of his town and the historical landmarks of note, for example, the coming of the railway and its effects on the valley. Mr Watson's talk will be illustrated by slides and aerial photographs.

FRIDAY 17 MARCH: "The Coal Mines of New Mills" - Mr Derek Drumhead.

By popular request our Chairman has been prevailed upon to repeat his talk first-given to the society last year (but to include some new material). Coal mining in and around New Mills dates at least from the sixteenth century - the earliest known documentary reference is 1599 - but the chief period of mining was in the second half of the nineteenth century. Over thirty named collieries have been located; most of these were shaft mines up to 300 feet deep, but some were worked by adits. Among the valuable documents which help the study of the local mines are coal mining leases, mine abandonment plans and geology maps. These will be referred to in Derek's talk, which will be illustrated by slides.

WEDNESDAY 10 MAY: AGM followed by a talk from Society member Margaret Bedgood on her collection of fans. Did you know there was a local history connection? Come along and find out how.

SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

New Mills History Notes No 18 "New Mills 1835-39" by Ron Weston will be on sale from 9 December 1988.

NEW MILLS HERITAGE AND INFORMATION CENTRE

One of the main functions of the Centre, which is at the rear of a former Co-op building at the Lop of Union Road, is to tell the "New Mills Story" as it has

unfolded over the centuries. Occupying three of the four exhibition rooms, the story will tell how a rural district of scattered hillside farms - going back to the Domesday Book and probably earlier - was transformed into an industrial town by the growth of the textile industry. An important part in this transformation was played by the Torrs - the sandstone gorge formed by the rivers Goyt and Sett - which was the site of the early water powered mills. A working group from the New Mills Local History Society has written the story and a Community Programme group based at the County Museum Services at Matlock is preparing the displays. The building was opened in July 1988 and while the display work on the New Mills Story is being completed at Matlock a series of changing exhibitions is being mounted in the Centre. Outside the Centre a viewing platform is being constructed with a dramatic view over the gorge.

The first room telling the story of New Mills will be devoted to the pre-industrial period, with an emphasis on the natural features of the district and the formation of the Torrs; the district in the times of Domesday and the Royal Forest of the Peak; the activities of the rural community; the fascinating story of the early sixteenth century "New Mill" - which gave its name eventually to the town; and growth of communications. A less well known aspect of New Mills industry was coal mining and an unusual feature of this room is the entrance to an adventure tunnel, a reconstruction of a coal mine adit similar to those once common on the hillsides around the town.

A second room will describe the growth of the town - the rise of the cotton industry and its associated industries of engraving copper cylinders, calico printing, dyeing and printing. A large part of this room is taken up by a model of the Torrs and the town as it was in 1884 - the year the Union Road viaduct spanning the gorge was built - with a recorded commentary in support.

A third room will take us into the twentieth century, describing the later growth of New Mills as a town and community. It is hoped in this room to give an idea of what life was like for the people who lived and worked in New Mills over the last eighty years. Other themes might cover recreation and entertainment, shops, traders and the various small enterprises which have contributed to the life of the town.

A fourth room will be reserved for temporary exhibitions, and this particularly should be of interest to individuals who have their story to tell, perhaps celebrating an anniversary or special event.

An important part of the Centre's work is in the area of local studies for schools and a Head Teacher has been seconded by Derbyshire Education Committee to coordinate this activity. Thus, the children will have the opportunity of studying the history of the town and placing it in the context of today's scene. A room in the Centre is set aside for this work and there is appropriate equipment to support it.

The capital cost of setting up the Centre, which amounts to over £70,000, has been met: by funds provided by Derbyshire County Council and New Mills Town Council, by grants from the Countryside Commission, the East Midlands Tourist Board, English Heritage, and by donations. Running costs are being met by New Mills Town Council. At present staffing includes a full time Information Assistant, a part time Administrator, a; well as the schools adviser and his clerical assistant. There is also a splendid team of volunteer assistants who work at the Centre, particularly at week ends.

The Centre provides New Mills people with a place to learn about the growth of the town. It is an attraction for visitors, being situated very advantageously next to the bus station and Central railway station. It is by the side of the path

(recently named Rock Mill Lane) leading down into the Torts and the Sett Valley Trail and thus convenient for following the specially written trails about the mills and bridges. The entrance foyer includes a shop selling publications, maps and trails, and an information point. It is also possible to get a cup of tea or coffee.

There is an Honorary Archivist (who is also Archivist of the Local History Society) and the Centre will look after and display from time to time items to do with New Mills heritage and history. Already some very interesting documents, photographs, tools, ledgers, souvenirs, programmes, pottery and textiles - all related to New Mills - have been donated or given on permanent loan, and some have been put on display.

Individuals or groups who would like to make use of the temporary display spaces are asked to contact the Centre. The Centre is next to the bus station and the address is Rock Mill Lane, New Mills, SK12 3ES (Tel: 0663 46904).

The Centre is open every day except Mondays from 9.30 am until 4.30 pm (10.00 am to 4.30 pm on Sundays).

We look forward to seeing you!

Derek Brumhead

AN EXHIBITION OF PHOTOGRAPHS OF NEW MILLS PARISH IN 1987 NEW MILLS HERITAGE AND INFORMATION CENTRE, 19 NOVEMBER - 31 DECEMBER 1988

During 1987, the New Mills Local History Society carried out a photographic survey of New Mills Parish. The project was organised by John Symonds, the Secretary of the Society. Members of the Society and their friends took nearly 500 photographs in the area and a video was also made. The purpose of the project was to provide a comprehensive coverage of the Parish which in time will become a historic reference source. An exhibition containing about 200 of the photographs, selected to show a wide range of scenes, buildings and activities is being shown at New Mills Heritage Centre (next to the bus station). The exhibition can be seen up to 31 December and the Centre is open every day (except Mondays) from 9.30 am to 4.30 pm (Sundays 10.00 am to 4.30 pm). It will also be open on Boxing Day.

Derek Brumhead

NEW MILLS PLACES - 1 DIGLANDS

The old buildings at Diglands shown on the OS map were demolished shortly before 1960. They were situated on what is now the Diglands estate, between Beech Avenue and Poplar Avenue (map ref SK 009863). Does anyone know of a photograph showing the old buildings before demolition?

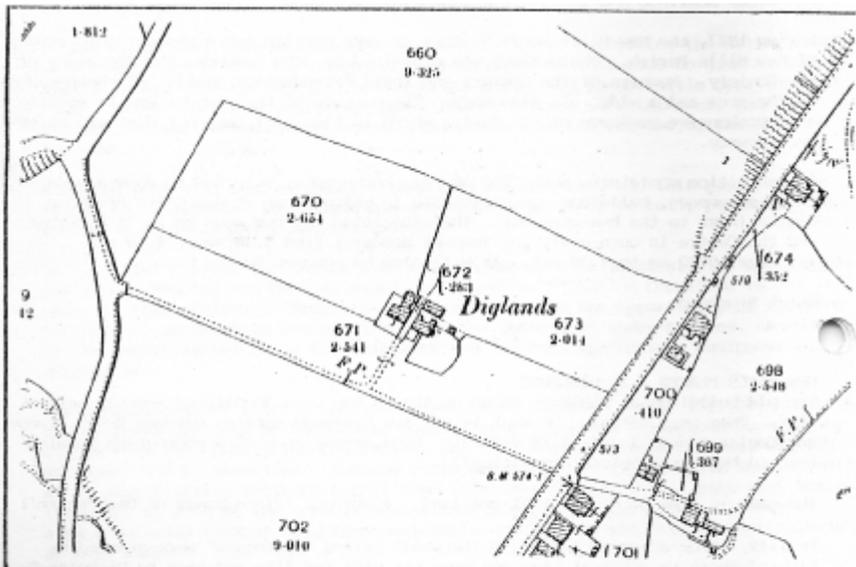
The name is from OE dic (ditch) and land. (Cameron: 'Place-Names of Derbyshire') In 1449, three acres of land on "Ollershed" called "Dyclondes" were granted by Richard Shore to James of Legh and Emma his wife for life and then to Nicholas Berd in fee tail. Since Nicholas was later outlawed for murder, it is not clear whether the property descended to his son John. (PRO DL3/7 B2)

In 1596, messuages etc in various places including "Deggland alias Dickland" were granted by Dame Maria, wife of Sir Richard Egerton, to her son Thomas Leigh of Adlington in fee tail. Maria held the property in dower from her late husband, Thomas Leigh. (39th Report of Deputy Keeper of Public Records, pp 115-6)

In 1600 a close called "Diglandes", in the tenure of Elline Warrenton, with all houses, buildings etc, was leased by Thomas Leighe of Adlington and his son Sir Urian Leighe to Edward Hyde of "the news milne" for a term of 80 years after the death of Elline Warrenton, widow of Richard Warrenton. (This is the earliest known use of "New Mill" as a place name rather than as a name for the corn mill from which the place name is derived.) (NMLHS D369 - copy of original held privately)

The conditions of the previous lease are very interesting. Edward Hyde had liberty to take sufficient house-bote (wood for repairing house), hay-bote, plough-bote, fire-bote and cart-bote; and liberty to cut briars, brambles, gorse and underwood; and liberty to make marl pits and to take marl and clay for use on the premise. If any tenant died during the course of the lease, Sir Urian could take the best beast or other possession of the deceased as a heriot. Edward Hyde was also obliged to be ready to work at his trade of walling for fourpence a day at the command of Sir (Arian).

In 1612 the same close, described as late in the tenure of Edward Hyde deceased, was granted in fee simple by Sir Urian Leghe to William Hyde of "Newmilne". One wonders what Sir Urian got as his heriot. (NMLHS SS6)



Diglands on the 25-inch Ordnance Survey map of 1898

In 1841. according to the tithe map information, "Diglands" consisted of some buildings and surrounding fields, all owned by Thomas Fernley. The buildings consisted of a house occupied by John Johnson and a house, barn, yard and garden occupied by George Ashworth. The surrounding fields (numbered 670, 671, 673 and 700 on the OS map) were occupied by James Etchells. Apparently the turnpike road from Low Leighton to Birch Vale (Hayfield Road) had cut through the edge of the original property.

Roger Bryant, 22 October 1.988

ANY IDEAS?

I was intrigued to find this short report in 'The Stockport Advertiser' of 8 December 1837:-

"IMMENSE IRON SHAFT - One of the largest iron shafts ever completed in this district was last week cast at Messrs Gordon and Davies' Foundry, Lancashire Hill. It weighed five tons and a half, and is intended for a water wheel at New Mills."

If anyone can shed any light on where precisely the shaft was installed, please let me know.

Ron Weston

A NEW PROJECT

The foundations have been laid for a study of the probate records of the New Mills district (wills, inventories and related documents). A team of three volunteers, led by Mrs Audrey Lee, has made numerous visits to Lichfield in order to compile a list of probate documents, covering the whole of the parish of Glossop. As a result of this hard work, the New Mills documents can be picked out. The Local History Society is in the process of obtaining photocopies of these documents, and the study of the photocopies will begin in a WEA course starting on January 17 (details follow). Do come along - this should be an absolutely fascinating project. It is hoped that the results of the project will eventually be published by the Society.

Roger Bryant

WEA Course: LOCAL HISTORY - Probate Records

Tutor John H Smith Commencing: TUESDAY 17 January 1989

Duration: 20 meetings

Time: 7.30 pm - 9.30 pm

Venue: New Mills Upper. School

Would you like to find out about local people such as Raphe Hibbert (alias Smyth) of Whytle who made his will in 1665? A list of his possessions was made in 1670 after he had died and included such items as "twoe Kyne and one Heiffer", "Beeffe and Bacon" valued at 10s-Od, "twoe stones of Woollen-yarne", and "One Dodd in the new parlour". Probate records provide a unique source for local and family history. The wills give information about family relationships and property. The

inventories give fascinating details of personal possessions. The class will study the probate records of the New Mills district, beginning at the mid-16th century and working forwards. One of the objectives will be to make accurate copies of the documents so that they can be more easily read and interpreted. practice will be given in reading handwriting of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries; no experience is needed. Although primarily intended for those with an interest in the New Mills district, the class will also be useful for anyone who wishes to use probate records or who wishes to learn to read the handwriting in historical documents.

Enrol at first meeting. Full fee £25; OAPs, early retirers and full-time students £16; FREE for the unemployed. Further information: Mr R Allan, tel NM 42809.

MANCHESTER REGION HISTORY REVIEW

The Manchester Region History Review, published twice a year by Manchester Polytechnic, is devoted to promoting interest in all aspects of the history or the Manchester region. Besides a wide range of authoritative articles on all aspects of the region's history, it offers regular reviews of books and local history publications, a calendar of events, exhibitions and lectures in local history, a comprehensive annual bibliography of books and articles about the history of the region, guidance on source materials and methodology, and a news and information notice-board.

Another regular feature is a series of articles on local history societies, libraries and museums, and in the current number (Vol 2 No 2 Autumn/Winter 1988/89), there is a full and concise account of the New Mills Local History Society by Roger Bryant. Covering five pages and containing seven illustrations from the Society's Archive Collection, it includes a particularly useful review of the Society's history to date, followed by a description of its activities, membership and publications. Not only is it very convenient for members to have this review of their own Society, but it also publicises our existence and activities over the whole of the Manchester region.

The Manchester Region History Review is on sale at the Heritage Centre and at Bella Kennett's Book Stop, price £2.95. Among the interesting articles are those on the Lusitania anti-German riots of 1915; the Salford gas scandal of 1887; Chetham's Library; John Edward Thornton, a forgotten Victorian photographer; and the maps and sewers of underground Manchester.

Derek Brumhead

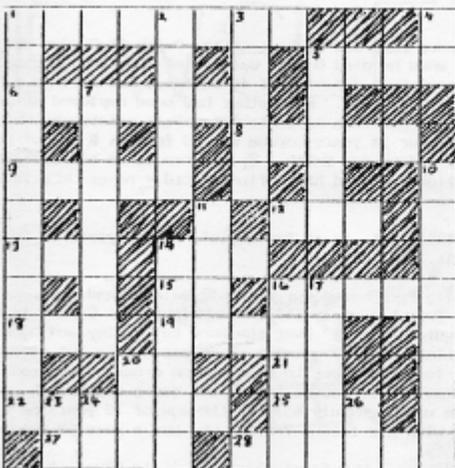
"ODE TO A TOWN"

A young man called Bill,
A weaver by trade in the mill,
He lived in a house,
With six children and spouse,
Not built back to back,
But up in the air like a stack.
Bill's front door opened on High;
Forty feet below his neighbours did lie.
On Meal Street they could be found,
This underliving so solid and sound.

Where is this town built on hills,
 With funny houses and cotton mills?
 You can walk on the moors
 Or down in the Torrs.
 This old home town of Bill's
 Is of course our New Mills.

If you can do better than this, and I know you can, please submit to the editors by May for inclusion next year. Failure to do so may result in another awful ditty from "The Rhymeless Wonder".

ARE YOU GOOD AT CROSSWORDS?



Clues Across

- 1 & 28 Where in the future the present will reveal our past (8&6)
- 5 Old institution in New Mills (4)
- 6 Formerly a busy area for transport (7)
- 8 A knoll on the outskirts of the town (5)
- 9 Many were laid in & around New Mills in the second half of the 19th century (5)
- 12 Found in lead mines but not in coal mines (3)
- 13 A silly animal? (3)
- 14 This organisation has members in New Mills - & elsewhere (3)
- 15 Initially it was built centuries ago at Low Leighton (2)
- 16 Partially responsible for the growth of Newtown in the early 19th century (5)
- 18 Vital to us all (3)
- 19 The park under the town (5)
- 20 Headless rodent (2)
- 25 Sounds like a New Mills river (4)
- 27 When the sun shines in the Hague Bar/ Brookbottom Road area? (4)

- 21 -- & down (2)
- 22 Place near Watford Bridge (6)

Clues Down

- 1 Once called 'Farthing Hall' because a farthing an hour was deducted from wages to pay for it (11)
- 2 Builders of the turnpikes only had primitive ----- (5)
- 3 This head was the scene of a crime some 175 years ago (5)
- 4 Buxton perhaps?
- 5 -----ley is a fairly common surname in New Mills (5)
- 7 This castle was the scene of a tragedy in 1930 (7)
- 10 Recent discovery not far from the Town Hall; one of more than 30 around New Mills (4&4)
- 11 In brief, what else you can get from 1 & 28 across (4)
- 14 King of the Torrs? maybe once, but not now! (6)
- 16 Container - for oil? - or an organisation which helps the bereaved (5)
- 17 Tree prolific in the northern part of New Mills? (5)
- 20 Sounds as if a celebration caused trouble (3)
- 23 One night initially (2)
- 24 Negative (2)
- 25 Races which take place in the Isle of Man (2)

SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Clues Across 1 & 28 Heritage Centre 5 Co-op 6 Gowhole 8 Eaves 9 Lines 12 Ore
13 Ass 14 CND 15 OF (Ollersett Farm) 16 Canal 18 Air 19 Torrs 20 (R)at 21 Up
22 London (Place) 25 Set(t) 27 Noon(sun)

Clues Down 1 High tee Hall 2 Tools 3 Green(head) 4 Spa 5 Cover(ley) 7 Windsor
(Castle) 10 Coal Mine 11 Info(rmation) 14 Cotton 16 Cruse 17 Aspen(shaw) 20
Ado 23 ON 24 No 25 TT

Olive Bowyer

OBITUARY

Many members of the Society were very sad to hear of the death of Gordon Wright. Although he was 86 years old when he died Gordon was one of the kind of people who seem to go on for ever. He came from a family of 10 children and arrived in New Mills on "June 25 1908, my 6th birthday". His father had been employed at Love Clough Mill near Rawtenstall and had then moved to Birch Vale printworks when the Love Clough Mill burned down. For 51 years Gordon worked for J & R Lee of New Mills as a sheet metal worker and copper smith. Mr F H Lee is on record as saying that "He was a most conscientious man and had a fine record - never ONCE late for work in 51 years".

A lifelong Methodist, it is said that, as an "advocate", he had preached in all 16 churches of the merged Circuit.

Two things he will be specially remembered for were his walking and his recall of details of New Mills history from his early life. You might meet Gordon in the street when he was off on a quick "stroll" over the tops to Chinley and back. I once went for a day trip to Llandudno. I got out of my car during the afternoon half way down what is a very long sea front to find Gordon crossing the road to meet me. We stopped for a chat and of course he was off for a short walk over the Great Orme before tea, but he was then only 85! At the age of 70 years he walked the whole of the Pennine Way with his friend Ted Fox who was a mere 62 years. Gordon's memory of historical detail was fascinating and it is pleasing to know that we have a tape recording of a talk he gave to the Society about his life and times in the town. I remember that this included an account of how he nearly died when still a child. He was rushed to hospital in a pony and trap and recalled over-hearing the doctor telling his mother that he was not expected to live. However, this nice, friendly man lived a full and interesting life and left us with many pleasant memories.

John Humphreys

ALBION ROAD CORN MILL

I should be glad to hear from anyone who has any information, however little, about the corn mill which stood on Albion Road on the site of Clapham's Builders' yard. I understand that it was working in the early years of the present century, at least until the period of World War I.

Olive Bowyer