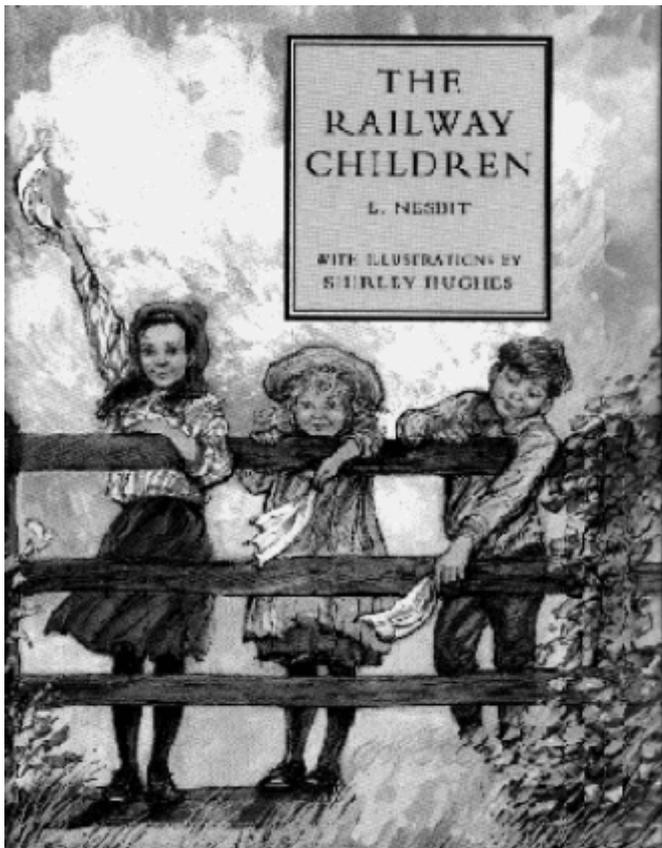


**New Mills
Local History Society
Newsletter**



Edition 24

Spring 2000

SPRING PROGRAMME 2000

Fri. 14th January
DAVID GEORGE
“Underground Waterways of Manchester”

Fri. 11th February
QUIZ NIGHT in the Town Hall

Fri. 10th March
DAVID FRITH
“Built by Brindley”

Fri. 14th April
Dr. BRIAN ROBINSON
“Walls Across the Valley”
(the building of the Howden and Derwent dams)

Fri. 12th May
A.G.M.
HEATHER TAYLOR
First World War Archives Research

COMMITTEE 1999-2000

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Vice-Chairman	BARBARA MATTHEWS	
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TRANSPORT BY PACKHORSE

10th September 1999 - Howard Smith

Written accounts of the history of transport are much more likely to deal with canals and railways than roads: yet, before the Industrial Age, movement of goods by packhorse was of fundamental importance to the economic life of the country at every level. Until the advent of the turnpike roads in the eighteenth century, most long-distance routes were unsuitable for wheeled traffic.

Furthermore, packhorse convoys were quicker and cheaper than such waggons as existed prior to the eighteenth century. For example, while a packhorse train could complete a two hundred mile journey to London in five days, it would take a waggon eleven.

Howard Smith, in his excellent talk, explained how all manner of goods and raw materials were transported by sturdy animals, each carrying a pair of wicker baskets. A normal load for a packhorse was two hundredweights (110 kg). In the Buxton area, for example, the trade in lime and coal, which had to satisfy the growing demand of towns like Manchester in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, amounted to several thousand packhorse loads per week.

The most important commodity moved over long distances in medieval times was salt. In our area this was transported from the Cheshire salt towns across the Derbyshire Pennines. Evidence of these salters' ways still survives in street names. Other relics of old packhorse routes include packhorse bridges (not sufficiently wide to allow access to wheeled vehicles), drinking troughs, milestones, and inns with names referring to the packhorse trade.

The life of the packman was hard and sometimes dangerous, especially in inclement weather and when there were highwaymen about.

Turnpike Trusts brought properly-surfaced and graded roads, which enabled heavy waggons pulled by teams of heavy horses to operate. These developments eventually put an end to the packhorse convoys; though they died a lingering death, holding out until the mid-nineteenth century in some districts.

Howard Smith is to be congratulated in presenting his well-researched findings in such an interesting way.

Ron Weston.

METHODISM IN MELLOR

8th October 1999 - Alan Rose

With this talk, Alan Rose completed his trilogy on Methodism in Hayfield, New Mills and Mellor. Although there are printed histories of the first two, there has never been one of Mellor; perhaps this was the first occasion on which the various facets of it had been presented together.

Although John Bennett is the acknowledged pioneer of Methodism in this corner of the High Peak, in Mellor the beginnings of it predated him. The first Methodist there was John Turner, a yeoman farmer who lived with his two daughters at the Bongs. An encounter with David Taylor, an erratic preacher, had led to his conversion and by 1741 he and his daughter were committed Methodists. A meeting with John Bennett did follow soon afterwards for it is recorded that in 1743 the two men rode to Sheffield to hear John Wesley preach. In the following year, John Bennett made at least three visits to the Bongs, which by then had become a meeting place for a small group of followers; there the very beginnings of Methodism for the whole of the area took place. There were other preaching places, Mill Brow, Sandhill Farm, Bottoms Hall, but the Bongs was the principal one, a key place. John Wesley chose to preach there, perhaps on three occasions, certain of the friendly reception that awaited him. In an entry in his journal for 28th April 1745, he described the houses "lone, on the side of a high mountain, whither an abundance of people were got before us."

That the Bongs was important in the history of Methodism in the area can be seen from the Methodist Circuit Account Books which have survived from the formation of the Circuit in 1752. The books identify where the centres were, for each one was required to contribute towards the allowances of the preachers. Whereas most of the early ones soon disappeared from the accounts, the Bongs persisted as a centre until 1847.

In 1786, the Manchester Methodist Circuit, having become so large, was divided and the Stockport Circuit was created, based on a chapel in Hillgate. The Superintendent Minister was required to record annually the names of all followers and the groups they attended; twenty Mellor names appeared in 1791 under the Centre of Catstone. Two years later the same surnames, the Sigleys, Moults, Staffords were listed under Longhurst Lane. In 1808 the New Mills Circuit, to which Mellor belonged, was formed when the Circuits were again reorganised and Stockport split. By 1813 Mellor members were attending fortnightly services, led by lay preachers at Longhurst Lane, Mill Brow and the Bongs. Since 1740 the growth of Methodism there had been steady and continuous. All that was to change when the Waller family moved to the area.

The family came from Eccleshall in Staffordshire, but about 1800 three of the sons, Thomas, Ralph and Samuel, moved to Manchester and established a cotton spinning business there. A directory of 1821 listed the three as a partnership

of cotton spinners in Market Street and New Islington, Ancoats. However four years earlier the eldest, Thomas, had moved to Mellor, leaving his brothers to manage the two mills in Manchester. By 1820 he had set up a new mill at Dove Bank where Ralph joined him in 1824. By 1836 the mill was the second largest in Mellor and rated at two-thirds the value of Samuel Oldknow's Mellor Mill.

The brothers were serious Methodists but not of the same kind. In the early days in Manchester all three were Wesleyans; Thomas and Samuel were local preachers and Ralph was a class leader. Because of their money, they were regarded as important. After Thomas left for Mellor, there was a disagreement amongst the Manchester Wesleyans and Ralph and Samuel left the group. They joined the Primitive Methodists, newly arrived in the town and based in Ancoats. The members were in the main working class and as Ralph and Samuel were the only two with money it was they who paid for the first chapel in Jersey Street.

Samuel did not move to Mellor but he did achieve fame by becoming the Primitive Methodists' first martyr. Arrested in 1821 in Ashton whilst preaching in the Market Place in front of the parish church, he was charged at Salford Quarter Sessions with regularly obstructing the highway and for noise and disturbance. Refusing to be bound over not to repeat the offences, Samuel was sentenced to three months in prison. Momentarily he became famous, although nothing is known of him afterwards.

Primitive Methodism reached Mellor in 1823, the preachers coming from Bradwell and not Manchester and Stockport. It was providential that Ralph Waller arrived at the same time. He and some of his Manchester associates purchased land for the first Primitive Methodist chapel in New Mills and two months later some more at Moored for one to be built next door to the mill. The latter, costing £450 to build, was opened in January 1828.

Because of his wealth, Ralph was the leading figure in the church. Hugh Bourne, the founder of the Primitive Methodists, visited him in 1833 and when through physical illness he had difficulty in walking, quarterly meetings were held at his house, "to have benefit of his counsel." A mark of the success of the movement is that two months before his death in June 1837, 102 children were enrolled at Moored Sunday School.

Thomas Waller, who was not a Primitive Methodist, probably joined the Methodist group which met at Longhurst Lane. In 1834, a split occurred within Wesleyan Methodism; disagreement had arisen not over doctrine or organisation but about the Sunday Schools, which were strongly supported. The belief had grown that Wesleyan ministers, who rarely spent more than two or three years in an area, wanted to control them and especially to ban the teaching of writing on Sundays. So great was the quarrel that many, including Thomas Waller and those from Longhurst Lane, decided to leave the Wesleyans and join instead a new group which to begin with was called the Wesleyan Association and later the

Free Methodists. By 1838 there were no Wesleyans in Mellor at all. At first the new group met in hired premises, but by 1845 it had a chapel and Sunday School at New House Hill on land given by Thomas Waller jnr.

In the latter half of the century, the history of Methodism in Mellor was one of long, slow decline. In 1864 Thomas Waller died, aged 84. He lies in a solitary grave outside New House Hill Chapel, the only person to be buried there. Financial aspects of his will caused difficulties. It went to Chancery, remaining there for many years. Although his son Thomas Waller jnr. in the Landowning Returns of 1873 was depicted as owning only 17 acres of land, its gross rental value was the second largest in Mellor. Disaster, however, was to strike. In 1873 a quarter of the mill burnt down, followed by the rest of it three years later. In 1878 Waller eloped with another man's wife, leaving his estate unsold and his sisters, all of whom had a financial interest in it, unpaid.

Mellor was in crisis, not only had the mill gone but the colliery too had closed down; there was massive unemployment. By 1881, of the 383 houses in Mellor, 110 were uninhabited. Ten years later, the population was almost halved. Many had sought employment elsewhere or emigrated overseas. The Primitive Methodists, however, continued to open chapels: Brookbottom in 1874 and Mill Brow in 1880.

During the following years the character of Mellor altered completely. The change is mirrored perfectly in the baptismal registers of New House Hill Chapel. In the 1850's the infants' fathers were dyers, millhands, colliers; in 1901 commercial travellers, clerks and salesmen, and by 1921 accountants, engineers and sales managers. Mellor had moved up the socio-economic grouping and become a posh suburb.

As Mellor's population declined, so also did the power of organised religion, particularly after World War I. In 1928 the Primitive Methodist Chapel at Moor End closed, Mill Brow in 1963 and New House Hill in 1991, exactly 250 years after John Turner's conversion.

In opening his talk. Alan Rose confessed to "scraping the bottom of the barrel to find material for it." A treasure chest would best describe the wealth of information on Methodism in the North-west accumulated by him over the years, That he could "tailor-make" three talks for the Society, covering areas so closely adjoining, is a measure of his knowledge of the subject. It has been a privilege to have him as a speaker.

Statistics of Ecclesiastical Census taken on 30th. March 1851

Unfortunately, the day chosen was one of very bad weather in the Peak District and the size of congregations was much less than normal.

Every church, chapel and meeting house had to count its congregation.

MELLOR Parish Church	Morning service	20-30 people
	Afternoon	341 inc. children
	Total	371
	seating capacity	655, none free
Primitive Methodists	Afternoon service	82 people
	Evening service	100 people
	Total	182
	seating capacity	250. 80 paid
Wesleyan Association	Morning service	129 people
	Evening service	115 people
	Total	244
	seating capacity	322, all free
In church at Mellor		797 people
Total population of Mellor		1777 people.

45% in church, despite the weather. All ministers reported average attendance 25% more than this figure, i.e. claimed regular attendances of over 1000 in all.

Alan Rose provided these figures as a snapshot of the church—going population of Mellor.

HARTINGTON

12 November 1999 - Ron Weston

Most of us in the Society, of course, live in the 'dark peak', that region of grit-stone, shales and coal seams where the ancient settlement pattern was one of dispersed farms, few nucleated settlements, and an absence of communal farming and strip

fields. But only a few miles away beyond Buxton is the 'white peak', a region of Taddington, Monyash, surrounded by the fossilised strip fields of a former open field system and a periphery of former common lands with their large rectangular and squarish fields of later date. Each unit forms a parish and Ron's talk was concerned with the very large parish of Hartington which stretches in an elongate strip from Goyt's Moss in the north to Biggin in the south, bounded on the west by the rivers Goyt and Dove, and on the east roughly by a Roman road, 'The Street'. Its extent can be judged from the fact that although essentially a manor of the 'white peak', in its north-west extremity it passed into 'dark peak' country at Goyt's Moss and Axe Edge. This was 'Earlsfrith', an area of hunting ground in the royal forest of Peak in medieval times.

The major source of information around which the study is centred is a magnificent map of the manor of Hartington in 1614 which is held in the Chatsworth archives. Ron spent many days, if not weeks, tracing the whole of this map and many of his slides were extracts of his meticulous tracings. They showed in startling detail the settlements at

the time with their burgages (long narrow plots owned by the burgesses), roads and tracks, the common fields divided into innumerable strips (all named with their occupiers), common lands, and other details such as corn mills. There were also some fine slides of the actual map in colour, which only served to emphasise the labour in making the tracings.

The greater part of the talk concerned the Ferrers estates which included many manors in Derbyshire, one of them being Hartington. Granted originally to the Ferrers followers of William I (Hartington is mentioned in the Domesday Book as the land of Henry de Ferrers), the estates remained in their possession until forfeited in 1266, when they passed to Edmund the first earl of Lancaster, becoming part of the duchy of Lancaster in 1399. Although all this time ago, Ron was able to show that there were still elements of this period in today's landscape. For instance, the Ferrers built a string of defensive sites, the most outstanding being Pilsbury with its dramatic motte and bailey earthworks, the finest in Derbyshire, a strong point in which, in those days, was no doubt hostile country.

Their outstanding contribution, however, must be the establishment of the villages themselves, not only Hartington but places such as Earl Sterndale, Hurdlow, Heathcote and Biggin. These are beautifully portrayed on the 1614 map and with the help of slides of today's landscape, Ron was able to show how much can still be recognised, such as the layout of the village, the greens, the former open fields and of common land pasture. Many elongate greens or single main streets in the Peak District villages (Chelmorton comes to mind), originated as extensions of the commons into the village centre providing access in and out for animals from the farms which were sited in the villages. The Ferrers also built the first church in

Hartington, although today's building has very little fabric if any, left of it. In 1203, the first market in the Peak was founded by William de Ferrers, who was also earl of Derby, under a charter of King John's reign, providing a Wednesday market and three-day fair.

The Ferrers were responsible for introducing an outside interest into the Peak District by granting much land to various monasteries in the midlands and these formed granges or sheep farms on the limestone pastures, particularly in the middle and southern parts of the manor. The Cistercian abbey of Merivale in Warwickshire, for instance, had three. Ron has mapped all these granges, showing their locations today on his slides, and how they form the basis of present farms today. Thousands of sheep were

involved, for in medieval times wool was in great demand and sales were very profitable. In fact, the Cistercians had contacts with the wool trade across Europe as far as Italy. The abbeys therefore can be seen as one of the agents in economic expansion at this time, along with the Ferrers and the creation of the villages with their open fields and common pastures.

Between 1266 and 1616 the manor was in the hands of the earls and later the dukes of Lancaster. They continued the emphasis on sheep farming (the monasteries, of course, had been dissolved in 1536-40 by Henry VIII and the granges turned into farms), establishing in the manor at least eleven bercaries (sheep houses with adjacent pastures) with perhaps 250-300 sheep in each. As with the granges, Ron was able to show with slides how these have been translated into present-day farms.

Ron's talk was concerned chiefly with the early medieval - early modern period and it therefore ended with the granting of the manor to the duke of Buckingham in 1616, which explains the existence of the 1614 map at Chatsworth (the manor was sold to the Duke of Buckingham in 1614). The manor court rolls which provide wonderful details of the workings of the manor over centuries - in Latin. Ron has spent over five years studying the history and landscape of

forward to the published study which is being undertaken by Derbyshire Libraries Service. The mixture of maps, documents, slides, field work, and wide reading

presented to us a study in landscape archaeology at its very best.

BUGSWORTH

10th December 1999 - Keith Holford

When, in 1251, Ralph de Bugge became Bailiff of Compagna, one of the wards of the Forest of the Peak, and established a farm clearing for himself at a place that soon came to be known as "Bugsworth", he also created a place-name that has a history of its own. From time out of mind, people have wanted to change the name of this settlement. As early as 1878, the name "Limedale" was suggested as a substitute, there being a number of lime kilns established by that time at Bugsworth Basin. The name was later changed

to the more genteel "Buxworth", which the inhabitants recently voted to retain.

Keith Holford has been studying the history of Bugsworth for many years and came with an impressive array of information and some splendid slides to inform and points to tell us more. Slides of Bugsworth Hall gave Keith the opportunity to talk about the Carrington family, prominent local gentry and yeomen in the area from 1340 down

to the nineteenth century. Before the church was built in 1874 services had been held at the railway station! The station itself is a curious building, standing with its back to the line, a result of the realignment of the track after a landslide had destroyed it.

The school was built in 1878. Evidently, the 1870's was a significant decade in the development of Bugsworth. The Primitive Methodist chapel, which had been erected in 1841, was rebuilt in 1878 and eventually closed in 1989.

Keith Holford has done a great deal of research on the Clayton family of Brierley Green Farm, one of whose members, Joel Clayton emigrated to America in 1837. Keith has talked to us on a previous occasion about Joel Clayton's life as a pioneer in California and how the township of Clayton, California has established links with Bugsworth.

We also heard about Chinley Chapel, a non-conformist chapel built in 1711 and the saving of the Dolly Lane engine-house from demolition, before we were finally introduced to Bugsworth Basin. With the aid of slides spanning some thirty years in the taking, Keith described how the derelict basin was restored to its former glory by the dedicated efforts of so many volunteers and enthusiasts. It was re-opened to canal boats first opened in 1798, became the lifeblood of Bugsworth. Altogether there were nineteen lime kilns at the Basin and three cotton mills along the line of the canal.

Now all is changed: Bugsworth is no longer the home of industry but a place for leisure, giving hospitality and instruction to all who would enjoy its industrial past or cruise its canal.

Keith's talk was very much appreciated and we hope to hear from him again soon.

Ron Weston

Excavations at Mellor, 1999

In the summer of 1998 excavations in the garden and a field near to Mellor Church revealed that the site had been used as a hill fort during the Iron Age and later occupied by the Romans.

The archaeologists returned in June. In the first three weeks they removed the rest of the fill of the ditch and found the bottom at two metres depth. Amongst the many finds are

of the vessel. Also in the ditch was a beautiful bronze disc that was part of the decoration from the harness of a horse of the same period. Then much to their amazement they

found several flints that have been dated to the late Bronze Age (1,200BC).

Work also began on a new trench, within the area of the hill fort. A possible ditch shown up on a geophysical survey, which they thought the Romans may have dug, was not found but there is a large post hole. It may be part of the base of a defensive fence. What they did find were some Mesolithic flints (3,000 - 8,000 BC), the people from that at the end of August the area where the flint had been found was enlarged. They had reached an area of 'serious archaeology'! Within a short depth there have been excavated finds of all periods, small ditches, man placed upright stones, hearth areas. Many more flints and a piece of Roman Samian pot were found. Work continued slowly and carefully, possibly revealing an Iron Age or Mesolithic dwelling, in the excavation. Time ran out so the area has been carefully covered to await more digging next year.

An open day was held at the end of the dig and proved very popular. Displays explaining how the archaeologists work and what they had found were placed around the site and some of the finds were displayed. Over a thousand people visited Mellor hilltop! The funds raised have been placed in The Mellor Archaeological Trust so that together with the help of Stockport, will enable more work to be undertaken next year.

Stockport Council financed this year's dig, and it is hoped that some of the finds will be on display when the Museum of Stockport in the Market Place is opened.

The site is the most important in Greater Manchester and already has taken the history of Stockport back several millennia.

NEW MILLS LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY;

WORD SEARCH PROGRAMME OF ARCHIVE MATERIAL IN NEW MILLS LIBRARY AND NEW MILLS HERITAGE CENTRE

This word search programme was written by David Pitcher from the original lists drawn up by Roger Bryant. It enables you to find out by subject which documents about New Mills on that subject are held in the local history society and heritage centre archives and what are the document reference numbers.

The programme is quite easy to use. If anyone would like to have an introduction to it either at the library or heritage centre, please contact Derek Brumhead.

A Literary Association with New Mills

New Mills library staff became aware of some interesting literary facts about the town and surrounding area, when Laura Probert, a member of the Edith Nesbit Society came on a visit earlier this year. Laura was carrying out research into the possibility that E.Nesbit's famous book "The Railway Children" was placed in the environs of New Mills and Strines. This theory is brought about by the fact that the writer's brother in law and step sister, John and Saretta Deakin, lived for a time in Three Chimneys, a collage on Cobden Edge, overlooking Strines. According to Nesbit's biographer Julia Briggs in "A Woman of Passion", Edith stayed at the collage with her relatives and was also friendly with the Woodcock family of Aspenshaw Hall. Derbyshire directories list John Deakin as a resident of Mellor in 1886/7, and the Woodcock family are resident at Aspenshaw Hall on both 1881 and 1891 census.

Reading other works by the author we discovered the Derbyshire hills were a popular setting for her stories. The place names Marple, Mellor, Aspenshaw, Thornsett and an industrial town called Old Mills were all used.

The area obviously made a great impression on Edith, and when reading the "Railway Children", with this in mind, such passages as:- "Perhaps the children would have loved the canal as much as the railway, but for two things. One was that they found the railway first-on that first, wonderful morning when the house and the country and the moors and rocks and great hills were all new to them",

certainly suggests that she based the book around the railway between Marple and New Mills, particularly as the cottage from where Peter could see the smoke of the trains winding along the valley, was called Three Chimneys.

A new version of "The Railway Children" has just been filmed by Carlton Television on the Bluebell line in Sussex. This is to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the making of the original film. The actress Jenny Agutter who played one of the children in the 1970 version takes the part of the children's mother. It will be on our television screens some time in the spring.

During May 2000 an exhibition "The Nesbit Connection" will be displayed in New Mills Library. On Saturday May 12th library staff will lead a literary trail around the area visiting places connected with the author and her books.

A public lecture will be given by society chairman Nicholas Reed on the evening of Friday 19th May in the library lecture room, about the life of Edith Nesbit including the local connections. Derek will also speak on the mills and railways of New Mills. Members of the Nesbit Society will be visiting New Mills during this weekend.

Barbara Matthews

Another Literary Association.

THE LONGSONS OF BRIERGROVE FARM by Joyce Holliday

Arnold Bennett, the novelist, playwright and journalist was born and brought up in Burslem in North Staffordshire. A great deal of research has been done into his Bennett ancestors, but, until now, very little was known of his mother's side of the family, the Longsons, who moved into Burslem in 1860.

The starting point for the research was a mention in Arnold Bennett's JOURNAL for 13 May, 1901.

"My mother said: "We" (that is herself, sister and brother) were all baptised at Mellor Church, near Marple. Grandfather had a farm there. Father and his three brothers were all born there.. ."

Since I knew Arnold Bennett's mother's date of birth from her Burslem gravestone, it was an easy matter to look up the family baptisms in the Mellor Church records. These showed that Robert Longson's children had indeed all been baptised there. John was recorded on 29 July, 1838, Sarah Ann on 6 September, 1840, and Frances Edna on 26 March, 1843. They are all described as the son or daughter of Robert and Frances Longson of Broadbottom in Cheshire.

It was also possible to trace Robert Longson's baptism and the baptisms of his brothers and sisters. His father was indeed a farmer: Joseph Longson, who lived at Briergrove farm, some two miles north of New Mills, and only a mile or so from Mellor. It is a fairly ancient settlement, first mentioned in 1530, and is still there today, though very modernised.

Briergrove earlier belonged to a man with the unusual name of Buckley Bower who lived there himself in 1794 and 1795. John Mellor is recorded as renting it from Buckley Bower from 1797 onwards. So the Mellors had not been resident there for very long when Joseph Longson married their daughter, Sarah, in June, 1799.

There is a gravestone in Mellor Churchyard recording that "John Mellor of Briergrove died 29 January, 1816, aged 66 and that his wife died 12 May, 1817, aged 69 years". In his will he left eleven hundred pounds which in today's money would be equal to around £35,000, and of course this did not include the land and buildings which were rented. This was divided between his eleven children and two of his sons were also to inherit "all my plows, harrows, carts and other farming implements." At first sight this seems a bit hard on his son-in-law, Joseph, who was still running the farm. However, it could indicate that there had been some arable farming for which you would need a plough, and that Joseph was planning to change the land use.

Arnold Bennett describes Robert Longson, his grandfather, in his article, THE MAKING OF ME.

"...the biggest individuality in my early experience was my maternal grandfather, tall, dark, moustacheless and bearded, who began life as a working weaver in Derbyshire. ...he would work at home 12 hours a day for five days, and on Saturday walk 12 miles with his week's weaving on his back to the town, sell the same, and walk home twelve miles with the money in his pocket."

This sounds as though Joseph abandoned any arable farming and concentrated on rearing sheep for their wool.

Joseph and Sarah's children were all baptised at Mellor Church. Their first child was John, baptised in 1800, followed by Martha in 1802, and James in 1805. Robert and William, baptised in 1807, were twins. Ann was born around 1812 and Sarah around 1816. The family were living at Briergrove Farm throughout.

In 1848, Joseph Longson made a will, which enabled me to trace what had happened to the family. John, the eldest, was a weaver in Glossop. Martha was the wife of William Pleasants, labourer, of Ashton-under-Lyne. James was a wheelwright at Smithy Lane in Ludworth. William was a tailor in New Mills and by then Robert had moved from Broadbottom and was a tailor in Glossop. Ann was the wife of John Rowbottom, weaver, still living in the smaller house at Briergrove. Sarah was the wife of Robert Phillips, collier, living at Will Hey near New Mills.

Joseph Longson died on the 15th March, 1859, aged 84, not at Briergrove, but at Gun Farm. His daughter, Ann, had been widowed and remarried John Higginbottom who lived there. Although he died at Gun, Joseph's gravestone recorded him as "late of Briergreave". The farm obviously meant a great deal to him.

The 1861 census shows that his youngest daughter, Sarah, and her husband, Robert Phillips, were by then living at Briergrove. Robert was a coal miner, and so was their eldest son, Joseph. There seemed to be no farming going on at all.

It's impossible to know how much money Joseph Longson left since his will was never proved but it seems as though it could have been a substantial amount.

The eldest son, John, a power loom weaver in Glossop, was able to move his family into better accommodation. James, the second son, abandoned his career as a wheelwright and became a publican at the Stock-Dove Inn in Romiley, Cheshire. He also farmed 16 acres of land. William who was a tailor in New Mills High Street became a tailor and draper on Market Street.

Robert used his inheritance to move to North Staffordshire where he rented a shop in an absolutely prime site in St. John's Square, Burslem and eventually became a wealthy man. Shortly afterwards, his daughter, Sarah Ann, married Enoch Bennett and their eldest son was Arnold Bennett.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE CATALOGUE

The PRO at Kew has its own website - www.pro.gov.uk - and it includes the catalogue or index of all the documents held, over 8,000,000 of them! After accessing the site, click 'readers' in the top left corner, and then click 'on line catalogue' from the menu provided. This provides a choice of more information, such as an index of all the class numbers, and a search or browse facility using key words.

Once you have found the document you are searching for, you can then run off the entry on your printer for permanent reference.

THE LOCAL HISTORIAN

May 1999

Jerome Farrell, 'The Irish in Hammersmith and Fulham in 1851.'

Graham Neville, 'Eviction and reclamation in World War H: the case of a Worcestershire farm.'

Audrey Fisk, 'Friendly Societies and local history.'

Frances Wilmot, 'In search of Birmingham's open-air schools.'

Reviews include 'English Local History: the state of the art' by Kate Tilley, 'Agricultural rent in England 1690-19 14' by M Turner et al.

August 1999

Eva Crane and Penelope Walker, 'Early English beekeeping: the evidence from local records up to the end of the Norman period'.

Gillian Clark and Jim Smart. 'Usage of the postal system in mid-eighteenth-century Berkshire: an exploration from The Foundling Hospital archives.'

Benson et al, 'Sources for the study of urban retailing, 1800-1950, with particular reference to Wolverhampton.' [ANYONE INTERESTED IN DOING SOME RESEARCH ON NEW MILLS?]

Reviews include 'Maps for Historians' by Paul Hindle, and 'Industrial archaeology: principles and practice' by Marilyn Palmer and Peter Neaverson

'Relative History 2000': a Family and Local History event. Saturday 8 January 2000

This event is being organised by the Derbyshire Family History Society and will take place at the Methodist church hall, Chapel Street, Glossop, 10-4. Admission 50p adults, 25p concessions.

Our Society will be represented by a table and others taking part include Brian Mills (books), Margaret Buxton Knott (Photographic history), computer advice, English Civil War Society, Glossop and District Historical Society, Glossop Heritage Centre, Glossop Public Library, the Goddard Association of Europe, and Tameside Local Studies Library. We hope many from our Society will be able to attend.

On the previous evening, Friday 7th January at 7.30pm, there will be a 'Brains Trust' with Colin Rogers and Ray Sarfas to held at Bradbury Community House, Market Street, Glossop.

To mark the millennium St George's Parish Church has received a yew tree to plant in the churchyard. It is planned to carry this out on Friday morning 31st March during a service attended by children from St George's school. As this is an historic event, Father David, vicar of St. George's felt it would be appropriate for members of the Local History Society to attend and invites all who are interested. Times to be announced at a later date.

Millennium Walkway and Postage Stamp

Members are reminded that in celebration of the new walkway in the Torrs, a 44p New Mills postage stamp will be issued on Tuesday 18th January 2000. First day covers will be on sale at the Heritage Centre on 18th January together with presentation packs of all the four stamps issued on that day. It is planned that other commemorative material will also be on sale at the same time