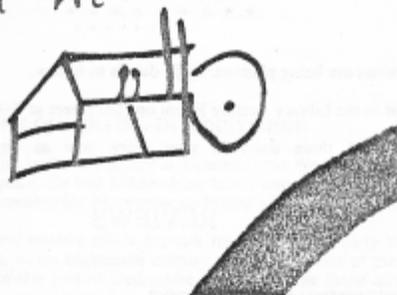


NEW MILLS  
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY  
NEWSLETTER

*the new mill*



Detail from a 17th century map showing the location of Beard Mill or New Mills.

EDITION NO.6 – SPRING 1991

## **SPRING PROGRAMME 1991**

WEDNESDAY 16th JANUARY: "Samuel Oldknow" with Anne Hearle  
FRIDAY 15th FEBRUARY: "Industrial Tokens" with W.A. Kennett  
WEDNESDAY 13th MARCH: "Ollersett in 1841" with Ron Weston  
THURSDAY 18th APRIL: "Lindow Man" with V. Horie  
WEDNESDAY 8th MAY: A.G.M. Details to follow.

Two Summer Excursions are being planned, again details to follow.  
All meetings are held in the Library Lecture Room on Hall Street at 7-45pm.  
Please make a note of these dates in your diary now as no further reminders are sent.

## **REVIEWS**

### **THE AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY IN STOCKPORT**

The subject of David George's talk, on 19th September, was a somewhat unusual one, concerning the history of a local industry which rose and fell within living memory.

In 1916 the government decided on a new offensive strategy using bomber aircraft against military targets behind the German lines. Hitherto aircraft had been used primarily for reconnaissance or as fighters. The Ministry of Munitions established three national aircraft factories to build the planes. One of the sites chosen was at Heaton Chapel on a green field site bounded by Wellington Road North, Crossley Road and Cringle Fields and convenient to the railway. The Ministry appointed the management of a private firm, Crossley Motors of Gorton, to operate the aircraft factory.

Labour was scarce and large numbers of women workers were recruited. These became known as "diluters" when the skilled engineering jobs were redesigned semi—skilled, a ruse that enabled the industry to offer lower rates of pay ( deemed appropriate to female workers at that time ). From 1917, the factory was producing medium bombers, the De Haviland DH 9's and DH 10's at a target rate of 200 per month.

After World War One, Crossley's took over the Heaton Chapel factory for car production, but with indifferent success.

1934 saw the beginning of the second phase of aircraft manufacture at Heaton Chapel with the perceived need to combat the Hitler menace. The factory was taken over by Fairey Aviation. In 1938 a second factory financed by the government was built alongside the Heaton Chapel works, a so-called "shadow" factory. This was also managed by Fairey's who, through the war years, produced a succession of bombers : the Hendon, Battle, Barracuda, Beaufighter, Handley Page, and others.

At the height of wartime production no less than 15,000 workers were employed at the two factories. The problem of moving this industrial army to and from work each day by public transport must have been formidable.

After the war, the aircraft industry at Heaton Chapel was gradually run down and the factory buildings were used for other purposes. Today there is little to be seen amongst the dereliction to remind one of all that hustle and bustle that must have accompanied the aircraft industry at its height.

It is important, therefore, that the industrial remains of the recent past are recorded in detail for posterity. In the next century the Heaton Chapel aircraft works will be objects of interest and concern in the way that the textile mills of New Mills are today. This is what makes researchers like David George worth their weight in gold.

*Ron Weston*

## **THE HISTORY OF LIMESTONE QUARRYING IN DERBYSHIRE**

Derek Burton spent his working life in the ICI quarry at Tunstead near Wormhill and at the end of his career was managing the quarry plant. He had followed his father into the trade so the Society could hardly have had a more qualified speaker for its meeting on Friday 19 October 1990.

With the aid of a variety of old and modern slides, the talk ranged from the early history of the lime trade around the Dove Holes area in the eighteenth century, to the operation of the gigantic modern Tunstead quarry. The limestone in this part of Derbyshire is probably the finest quality in the world and millions of tons of limestone are extracted annually and used for a variety of purposes far too numerous to list but which affects the every day lives of us all.

Derek first explained the development of lime kilns - a fascinating topic which would merit a talk of its own - and this was put over very clearly without recourse to technical terms. He then traced the development of the methods of handling stone in Tunstead from the days of hand sorting and loading in the 1920s - 1950s to today's 50 ton-capacity excavators costing £750,000 and operated by one man. The talk provided a fascinating insight into an industry whose history has not so far received the attention and publicity it deserves.

*Derek Brumhead*

## **"FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS"**

### **COLLIERY SPOIL HEAPS NEAR BATE MILL**

The origin of the piles of black shale next to Bate Mill has recently been confirmed from some documents found in the New Mills Town Council's archives. The shale is the spoil resulting from the driving of a tunnel under Broadhurst Farm for bringing out of the coals from Thomsen Hey Colliery, also known as cave of Adullam and Broome's Pit. The tunnel's exit was in the side of the Ladygate valley about a 1/4 of a mile north of Bate Mill, from which the coal was taken by tramway to a coal wharf on Bate Mill Road, now the site of children's play area. This wharf is marked on an Ordnance Survey manuscript map of 1841 (See "Coal Mines of New Mills", New Mills History Notes No 16, page 7), and on the 1st Ed. 25" O.S. map.

Among the documents is a rough plan at a scale of 40 links to an inch titled "Damages at Thornsett Colliery 1878". It is a survey by Mr. Pollitt the Town Clerk at the time, who appears to have been engaged to arbitrate over the damaged ground next to Bate Mill. The plan is his survey and calculation of the area damaged in square yards and a note in his hand writing on the plan reads: "Memo: — In Nov. 1871, Messrs I and J Bennett paid to the trustees of the late Joseph Bennett the sum of £14,12,6 for damages to 968 sq yds of land at 50/— per acre at 30 years purchase.

The quantity of Damaged Land is now 1600 yds which minus the 968 yds leaves 632 yds to be charged for which I value at 60/— per Acre and 33 years purchase, the amt. £12,18,6."

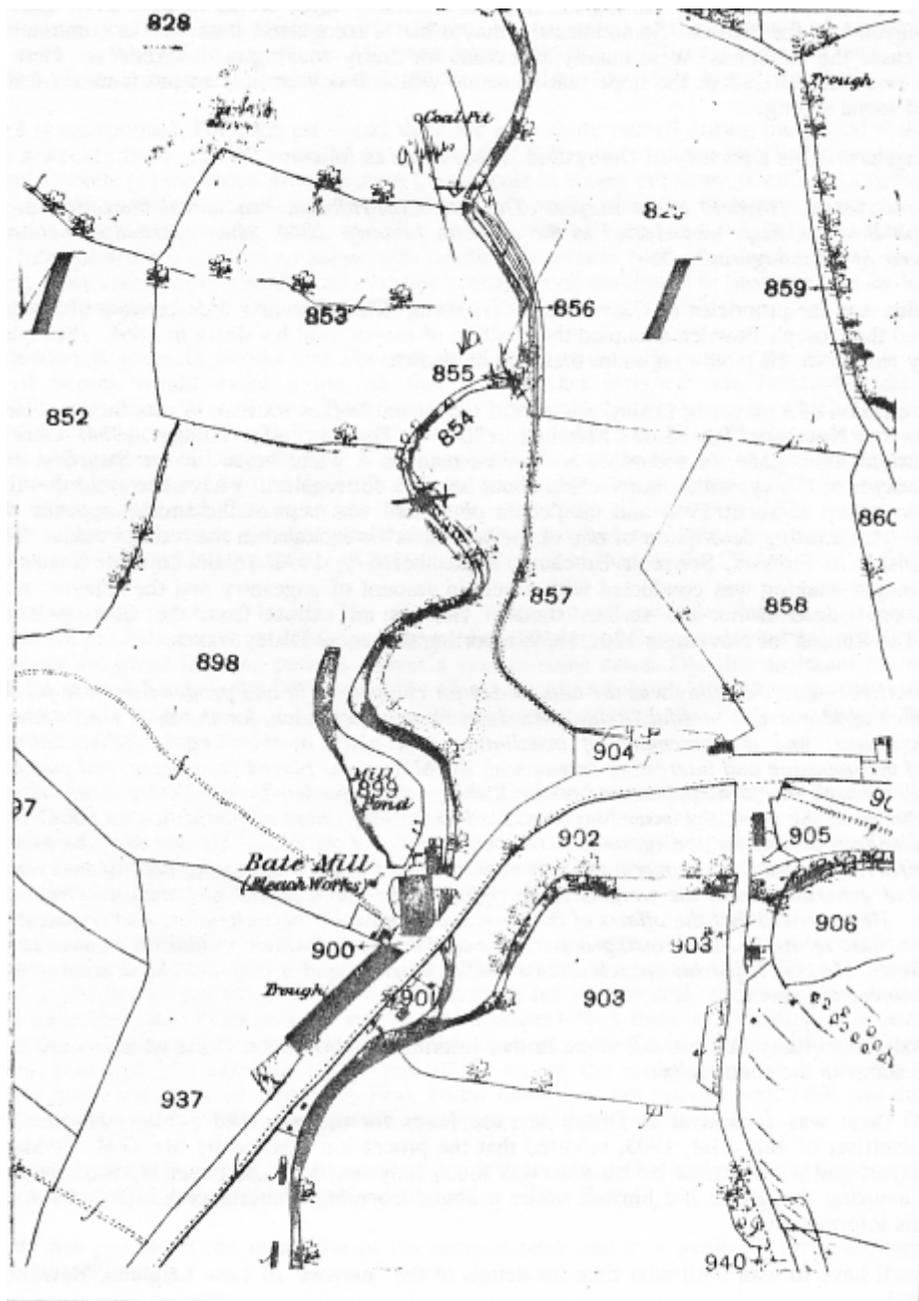
The plan shows a tramway running to the coal wharf on Bate Mill Road, termed "Coal Pitsett".

There is a minor twist to the story. Enrolled with the plan is a letter dated Nov. 20 1877 from Thomas Gregory, Public Accountant and Auditor, Estate and Insurance Agent of York Street Chambers, Manchester, addressed to B Wimpenny Esq. of Oak Villa, Hayfield (Secretary of the coal company?) which reads:

"re Id Bennetts. On looking over the Books herein I find the following entry, " 1871 Nov. 14, By Cash, I and J Bennett for damage done to 968 sq yds or 32 Statute Acres of land at 50/—, per acre thirty years purchase £14,12,6.

This appears to be wrongly entered as the 968 yds would be 1/5 of an Acre or £15.

*Derek Brumhead*



FROM O.S. 25inch map 1st Edition (Surveyed 1879)

## MAYORS AND MOCK-MAYORS (Part 1)

Perhaps you have heard of the "mayors" of Hayfield and Disley, but what about those of Low Leighton, Newtown and Thomsen? During the nineteenth century there seems to have been quite a galaxy of "mayors" in the district. Sometimes the mayor had a recognized status in the community, but in other cases the "elections" were mainly an excuse for merry-making or drunkenness. Here is some of the evidence, offered in the hope that someone will one day be able to put it into a fuller historical and social setting.

Hayfield. Bagshaw in his Directory of Derbyshire, 1846, wrote as follows.

*"By an ancient custom, Hayfield has a Mayor. The late John Hobson, Esq., filled the office thirty years. Joseph Bowden, Esq., was elected to the office in January, 1844, when a grand dinner was given in honour of his inauguration."*

Joseph Bowden was the proprietor of Grotto Mill at Hayfield. Chris Bowden, a descendant of Joseph, has discovered that Joseph Bowden occupied the position of mayor until his death in 1864. (Sec New Mills History Notes No. 16.) Nothing more seems to be known.

Disley. The election of a mayor of Disley was part of the annual Wakes festival, Wakes Sunday being the Sunday before November 5th. Susan Marshall in "Disley, The Story of a Village", 1954, refers to "the dour custom, now gone, of mounting a drunken man on a white horse on the Saturday, and calling him Mayor of Disley, with a horse chain about his neck for regalia". I have been told that this custom continued up to about 1946 and the "chain of office" was kept at the smithy opposite the Ram's Head. (An amusing description of one of the "elections" is included in the recent booklet "The History of Disley in Flowers, Souvenir Brochure, September 6-9, 1990".) But in mid-nineteenth century the mayor-making was conducted with a certain amount of pageantry and the "mayor" may have had a recognized if not-too-serious status. Here is an extract from the Glossop-based newspaper "The Record" of November 12th, 1859, reporting the recent Disley wakes.

*"MAYORS' WALK - Last Saturday was the annual day for choosing a fit and proper person to fill the important office of Mayor of beautiful Disley. Mr. John Orme was chosen, for the third time, without a single dissentient; and the ceremony of installation took place at the Ring o' At the conclusion of the imposing and interesting ceremonial, the Mayor was placed on a horse, and paraded in procession through the principal streets of the locality, accompanied by the Disley Band. After making the circuit of the town, the assemblage returned to the inn, where ample justice was done to a substantial dinner provided for the occasion. On the removal of the cloth, his worship, the Mayor took the chair. He opened the proceedings in a neat speech; stating that, during his last two years' service, he had generally found the weights to be right, but he much feared the "measures" needed looking after. He promised that the affairs of the town should have his best attention, and commented, in very appropriate terms, on the growing importance of the place of which he had the honour to be the chief officer. He concluded his speech amidst much cheering; and a very delightful evening was spent by the company present."*

Perhaps a Disley historian could provide some further information about John Orme which would help to clarify his status in the community.

In July 1903 there was a carnival at Disley to raise funds for the proposed public institute. The Stockport Advertiser of July 31st, 1903, reported that the procession was led by Mr. G.H. Goddard, the mock mayor, and a gentleman by his side was mock lady mayor. The paper reported that his get-up was amusing though he hid himself under a liberal covering of burnt cork. (I thank Anne Cohen for this information.)

I'm afraid you'll have to wait until next time for details of the "mayors" of Low Leighton, Newtown, and Thornsett.!

Roger Bryant

**NEW MILLS COAL MINING ACCOUNT BOOK, 1711-1757 Derbyshire Record Office  
3226 Z/1/1 Microfilm XM/34/I**

This Account Book consists of 163 pages (83 microfilm pages), a unique record of what appears to be the first serious period of coal mining in the district. It is a record of the accounts of a partnership of three men — John Mottram, (Peter Mottram from 1749/50), William Carrington and William Bennett, who leased mines on Ollersett and Beard Moors and in New Mills from John Shallcross.

The detail is exceptional. For each pit - and there are over thirty named during the period - there is given on a weekly basis: (1) the name of the banksman (2) the name of the pit (3) the production in Scores and Baskets (4) the value of production (5) the cost in wages per score (Getting, Drawing, and Winding) (6) the profit per score and (7) the balance left owing after the deduction of wages. There are periodic or yearly summary totals, showing the residual balances and the disbursements to the partners. Interspersed are sections or pages with details of expenses (deducted from profits) - such as dead work, tools, nails, tubs, powder, and even the account hook purchased in Stockport for 2s 4d. The years are given in the old style (New Year's Day being 25 March) until 1752.

The production is given in Scores and Baskets, there being twenty Baskets to the Score. A certain number of Scores would make a ton, so that if a Basket weighed one hundredweight then, conveniently, one score is one ton. There does not appear to be any way in which this can be confirmed for the moment. According to Farey many years later in 1811 ("General view of the agriculture and minerals of Derbyshire...", Vol 1, page 340) "a certain number of Corves (Baskets) are supposed to make a ton and by that denomination they are sold". But as well as noting an uncertainty as to the exact number of Corves to the ton, Farey also pointed out (page 182) that in eastern Derbyshire where coals were brought down the canals "previous to 1798, the quantity or weight allowed to the ton, varied at almost every Coal-wharf or place of loading the Coals".

The Banksman was the team leader. He paid the team out of the sales income and was held accountable for the balance. These balances were paid to the partners irregularly and not in full. Often, large amounts are owed for long periods over a year in some cases. Did this represent the rate of income from sales? Farey (page 340) says "that Coals are often sold at Pits otherwise they must be transported away by horse and cart." If the sales were irregular, perhaps the Banksman would have to retain some income for future wages.

Although there are over thirty named pits, some may be the same pits later renamed. They are all sited at the top of Ollersett and Beard moors, where the "yard" seam is near the surface. The account hook records the sinking of several new pits to a depth of 4 yards. Among the pits named are Dirt Hole, Acre Nook, Bum'd Edge, Top o'the Moor, Engine, Colliers, Potts, New Miln, Valentine Wild's, and Little Pity i'the Hare Holes Lane.

Production is continuous throughout the 47 years recorded in the account hook, often two or three pits work at the same time. The total coal produced (at first count) is an astonishing 120,615 Scores, an average of 2,566 Scores per year. What were the markets for all this coal, so many years before the growth of industrial New Mills and the rise of steam power? Was there a rebuilding of houses and farms in stone and an increase in coal fires? Was the coal sent to the Dove Holes and Buxton areas for use in lime burning? The isolation of the pits at the top of the moors must have meant arduous journeys for horse and carts; of course the Peak Forest Canal was not opened until 1796 and the first turnpike road not built until 1801. So there are interesting questions to be answered.

At the beginning of the period the profit amounted to 10d per score; this had risen to 16d per score by 1757. It is hoped to publish a full account and analysis at a later date.

The society has purchased the microfilm of the account hook and it is available for consultation in New Mills library.

*Derek Brumhead*

## WALKING TO SCHOOL AT NEW MILLS

In the Autumn of 1921 when I was 11 years old, I left Mellor School to start at what was then New Mills Secondary School. At this same time a new headmaster, Mr. Whitton, took over from Mr. Nichols who was retiring.

My home was just above the Devonshire Arms in Mellor, and for me & other children living around there a walk of 2 3/4 miles over the hill was necessary to get to New Mills School. There was no bus service to take us there, and Marple Station, about 2 miles away, had no convenient bus connection for the train. Generally six of us would walk together, leaving home soon after 8.30am. The first feature of interest was the huge square stone chimney, towering high above the ruins of Wailers' old cotton mill in Moor End. There were several shops in Moor End, a greengrocer's a provision shop and general store, a butcher's, a baker's, an ironmonger's and two shops selling toffee. Also a blacksmith and a joiner had workshops in the village.

Arriving at what was then the Church Sunday School, the road surface deteriorated from large uneven stone setts to loose stones, very rough and potholed, and often washed into channels in wet weather. The road continued in this state almost to New Mills. At the cross roads at the top of the hill, just past the Rowarth turn off, was the ruinous Jordan Arms, and in a field opposite was the spoil heap of the old Mellor Colliery, which ceased working in 1879. The workings of this colliery, which went down to a depth of 360 feet, extended far and wide under this area, and a stone lined shaft about 9 feet in diameter still existed alongside Bradshaw Edge Wood. This was inadequately fenced, and it was a frightening but fascinating feature which often tempted us to toss large stones down to hear them crash from side to side before finally plunging into the water.

Further down the road was the Packhorse Inn, suggesting that this road was originally a packhorse trail. Indeed, I was told by the grandson of Jonathan Jowett, the last operator of the colliery, that coal was carried by packhorses from the colliery to the canal wharf in Newtown.

As we descended towards New Mills we had a good view of the Sett Valley with its several calico print works throwing up billowing clouds of steam. Watford Bridge was the nearest, and to lads from rural Mellor it impressed us as a large industrial complex with its spread of buildings and reservoirs. At the bottom of Dye House Lane was the curious "Drunkard's Reform" house on the right, with its story engraved on a stone tablet set over the doorway. Just over the bridge on a terrace above the road on the left, was a monumental stonemason's establishment where several men laboured with mallets and chisels shaping grave stones and cutting the lettering on them. If time allowed we would stop and watch this interesting work, greatly admiring the skill and hard work that produced the smooth, shiny surfaces and the precisely cut letters. The work was done in the open, but there was a small roofed-over shelter which could be used in wet weather. Opposite, across the river, were some dilapidated old cottages set in a disorderly jumble up the steep bank. The area was dirty and depressing, a slum long since removed. Then came Arnfields' Engineering Works, specialising, I believe, in undertaking work for the calico print works and local mills.

The steep Church Lane branches off here on the left, and a short way up it crossed the railway line to Hayfield by a bridge. A signal box was close to the bridge on the Hayfield side, and when a train approached on the single track we watched with interest the transfer of the "staff", a thing like a hoop, between the loco driver and the signalman which took place without the train reducing speed.

Then the school gates and lessons. It had been an interesting 2 3/4 mile walk.

*Tom Oldham.*

"CONSUL"

*Almost  
Human.*



PUPIL OF



FRANK C. BOSTOCK,  
The Animal King.

POST CARD.

FOR INLAND POSTAGE ONLY THIS SPACE MAY  
NOW BE USED FOR COMMUNICATION.



THE ADDRESS ONLY TO BE WRITTEN HERE.

A  
HALF-PENNY  
STAMP TO  
BE PLACED  
HERE.

**The Empire Theatre,  
NEW MILLS.**

WEEK COMMENCING  
MONDAY, JUNE 24th, 1912

**"CONSUL"**

Presents you his Compliments and hopes  
**TO SEE YOU**  
at one of his  
**PERFORMANCES.**

An early show at "The Empire" which was opened in June 1911 and is now "The Art Theatre"

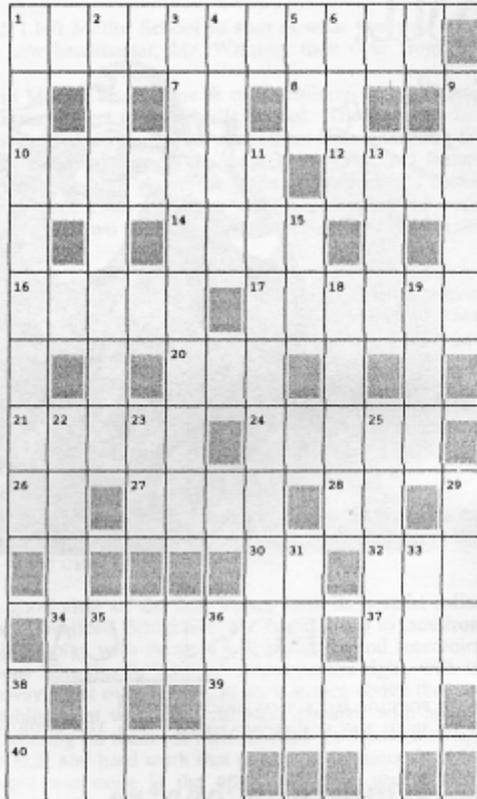
**CROSSWORD — Olive Bowyer**

**Across**

- 1&10 1991 Celebration (3,4,3,7)  
 7 Concerning (2)  
 8 Thank you (2)  
 12 A new way (4)  
 14 A painting or mosaic of a sacred person (4)  
 16 Damp (5)  
 17 With 12, a local beauty spot (6)  
 20 A Sharpe edge? (3)  
 21 Distribute Officially (5)  
 24 Bridge over troubled waters? yes, when flooded(5)  
 26 Exclamation of triumph or scorn (2)  
 27 This enemy plane amounted to nothing in World War 2 (4)  
 28 Supported by (2)  
 30 Initially the residents of this seaport may have been what the name but no longer (2)  
 32 London Weekend Television (3)  
 34 Long standing resident on the outskirts of New Mills (7)  
 37 Be wary about putting yours in! (3)  
 39 An illegal footpath diversion leads us here  
 40 There are several on sale in the Heritage Centre (6)

**DOWN**

- 1 Wine waiter of ancient times (8)  
 2 May near Castleton — or in New Mills (7)  
 3 To arouse impatience (8)  
 4 Do Welshmen congregate here on 1st March (4)  
 5 A Holy thoroughfare? (2)  
 6 To curve under pressure (3)  
 9 A support (4)  
 11 A meeting place for birds of peace approached via The Peak Forest Tramway? (9) 13 Lubricant (3)  
 15 Not applicable (2)  
 18 Emblem (4)  
 19 Plenty of these on the hills around New Mills (3)  
 22 To do this, fly in vertical circle turning upside down en route (4)



- 23 Home of a fictitious magician (2)
- 25 At Bugsworth, tipplers helped to do this(6) 29 A short car (3)
- 31 A theatre - or what is done there? (3) 33 How to eet there (3)
- 35 Exclamation of surprise or mockery(3)
- 36 Contains (3)
- 38 Initially part of Holy Writ (2)

**NON-CONFORMIST REGISTERS HELD AT DERBYSHIRE RECORD OFFICE ON MICROFILM**

Chinley Independent Chapel (later congregational): Founded 1662

Births and Baptisms 1729-1814

Deaths 1736-1744

Burials 1755-1814

Baptisms and Burials 1703-1840

(Document D 932)

Chinley Wesleyan Chapel: Founded 1808 Births and Baptisms 1808-1829

Hayfield Wesleyan Methodist Church Baptisms 1795-1837

New Mills, Providence Chapel, Whittle.

Independent later congregational: Founded 1829 Births and Baptisms 1829-1837

Burials 1832-1837

New Mills Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, St. Georges Road Congregation founded 1776, moved to St. Georges Road 1813

Births and Baptisms 1794-1830

Births and Baptisms 1829-1837

Society of Friends (Quakers), Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Quarterly Meeting, Low Leighton, Slack Hall (pa Chapel-en-le-Frith), and Glossop Births, Marriages &

Burials 1641-1745

Glossop Littlemoor Independent Chapel, Whitfield(later Congregational)

Founded 1811

Births and Baptisms 1812-1837

Burials 1837

Births and Baptisms 1813-1825

Burials 1825-1837

Glossop Circuit (Wesleyan Methodist)

Births and Baptisms 1813-1837

Charlesworth Independent Chapel (later Congregational): Founded 1716 Births and Baptisms 1786-1837

Photocopy of extracts of Derbyshire entries in Dr. Williams Library registers of births to non-conformist parents (in PRO) 1759-1837

## **Duplicate Marriage Registers of closed Methodist Chapels**

Newtown 1921-1975  
New Mills, Thornsett 1911-1970 New Mills Methodist Church Spring Bank  
formerly United Methodist, the Mount  
Pleasant Methodist Church Spring Bank 1910-1980  
New Mills, St. Georges Road 1914-1968  
New Mills Spring Mount 1911-1968  
Hayfield Bethel Chapel 1909-1954  
Hayfield Bourne Chapel 1910-1968 Little Hayfield Clough Lane Primitive  
Methodist 1932-1972 Hayfield, Birch Vale Zion Methodist 1921-1974  
Glossop, Howard Town 1920-1960  
Glossop Wesley Street 1921-1959 Glossop Tabernacle, Hall Street, Manor  
Park Road after 1929 1910-1960  
Whitfield Princess Street 1948-1958  
Whitfield Hague Street 1932-1967

*Derek Brumhead*

## **SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD**

ACROSS 1&10 New Mills Six Hundred 7 Re 8 Ta 12 Goyt 14 Ikon 16 Moist 17 Valley 20 Axe 21 Allot 24 Hague 26 Ho 27 Zero 30 La 32 LWT 34 Panther 37 Oar 39 Astray 40 Trails

DOWN 1 Nehemiah 2 Winhill 3 Irritate 4 Leek 5 St. 6 sag  
9 Stay 11 Doveholes 13 Oil 15 Na 18 Logo 19 Ewe 22 Loop 23 Oz 25 Unload 29 MTR 31 Art 33 Way 35 Aha 36 Has 38 OT

**HAVE YOU BOOKED THE DATES OF THE SPRING MEETING IN YOUR 1991 DIARY?**