

NEW MILLS  
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY  
NEWSLETTER



Edition 19

Autumn 1997

## **AUTUMN PROGRAMME 1997**

Fri. 12th SEPTEMBER

ALAN ROSE

"Methodism in the High Peak"

Fri. 10th OCTOBER

NEVILLE KIRK

"The Nature of Regional and Local History"

Fri. 14th NOVEMBER

J.P. SKYNER

"People of Bramall Hall"

Fri. 12th DECEMBER

DAVID FRITH

"Todd Brook and Coombs Reservoirs"

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## **From the Editor**

The East Midlands Industrial Archaeology Conference held at New Mills Sixth Form Centre on 10th May, was not, of course, one of our Society's events: but it might just as well have been. The day was attested a great success and from our point-of-view did much to promote the town as a site of significant importance to industrial archaeology. Well over a hundred people attended, some from as far afield as Lincoln and Northampton, together with quite a few of our members. All three speakers, Derek Brumhead, Roger Bryant and Ron Weston, are members of the Society, and the same personnel, together with John Humphries conducted groups of visitors through the Torrs in the afternoon. Other members devoted their time to selling the Society's publications, including our latest title, "New Mills - a look back at its Industrial Heritage." which was brought out to coincide with the date of the conference.

Everyone speaks well of this attractive volume: but, so far, sales have been rather disappointing. The book cost a great deal to produce and it would not have been possible to do so without a generous loan from our Town Council, one that we shall have to repay in the not-too-distant future.

If you haven't bought yourself a copy yet (and another for your cousin in Australia), please do so. It's a snip at £4.95.

Best wishes,

*Ron Weston*

## **A MESSAGE OF THANKS**

The evening of Friday 13 December 1996 is some time ago but it is fixed in my memory as the most astonishing and surprising event of my life. The "This is your life in New Mills" event was a complete surprise and of the greatest honour. I should like to take this opportunity of thanking the society, my friends and their messages, and all those who spent so much time and effort in making it a success particularly Olive Bowyer who planned and directed the whole operation. It was especially satisfying that all present found it a very enjoyable occasion. The red book has a special place on my bookshelves.

*Derek Brumhead*

## A WALK ROUND CHAPEL MILTON: AN ARMCHAIR HISTORY WALK

**10 January 1997 - Derek Brumhead**

The numbers refer to locations on the map.

1. Approaching from the Chapel-en-le-Frith direction, it is possible to park on the main road (A 624) outside the Ferrodo works just before the roundabout. The manufacture of brake blocks and brake linings by this firm was started by Herbert Frood who lived at Chapel and opened his works herein 1902. The reception building with its semi-circular glass front and Crittall-type metal-framed windows is typical of 1930s light industry, although the building was erected after the war in the 1940s. The research and development block is a fine example of 1950s architecture before the depressing prefabricated era of the 1960s arrived.

The roundabout was built in 1987 at the time of the Chapel-en-le-Frith bypass and the stretch of road to Bowden Lane is also new.

2. At T just inside the grounds of Stoddart House can be seen the entrance to the tunnel which carried the Peak Forest Tramway under the road. Opened in 1797 this may be the oldest existing tramway tunnel in the country, if not the world. The tramway was built to carry lime and limestone for transshipment onto barges on the Peak Forest Canal at Bugsworth, and thence onward to Marple and the Manchester region.

3. At G on a bank above the road is a former gateway to Stoddart House. The initials refer to the Bennett family, which bought the house about the end of the eighteenth century, which may explain its early nineteenth century architecture. James Clegg, minister of Chinley Chapel 1702-55 lived on the road. Opened in 1797 this may be the oldest existing tramway tunnel in the country, if not the world. The tramway was built to carry lime and limestone for transshipment onto barges on the Peak Forest Canal at Bugsworth, and thence onward to Marple and the Manchester region.

3. At G on a bank above the road is a former gateway to Stoddart House. The initials refer to the Bennett family, which bought the house about the end of the eighteenth century, which may explain its early nineteenth century architecture. James Clegg, minister of Chinley Chapel 1702-55 lived at an earlier hall-farm on the same site. The back of the present house was the front in Clegg's time. At this point the main road originally climbed over a hill - hence the need for the tramway tunnel. In the 1930s, the road was lowered, most of the tunnel destroyed, and the gateway now remains at the original level.

*Walk down the main road and under the bridge carrying the bypass, noting the line of the tramway on the left (marked on the*

*map). Continue down the hill to the bridge over the Black Brook just past the junction with Bowden Lane.*

4. Note the stone standing over the middle of the stream, S on the map, marking the boundary between the townships of Chinley and Bowden Edge. When these were known as hamlets in the eighteenth century, Chinley was one of ten hamlets in Bowden Middlecale, and Bowden Edge was one of three hamlets in Bowden Chapel. Bowden Lane was the original road to this point from Chapel-en-le-Frith. Locally, it was known as Monkey Lane after a pub near Waterside. The present main road, since much altered, was built as a turnpike road from Chapel to Glossop under an Act of Parliament of 1792.

5. Mill House and Mill Cottage stand on the site of a duchy of Lancaster corn mill (Maynestone Mill) which was here in the late fourteenth century. It was one of several such mills in the region (such as our own New Mill), to which people were obliged to take their corn for grinding - the Duchy had a monopoly. The mill received its water for driving the waterwheel from a tributary stream to the Black Brook.

*Follow the footpath under the two railway viaducts.*

6. The viaducts were built by the Midland Railway at different times. The viaduct towards Chinley from Buxton was built in 1867; the viaduct towards Sheffield in 1894. *After climbing the stile, climb the grass bank to the left.* The stretch of road here is a track belonging to Ferodo for vehicles testing their brakes, and is built on the line of the Peak Forest Tramway.

*Return to the footpath and cross the fields towards Bridgeholme. On the right is an embankment by the side of the Black Brook. From here one can see in the stream a weir and teat built for the mill at Bridgeholme. The weir raised the level of the stream, hence the need for an embankment to prevent flooding.*

7. The former cotton mill at Bridgeholme is a fine example of late eighteenth century, or early nineteenth century, construction and has been converted into apartments. It is typical of the out-of-the-way mills built at this time to make use of a water power source. *Turn left at the lane.*

8. At this location, the line of the Peak Forest Tramway has been interrupted by the construction of the bypass; the section between here and Chapel Milton is now buried under the embankment. A realigned tarmaced section was built for Ferodo and is used, as previously, for brake testing. Towards Bugsworth, the track follows the true line of the tramway, and although the iron plate rails were removed in 1924 when the tramway was closed the stone blocks are still in place under the surface.

*Return along the lane past Bridgeholme Mill. On reaching the main road (A 624) turn left towards the junction with the road to Hayfield.*

9. The house on the main road opposite the railway bridge has a plaque on it 'Toll Bar View 1878'.

*Walk under the bridge and stand outside the Crown and Mitre pub.*

10. The hamlet of New Smithy, takes its name from a smithy built here when the original one was demolished to build the railway viaducts (Location 6 above). The railway bridge was built in 1867, along with a new section of road in front of the pub. Before then, the turnpike road from Hayfield to Chapel went behind the pub. It is still there although now a cul-de-sac against the railway. The front of the pub continued to face this old section of road until the 1920s when it was rebuilt.

*Return under the bridge and walk back towards Chapel.*

II. At this point stand opposite the entrance to the High Peak Borough Council offices. These Victorian buildings dating from the late 1890s were originally the Chinley Infectious Diseases (Isolation) Hospital, which served the local authorities of New Mills, Hayfield, and Chapel. It was later taken over by Derbyshire County Council.

*Continue along the road and just under the railway bridge turn into the*

*entrance of Chinley Chapel.*

12. Chinley Independent Chapel was built in 1711 to serve the then Presbyterian congregation, started by William Bagshaw 'the Apostle of the Peak' in 1662 and which originally met in a barn at Malcoff. James Clegg was minister 1702-55 and his grave can be seen by the side of the path on the south side of the church. Another grave adjacent is that of William Bennett who married Grace Murray, much to the disappointment of John Wesley.

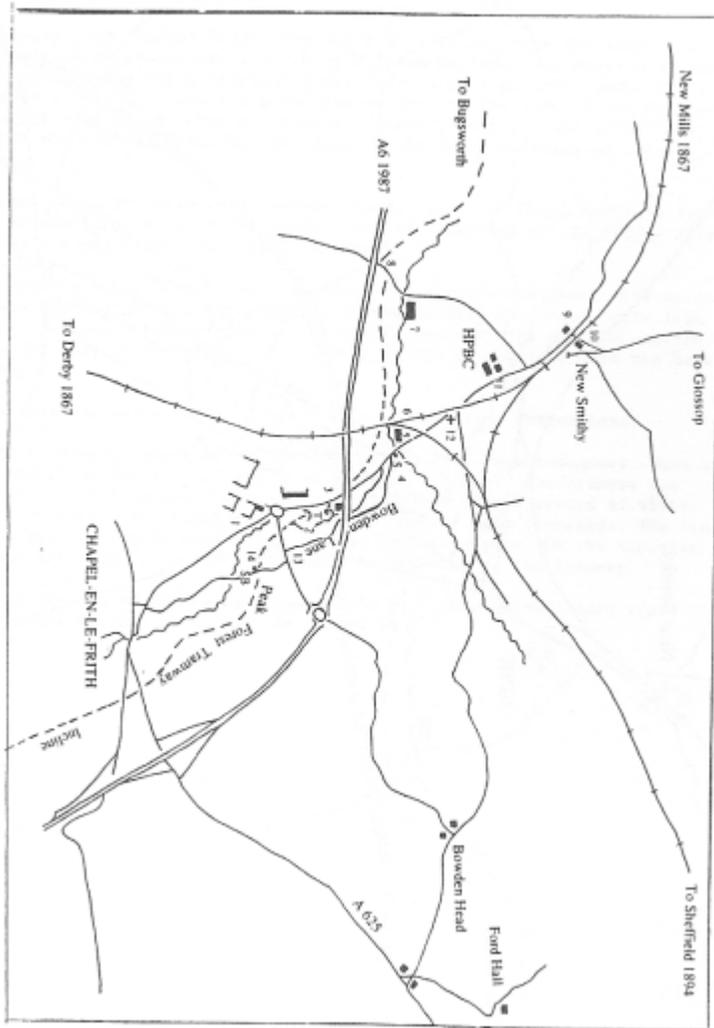
*Continue along the main road towards Chapel past Mill House and turn left into Bowden Lane. After a few yards, turn to look back at the bridge which carries the main road over the Black Brook.*

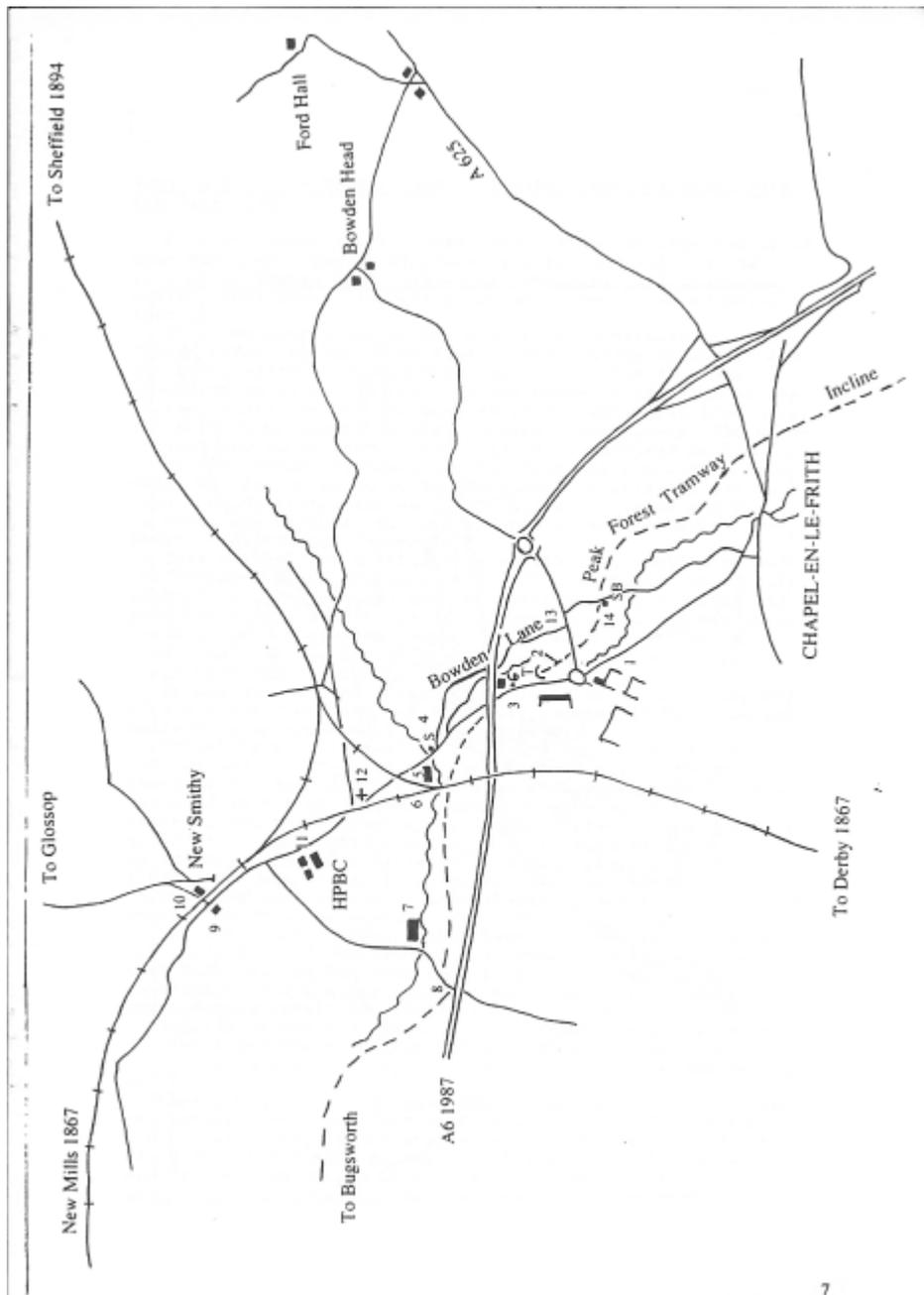
13. Continue along Bowden Lane. Ignoring the tarmaced surface, this narrow stretch of lane gives one a good impression of what main roads were like before turnpike roads were built. At the T junction with the new section of road, the lane is now offset as a result of the alterations when the bypass was built.

*Cross over the new section of road and continue along Bowden Lane.*

14. Here, Bowden Lane crosses the line of the Peak Forest Tramway. Note the stone block by the side of the road ('SB' on the map). The tramway was constructed of iron rails pegged down onto stone blocks spaced at three feet intervals. This block was, therefore, one of many thousands. The line of the tramway can be seen going towards Stoddart House. On the opposite side of the road, a wooden shed stands on the line of the tramway.

*Walk to the end of Bowden Lane and at the main road (A 624) turn right towards the Ferrodo works and the parked cars.*





**Rags to Riches - Thomas Legh, 1792-1857,  
Kate Atkinson, 14th February 1997**

Kate Atkinson, who has been researching the Legh family of Lyme Hall for a number of years, presented a fascinating account of Thomas Legh, traveller, explorer, art collector, writer, coal owner, industrialist and promoter of scientific farming.

With the completion of his studies at Brasenose College. Thomas undertook The Grand Tour, concentrating on Greece and the Nile, which he explored further into Nubia than any preceding European. He kept copious notes of all that he saw, shipped quantities of statuary and other artefacts back home. the British Museum being the principal beneficiary. The Greek friezes now to be seen at Lyme Hall were acquired by him.

In 1815, Thomas returned briefly from his travels to serve under Wellington at Waterloo. Back at Lyme Hall, he put in hand a major restructuring of the house to create a place fit to house and exhibit the rare and costly art treasures that Thomas had reserved for himself.

This portrait of a fabulously wealthy, well-educated and accomplished young man contrasts with his origins as one of several illegitimate children of Peter Legh by a mother who had been a maid at a vicarage. It was only because his father had publicly recognised Thomas as his heir, fighting off other claimants in chancery, that he was able to pursue this "rags-to-riches" career.

Thomas was married twice: first to Ellen Turner, daughter of a wealthy Blackburn industrialist; second to Maud Lowther, heiress to an industrial empire in Cumbria. Whilst Lyme Park remained a country seat, a place for culture and leisure. Thomas Legh's estates in south-west Lancashire around Newton-le-Willows were more prosaic. Thomas invested in his coal-mines there, introducing state-of-the-art technology to produce coal for the Cheshire saltfield at competitive rates. He also figured prominently in the development of railways, actively promoting George Stevenson's Manchester to Liverpool Railway, which passed through the Legh estates. Later Thomas established the famous locomotive works at Newton-le-Willows.

In later life, Thomas took a keen interest in agriculture, particularly in stockbreeding. His comprehensive drainage of Lyme Park has had the long term effect of changing the vegetation from heather to grass moor (*Molinia*) - not an advantageous result for the deer.

Shortly before his death in 1857, Thomas invested in the Stockport and Whaley Bridge Railway, with the provision of a station at Disley for his own use, (originally called Newton Halt).

Thomas Legh, with his many and varied activities, brought into relationship two very different ways of life, that of the cultured, dilettante gentleman and the hard-headed man of business. It was through men with his breadth of vision that old wealth from landed estates was employed to create new wealth in the Industrial Revolution.

### **Waterways into Castlefield. John Fletcher, 14th March 1997**

John Fletcher's talk transported us along numerous waterways into the heart of the once thriving inland port of Manchester.

By means of maps and photographs, we were taken from the time when the area at the end of Deansgate was simply a field to the prosperous days when the wharves were laden with goods delivered by fleets of working boats.

Then followed the scenes of more recent times: a silted up canal and derelict warehouses.

Finally, with the restoration programme beginning in 1988, we witnessed a transformation of the area into an urban heritage park.

John explained that the Inland Waterways Association, of which he is the Manchester Branch Chairman, regularly hold rallies at Castlefield to help promote the heritage park and the canal system generally. Young people in particular are encouraged to come and learn how to enjoy the canals as a leisure facility.

John showed a great enthusiasm for his subject and his slide presentation was excellent.

### **Trespassers and Debtors in Tudor and Stuart Derby, Dr. E.A. Lord. 11th April. 1997**

The town of Derby in the late sixteenth to early seventeenth century consisted of five urban parishes, each with its presiding church, serving a total population of no more than two-to-three thousand. Derby was principally a commercial centre dominated by the cloth trade. The burgesses ran the town, jealously preserving their commercial privileges confirmed to them by a charter of Queen Mary.

Plague was a constant threat during that time and there were at least two severe outbreaks in the 1590's.

Having described the general condition of the town and its inhabitants. Evelyn Lord then turned to the evidence of the town's Court of Record, which dealt with pleas of debt and trespass. Debts, large and small, for non-payment of goods were extremely common and involved people from all walks of life: gentry; yeomen and husbandmen; burgesses and tradesmen. So many litigants were involved that owing and being owed must have been a fact of everyday life for most people. The records of cases shed much light on the credit system in that period.

Trespass was a term used in its widest sense and involved the abuse of property. The commonest complaints brought before the court, and some of the most bitter disputes, involved infringements of the rules regarding the open fields around the town, which gives the lie to the cherished notion that the common

field system regulated a harmonious community acting in concert for its mutual benefit.

Dr. Lord's stimulating account of a well-researched topic prompted many questions from an interested audience. NOTE: An article on this topic, by Dr. Lord, appears in Derbyshire Archaeological Journal, 1997.

### **James Clegg - the man. Dr. John Smith. 9th May 1997**

Last year, John Smith talked to us about the religious life and work of James Clegg (1697 to 1755), the Presbyterian minister and prolific diarist. We found this topic so enthralling that we invited John to return to tell us something of the other aspects of Clegg's uncommonly full life as revealed in his diaries.

Following his ordination in 1703, Clegg, living at Malcoff near Chapel en le Frith, found that he occupied an uneasy social position: shunned by Anglicans and Catholics alike, not being regarded as a proper minister; as a moderate Calvinist, often out of step with his increasingly extreme colleagues; in terms of secular status, more than a yeoman, but not quite a gentleman.

To support his growing family, Clegg took on the tenancy of Stoddard Hall Farm in 1713. The diaries reveal much interesting detail regarding farm life and the farming year at that time.

Not content with being a minister and a farmer, Clegg also studied and practised Medicine, receiving a medical degree from Aberdeen University in 1729. Clegg was an indefatigable traveller, and his accounts of innumerable journeys on foot and horseback to tend the sick, attend to farming business, visit friends, give spiritual, legal and financial advice, are amongst the most absorbing passages in his diaries.

He witnessed the passage of the Scottish army in The '45, and graphically records the panic roused in the neighbourhood.

With his tremendous capacity for work and writing, Clegg accomplished more than most of his contemporaries, even allowing for the fact that men of his generation were driven by the work ethic to a greater extent than today's.

John Smith brings a light touch to a scholarly undertaking. Under the spell of his words, we found the evening passing all too swiftly.

## **VISIT TO WIRKSWORTH VILLAGE AND NATIONAL TRAMWAY MUSEUM, CRICH - SUNDAY 8th JUNE, 1997**

Our coach left New Mills bus station at 9.30 a.m. on a lovely sunny morning, and we journeyed south through scenic Derbyshire to our first place of call, Wirksworth.

At the Heritage Centre we were met by Bob Mumford, who took us on a walk around the 'Town Trail' of this most interesting award winning town, which these days is also famous for 'Peak Practice'. During this tour we had many welcome pauses as points of interest were indicated to us and also to recover from the hill climbing of the steep streets.

Some of us visited the Church and others the Heritage Centre where the Wirksworth story is housed in a former silk mill, and when departure time came it was generally felt we wished we had had more time here.

Then we continued the short distance to Crich and the National Tramway Museum. On arrival we were given an old penny which we exchanged for our "All Day" tickets on the trams which come along every few minutes. Grown-ups and children alike enjoyed the rides through spectacular countryside - even if the seats were a little bit hard. We also visited the shops and tramsheds all full of attractions for all. Some of us timed it right and missed an afternoon downpour, whilst if you were unlucky you got wet on an open air tram.

Late afternoon we all returned home safe if a little tired, wondering where we will go next year.

### **LORD BRIMELOW**

The note about Lord Brimelow in the last newsletter brought in a number of replies from persons who had known him or went to school with him. He was born 25 October 1915, died 5 August 1995. He attended New Mills Grammar School, where several people in the town remember him. Tom had two brothers, George and Sidney. He was the middle one in age. Mr Albert Hill was in the same class as his brother Sidney, and Tom was in the class below. He was an outstanding student, and won a scholarship to Oriel College, Oxford. Several remembered that the family lived on Spring Bank, a house called Cliff Bank. Later, his father and mother lived on Bate Mill Road in a bungalow called Doone Low.

Tom became an outstanding linguist, fluent in Russian, German, Spanish, Polish, Italian and Swedish, and others. In Russia he was once asked 'Mr. Brimelow, where did you learn to speak such good English?' His most prestigious appointments were: Ambassador to Poland 1966-69, Permanent Under Secretary at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Head of the diplomatic service 1973-75. His awards were impressive, and included KG G, OBE. He entered the House of Lords in 1976 and served as Member of the European Parliament 1977-78.

We are grateful to the following for information: Mary Crabtree, Dorothy Gadd, Albert Hill, Nora Newtown, George Tomlinson, Margaret Wood.

*Derek Brumhead*

## Obituary

### **THOMAS MEIRION GRIFFITH. 20th January 1902 - 6th May 1997**

Thomas Griffith has been a member of the Society for many years and it is sad that we note the passing of this gentleman.

He lived alone and was largely housebound due to his age and infirmities. It was a real treat for him to come to the Society's monthly meetings, where he enjoyed meeting friends and listening intently to the talks. Though he was infirm in body, his mind was sharp and his ability to recall the past was often amazing. Anyone in conversation with him could not help but be impressed by his wealth of knowledge about people, places and events.

Mr. Griffith will be particularly remembered for his notable and extensive research into the life and work of John Potts, who made such a great impact on the industrial history

of New Mills. I can still recall the excellent lecture on the life of John Potts given to the Society by Mr. Griffith on 12th September 1984. A copy of his manuscript is lodged in the archives of the Central Library in Manchester. A photo-copy of his typescript, "John Potts of New Mills. Artist and Inventor." (1982) is to be found in the Society's archive.

On 10th May of this year, Roger Bryant gave a lecture on the life and work of John Potts to the East Midlands Industrial Archaeology Conference, which was held in New Mills. Roger acknowledged the work of Mr. Griffith and dedicated the lecture to him as a memorial.

Olive Bowyer and I attended the funeral of Mr. Griffith on behalf of the Society. Whilst these occasions are inevitably sad there was also an air of celebration. It was clear from the Address that Mr. Griffith had led a full, happy and fruitful life.

*John Humphreys.*

A small display to illustrate "Strines History Walk." by Rosemary Taylor can be found in the local history section of Marple Library (upstairs). The display will continue into September.

## **The Strines May Queen**

Before the first World War, the Print Works, St.Paul's Church and the village community, were much more closely linked than they are today. The church had been founded in 1880 by Mr T.H.Nevill a partner at the works and maintained by his son Mr.Charles Henry Nevill of Bramall Hall, who succeeded him. By 1913 the church was still the private property of Mr.Nevill, although by then the works had been incorporated into the Calico Printers Association. The partners at the works by this time were Mr. Charles Heape of High Lane, and Mr. G.H.Norris of Disley .Mr. Nevill and Mr. Heape were connected by marriage. The priest-in-charge was Canon J.F.W. Drury, and many of the people who lived in the village worked at the works and attended the Church notably Israel Shaw who combined the duties of dyehouse foreman and Churchwarden. These links are the background to the tale of the Strines May Queen. Part of the programme for 1913 is reproduced here.

In the Reporter dated May 31st. under the heading "Pretty Marple Fete" we find:

"Crowning of May Queen at Strines.

A pretty event and one which was quite new at Strines took place on Saturday. Instead of having the usual treat and field day for the scholars attending St.Paul's Mission Church School, Strines, it was decided to have a carnival and crown the May Queen. It was also resolved to invite children attending the Marple Ridge United Methodist School and the children who go to Brookbottom Primitive Methodist Sunday School. (An early ecumenical enterprise ? ) It was at first suggested by the committee that the daughter of Canon Drury should be May Queen, but Canon and Mrs. Drury considered that a native of the district should have the honour, and the lot fell to Bertha. Richardson, of Greenclough Farm."

There follows a lengthy report listing the participants and the prizewinners at the sports which is summarized in the programme reproduced here.The Reporter estimated that " about 600 persons were present."

Photographs show Israel Shaw leading the procession from Canon Drury's house, the Grange, to the cricket ground where the crowning took place, and which is where the works now stands.

In the June issue of his Parish magazine Canon Drury wrote " I am now in a position to place on record. that our' somewhat large but simple effort' was a great success The children entered into the spirit of the day with great zest and enthusiasm. They behaved splendidly. There was no rudeness, illnature or grumbling; they behaved as Strines children always do. ....To our surprise, in spite of considerable expenditure we made a profit of nearly £5. We trust that this event may become an annual fixture. ..I must tender the thanks of the com-

mitteeto the New Mills Band for the generous terms on which they came, and contributed in no small measure to our enjoyment."

By July a Permanent Standing Committee had been set up, and a bank account opened with the £5.

A similar ceremony was held in 1914 and reported in great detail in both the Reporter and the Herald. The May Queen was Mary Bate, 10 year old daughter of the organist, described as 'regal and self-possessed'. New Mills Band had been replaced by Thornsett Prize Brass Band and the procession also included' Marple Surprize Discord Band, a party of young men in ridiculous costumes and funny make-up '. The spectators included the partners and the manager of the works and their wives and the manager's wife, Mrs. Gray, presented the prizes.

I can find no record of a May Queen ceremony in 1915, so presumably such frivolities were prevented by the war and the custom was never revived in Strines. although it is flourishing in several nearby villages.

Three present members of the Local History Society are related to people named on the 1913 program. Can you identify them?

*Rosemary Taylor*

**Train Bearer:**  
Mildred Clayton,  
Dane Drury.

**Crown Bearer:**  
Robert Ashworth

**Bands of Honour:**  
Mary Bate,  
Jenn Drury,  
Enil Nuttall,  
Fanny Rowley,  
Jane Ward,  
Edith Williams.

**ANSWERS:**  
Sheila Richardson is Bertha Richardson's niece.  
Geoffrey Taylor is Bertha Taylor's nephew.  
Pat Priddle is Mildred Clayton's daughter.

**THE MAY QUEEN,  
BERTHA RICHARDSON,  
GREEN CLOUGH.**

The QUEEN will be CROWNED at 3-15 p.m. by  
Miss BERTHA TAYLOR.

## **A Search for my Roots and a New Mills Family, by Colin Hyatt**

It all started in 1991 when at the age of fifty-five I suddenly realised that apart from my immediate family I knew only of one other relation still alive. I have only really known my father's side of the family: his four elder sisters and their husbands. of which only the eldest had a child. my cousin Joan. who is nine years my senior. I therefore decided to try and find out about my mother's side of the family, whose maiden name was Dyer.

I had a childhood memory of a small stone-built barber's shop where. if you entered the shop from the road and went upstairs to the living area, you could go outside again via the kitchen door and still be on ground level. This was puzzling to a small child ( the whole row of shops and houses are built along the line of and cut into a steep hillside). Knowing that my mother had been born in New Mills. my wife and I. on holiday in Derbyshire some five years ago. spent a whole day walking round the town hoping to find the shop again. but without success. Finding the address in my mother's papers of her cousin, Ken Dyer, I contacted him and in the following year paid him a visit. Ken in the mean time had the Dyer family Bible brought to his home. My wife and I spent a very interesting afternoon talking with Ken about the family, looking at old photos and studying the family Bible, which had the family births, marriages and deaths written in the front. Ken told me that the shop I was looking for was not in New Mills but was my mother's uncle William Dyer's barber's shop in Chapel-en-le Frith. We later called and spoke to the present owner. Ken also gave me a copy of a family history compiled earlier by himself and his cousin, Fred Dyer. who turned out to live only an hour away from my home in Southampton. Another cousin. Edith Grant (nee Dyer), I discovered, lived only fifteen minutes away. I have visited all three many times and, after spending many hours in record offices, now know of more cousins than I can readily remember, including some in Canada and Australia.

Part of the following account was first taken from the family Bible presented to William Henry Dyer by his father, William. The Bible has since passed down to James Norman Dyer. then to his youngest son. Kenneth. and so to his youngest son. Paul. The latter has two sons, so the further passage of the Bible down the male line is assured. The eldest of Paul's sons, Andrew, has been given his Great Uncle Andrew's South Africa campaign medal. This account has also been expanded with information given by word-of-mouth and acquired from various record offices in England. Scotland and Australia.

The Dyer Family of New Mills, Derbyshire.

My great grandfather, William Dyer, was born on 10th July 1854 in the parish of Kilmarnock. between Dumbarton and Loch Lomond. Scotland. He was the son of Francis Dyer and Jessie McCrimmon. according to the family Bible. though the only records found show Francis married to a Helen Dunlop! By

trade he was a travelling expert calico block printer, the same as his father. He made all his own wooden pattern blocks and mixed his own colours for the hand printing of various delicate fabrics and hangings. He trained others. and so passed on his experience in this intricate trade. His broad Scottish accent made him a little difficult to understand by strangers, but he was widely sought after for his skills in tile printing of cloth, as is verified by letters and pattern samples still in existence.

William married Annie Golding. who was born 4th November 1855 in the White Hill area of Dartford. Kent. She was the daughter of Henry Golding, a block cutter by trade. What is intriguing is. how did they meet? There are letters showing that William travelled to Kent where, having met the family, he could have encouraged them to move to New Mills. where the Goldings were later found living at Spring Bank.

Annie also had a brother, George. who had a little old-fashioned barber and tobacconist shop at 29 High Street in Whaley Bridge (now a bistro). Her sister. Harriet. married Edwin Stafford of Tanpits Farm, New Mills. They had two known children, Enos and Percy. Annie also had a brother, Tom, and sister. Emma, living in Crayford, Kent.

William and Annie were married at St. George's church. New Mills, on 16th February 1874, when William was twenty and Annie nineteen. They must have moved to Newchurch. Lancashire. for this is where their first two children were born (the first died in infancy). They later moved back to New Mills and lived in High Street (thought to be no.44). They had in all eleven children. William set up his eldest son, William Henry, in a barber's shop when he was twelve in a place called Spout Gutter, which was half way down High Street on the left hand side, opposite Meal Street. It was demolished in 1938. It was said in an advertisement in the Oddfellows, New Mills. Directory of 1891 to be three doors down from the Liberal Club. There was also a second shop higher up High Street (thought to be no.15). There are photographs of both shops. thought to have been taken in August 1899. William Henry's brothers. Andrew and John. worked as his lather boys.

I expect that Thomas and James started in the trade in this way too. One story told is that William. having some clout with the overseer of one of the mills, had a suit made for his son, George. The jacket fitted, but the trousers needed altering and were returned. There was a fire at the mill and the trousers were lost. Whenever the youngsters in the family passed the mill, they would shout, "That's where George's trousers are."

By all accounts, William was a hard man and enjoyed the odd whisky. He used to knock the boys about a bit when he had had too many and became short-tempered. One day, Andrew and John, having had enough of his moods, hit him, supposedly, with indian clubs. doing him grievous harm. Knowing that

after this they could no longer live at home and thinking also that they may have killed their father. they left and joined the army (few questions were asked in those days, if you took the King's shilling). They joined the Royal Scots Fusiliers in, of all places, Kilmarnock, their father's place of birth.

Annie died 6th May 1901, aged 45. Her obituary in the Ashton-under-Lyne Reporter (Derbyshire edition) reads: Death of Mrs. A. Dyer.

We regret to have to record the death of Annie the wife of Mr. Wm. Dyer of High St. New Mills. The deceased passed away on Monday aged 45 yrs after a short illness of about nine days duration. The deceased, who was a native of Crayford Kent. was held in the highest respect by a large number of friends and acquaintances and on Wednesday when the funeral cortege passed along on its way to the New Mills Parish Church where the body was interred: all blinds were drawn as a token of respect to the deceased who was widely known in New Mills. Previous to leaving the house a short service was held. which was conducted by Mr Henry Turner the manager of the New Mills Co-op Soc. The mourners were as follows: 1st coach. Mr Wm Henry Dyer husband of the deceased. George, Thomas. Annie, Jeannie, Norman and Mary Ellen Dyer the sons and daughters. 2nd coach. Mr & Mrs Wm Henry Dyer of Hurst, son and daughter-in-law. Mr George Golding of Whaley Bridge her brother. Mr Tom Golding of Crayford Kent her brother, Mrs Emma Pettit her sister, Mr George Hargreaves of Crayford Nephew, Mrs Tom Stafford of Tampitts New Mills and on foot there walked: Messrs J Wooley, Henry Turner, J A Ingram, Walter Ingram, J N Etchells, A I Redfern the undertaker and Mr J N Street. A large number of people witnessed the final funeral arrangements which were conducted by the Rev. J L Knowles MA Vicar. Wreaths were sent by: Wm. Dyer husband, Son Thomas, Mr Thomas Golding, Mrs Emma Pettit, Mrs Edwin Stafford, Mr A I Redfern & Family.

The last address known for William was 138 Bradshaw Brow, Turton, where he died 20th July 1911, aged 57 years. His obituary appeared in the Ashton-under-Lyne Reporter (Derbyshire edition)

Death of Mr Wm Dyer

The death occurred on Thur. at Bradshaw nr Bolton of Mr William Dyer a Block Printer who formerly resided at New Mills for many years. The deceased who was 57yrs of age was well-known and generally respected. He leaves a widow and eight children (nothing is known of his remarrying).

The funeral of the late Mr Wm Dyer took place on Monday afternoon in St. George's Churchyard New Mills, conducted by the Rev. A T Beeston. The chief mourners were: Mr & Mrs Wm Henry Dyer son and daughter-in-law, Mr J N Dyer son, Mr Thomas A Dyer son, Miss Mary Hellen Dyer daughter, Mr Francis Dyer brother, Mr George Golding of Whaley Bridge, Mrs Stafford of Church Road, Masters Alec & Colin Dyer grandsons.

*to be continued* ... The author will be pleased to hear from anyone with information concerning the Dyer family. Colin Hyatt's address is. 44 Barnes Lane. Sarisbury Green. SOUTHAMPTON 5031 7BZ

## **THE LOCAL HISTORIAN**

The following volumes have been placed in New Mills Library. The contents include:

### **Volume 26 No 4 (November 1996)**

B G Blackwood, 'The Cavalier and Roundhead gentry of Norfolk'.

Janet Brown, 'Recording war memorials in Northumberland'.

Melvin Jones, 'Long-distance migrants and cultural identity: the example of a Welsh colony in south Yorkshire'.

Derek Nuttall, 'The book trade in Cheshire prior to 1850'.

Book reviews include 'The history of Maidstone'; 'The protestation returns of 1641-42'; 'Religion in Hertfordshire 1847-51'; 'Women and families in oral history, 1940-1970'

### **Volume 27 No 1 (February 1997)**

Angus Winchester, 'Parish, township, and tithing: landscapes of local administration in England before the nineteenth century.'

The importance of this article can be deduced from the author's introduction: 'This article explores something of the relationship between such territories at the local level [and examines] the relationship of these administrative territories to patterns of settlement and landholding... We will only begin to understand the diversity of our administrative landscape fully when we are clear about the precise nature of the territorial units and administrative functions which we encounter in our localities.'

Della Hooke, 'The charter bounds of the south west of England'

Antony Taylor, 'The garden cities movement in a local context: the development and decline of the Penkull garden village estate' [Stoke-on-Trent].

Book reviews include 'The great rebuilding of Tudor and Stuart England: 'Revolutions in architectural taste'; 'The open fields of Northamptonshire':

'Population, economy and family structure in Hertfordshire in 1851'; 'Sport and identity in the north of England'.

There are the usual list of recent publications in local history. Included with both journals is 'Local History News', a 24-page newsletter. A subject and author index for volumes 24 and 25 (Feb 1994-Nov 1995) is also included.

## **Volume 27 No 2 (May 1997)**

Oliver Rackham, 'Crossing temple; trees, woods and timber-framed buildings'. The author, who is a botanist, is one of the leading authorities on the history of vegetation and the landscape.

Steve King, 'Power, representation and the historical problems with sources for record linkages in two Yorkshire townships 1650-1820'.

Here is an article for all family history detectives. One quote should suffice to illustrate the importance of its theme - 'Any project which involves the reconstruction of detailed life cycles cannot afford to ignore the fact that a single life cycle could consist of references from a range of sources in which the person concerned had total, partial or no control over the information recorded.'

Ann Mackinnon, 'The files of the nineteenth-century Incorporated Church Building Society as a means of reconstructing the past: the example of St Andrew's church Earls Colne, Essex.'

Henry Maitles 'Confronting facism: attitudes of the Glasgow Jewish community in the 1930s'.

Books review include: 'British population history from the Black Death to the present day' edited by Michael Anderson: 'A clearer view of the Census' by Edward Higgs, published by HMSO and warmly recommended by the reviewer: 'Neston [Wirral] 1840-1940': 'An atlas of industrial protest in Britain 1750-1990'.

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