

New Mills Local History Society Newsletter



Edition 21

Autumn 1998

AUTUMN PROGRAMME 1998

Fri. 11th September

ALAN ROSE

“Methodism in Hayfield”

Fri. 9th October

J.P. SKYNER

“Bess of Hardwick”

Fri. 13th November

JOHN WALTON

“Blackpool in the 1930’s”

Fri. 11th December

CHRIS. MAKEPEACE

“Christmas in Victorian Manchester”

COMMITTEE 1998-9

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RICHARD WOOD.

JOHN POTTS

9th January 1998, Roger Bryant

Roger began by referring to his main source of information on John Potts, the account written by a former member, T.M. Griffiths, who died last year, and to whose memory Roger's talk was dedicated.

John Potts (1791-1841) was the inventor of a method of calico printing by the use of copper rollers onto which patterns had been engraved. Born in Manchester, he moved to New Mills in 1820 and with his brother, William Wainwright Potts, founded the firm of engravers to calico printers known as Potts, Oliver and Potts at St. George's Works.

John was an artist and a superb engraver, whilst William was more interested in pottery. The latter eventually moved to Burslem to become a pottery manufacturer, but not before a certain amount of pottery had been made and decorated in New Mills in the upper works (described as a print and pot works as late as 1841). John Potts also did some printing on his own account, focusing his attention on the printing of silk.

John Potts received great acclaim from his contemporaries and his copper rollers were exported world-wide. His invention greatly improved the process by which calico was printed, a boon to women in all walks of life.

The second part of Roger's talk involved a detailed scrutiny of early maps of St. George's Works. Roger argued that of the three sets of industrial buildings to be found on the site, the lower works had no connection with Potts, Oliver and Potts; the middle building was the engraving shop (that is, St. George's Works itself) with the curved frontage of John Potts' picture gallery in the rear; the upper building, which is the sole one remaining and often referred to erroneously as St. George's Works, was where pottery-making and silk printing were carried out.

Most of the observations and questions from the audience concerned the history of the buildings, and it was interesting to learn that the former picture gallery, now a row of garages, had once been of two storeys and still retained some original floor tiles.

Roger's talk proved to be of great interest to our audience and a fitting memorial not only to T.M. Griffiths but also to John Potts himself.

NEW MILLS FOOTPATH SURVEY:

13th February 1998, Denzil Hallam

Denzil explained that in 1992 the Countryside Commission proposed that parishes should be allowed to decide what should be done to improve and protect their own rights-of-way. This was acted upon in New Mills by reviving an earlier Footpaths Committee, which then invited interested parties such as the Ramblers' Association to join.

A footpaths survey was organised to discover exactly what needed to be done in New Mills. This proved a considerable task, for New Mills has an exceptional number of footpaths with a total length in excess of fifty miles. The survey took twelve months to complete and all the information was entered on computer. The survey showed that the work involved in bringing footpaths up to standard was considerable: 56 stiles needed repair; 83 signposts would have to be replaced.

Denzil showed us how this information was stored and also demonstrated the various ways in which computer graphics could be used to represent footpaths in their landscape settings.

A considerable amount of work on the restoration of stiles and replacement of signs has now been completed. Denzil's slides showed how the work was being carried out very competently by volunteers. The use of volunteer labour enabled the modest annual grants made available to be utilised most effectively.

Much remains to be accomplished; but Denzil's account of this commendable self-help venture is already a heartening success story.

We get things done in New Mills.

A NEW LOOK AT EYAM PLAGUE

13th March 1998, J.G. Clifford

The story of Eyam plague is well-known and is of enduring interest not only because its consequences were so tragic but also because the inhabitants were so selfless and heroic in their suffering. Mr. Clifford retold the tale vividly, drawing on the historical accounts of Mompesson's letters written only a few weeks after the end of the plague in November 1666 and the more detailed record composed by Mompesson's son in 1720. It was the latter that gives the information that it was a tailor from London who brought the plague to Eyam in a bolt of cloth. Later accounts in the early nineteenth century by Ebenezer

Rhodes and William Wood have been supplemented and checked for accuracy by Mr. Clifford who has made effective use of official sources of information. The Hearth Tax returns, for example, reveal that there were far more families in Eyam than the seventy-six that suffered plague which suggests that there were more survivors than was thought in the nineteenth century. A second error was the assumption that Mary Cooper with whom the plague-bringing tailor lodged was "a poor widow." She was, in fact, widow of a wealthy yeoman, Edward Cooper. Parish registers show that she subsequently remarried. It seems likely that the tailor was a journeyman working for her second husband, himself a tailor.

Mr. Clifford's re-telling of this familiar tale interspersed with new, revealing details drawn from his own researches proved a fascinating experience for his audience.

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE PEAK DISTRICT & BEYOND?

3rd. April 1998. Jack Hamner

Our speaker, who has written a number of books describing walks in this region, regaled us with a string of anecdotes drawn from his extensive experiences as a rambler. He also quizzed his audience on its knowledge of the locality and we were soon participating vociferously.

This reviewer soon gave up trying to make notes on all the places that Jack Hamner referred to; but here is list (probably not comprehensive): Ecton copper mines; Wettan Mill; Manifold Valley; Butterton water splash; Grindon, where there is a memorial to the crew killed in an air crash in 1947; Hollinsclough with a lovely view of “surprise valley”; Chrome and Parkhouse Hill; Lud’s Church; Daffodill Dell near Jodrell Bank; Swettenham; Stanton Moor and the Nine Ladies; Birchover and the nearby Rowtor Rocks which had been fashioned into furniture by Rev. Eyre; the heronry at Macclesfield Forest; Via Gellia; Tufa Cottage; Axe Edge and the sources of the rivers Dane. Dove, Goyt, Manifold and Wye; Sambo’s Grave on Morecambe Bay, where a slave, put ashore at Sunderland Point, lies dead and buried; Flash, the village that gave its name to counterfeit money, there were counterfeiters at work at Three Shire Heads nearby; Holmfirth and the canal museum at Marsden.

A.G.M.

8th. May 1998.

Our Annual General Meeting was followed by video presentations.

A MISCELLANY FROM THE LIBRARY

The staff of New Mills library sometimes receive information concerning our local history, which they record assiduously. Barbara Matthews has kindly sent in the following items.

Marjorie Jones, whilst scanning the High Peak Reporter on microfilm in the library, came across an interesting article regarding a building dating back to the heyday of the Peak Forest Canal. Dated May 10th 1963, the paper reported the planned demolition of the canal house in Wharf Yard, Newtown. In the article Mr. Joseph Swindells of Church Road claimed that his father had been wharfinger at Newtown and had lived in Wharf House. He himself had been born there on June 30th 1892, the very day when, according to Mr. Swindells, it was announced that goods would in future be delivered to Newtown by rail. The Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway did cease to act as canal carriers in 1892. Up until that time all types of goods were delivered to Newtown by canal and a dozen horses were stabled in the yard to carry out local deliveries. Mr. Swindells went on to say that all traffic ceased except for sulphuric acid from the bleach-works.

On the subject of demolition, St. George's Church newsletter of 9th August states that the School House at St. George's Primary School is no longer fit for habitation. The Governors and the Diocesan Board of Education have decided jointly that the building will be demolished during the summer holidays.

St. George's National School was originally opened in 1846. This was demolished to make way for the railway and the school rebuilt on its present site and reopened in 1864.

The Glossop Record gives a good account of the laying of the foundation stone on 10th March 1863. This ceremony was carried out as part of the town's celebrations of the marriage of the Prince of Wales. The stone was laid "in a most graceful manner" by Miss Ingham of Watford Villa (the future Mrs. Mackie).

The singing of the National Anthem and "God bless the Prince of Wales" followed prayers by the Rev. John Rigg. A procession of scholars from both the Sunday and day schools, the churchwardens and ladies and gentlemen made its way back to the old school for a tea which was greatly enhanced by the donation of a large ham and several jars of preserves.

Marjorie Jones would be pleased to hear from anyone who has information concerning the school house and its former tenants.

A lady rang the library recently asking for information about Aspenshaw Hall in the early nineteenth century. Her interest arose from the fact that she owned a sampler illustrated with a picture of the hall and the words "Elizabeth Gaskell 1826," this, presumably, being the person who worked it. The Gaskell family of

Prestbury were her ancestors and she wanted to find out who owned the hall at that time and what connection Elizabeth had with it.

Sheila Richardson kindly came down and told her the history of the owners, but at present we can only suppose that Elizabeth was in service there. The hall on the sampler is a three storey building but has since been reduced to two. Sheila has arranged for a photo to be taken of the sampler.

Marjorie Jones reports that the Burial Books for St. George's parish church, covering the period 1831 to 8th March 1895, have been sent to church archives. Four volumes of Burial Books, dating from 8th March 1895 to 4th August 1949, are held in the church safe. Marjorie has permission to photo-copy these latter and will place a copy in New Mills library. Eventually the complete set of Burial Books 1831 to 1949 will become available on film and Marjorie hopes that the Society will be able to purchase a copy for the library. The photo-copy can then be placed in the Society's archive. Marjorie intends to bring the photo-copies to our September meeting for members to view them.

SUMMER OUTING

This year the Society outing was to the Royal Armouries in Leeds. Through 8,000 exhibits displayed in five galleries, including live interpretations, 42 specially made films and interactive computers, we were able to go back over 1,000 years. It was impossible to cover everything in one day, but most of us had a good try.

Amongst the exhibits we saw the big game hunter on the back of an elephant, the magnificent armour of the Japanese warriors and the tournament armour of Henry VIII. I even heard a bible reading of David and Goliath! The First and Second World Wars were well covered, as well as modern warfare and also a "star wars" look into the future.

Actors played the parts of Annie Oakley, Florence Nightingale, an American soldier who witnessed Custer's Last Stand, and a couple reliving the tragedy of World War I through love letters.

Outside in the tiltyard we were shown the skills of the knights on horseback and a display of the ancient hunting techniques of the falconer. Here we had the chance to take part in the display, spotting the young kestrel, who unfortunately decided to play hide-and-seek with the falconer before disappearing completely.

In the mini-cinemas I learned how the archers of Henry V's army beat the French at Agincourt, and watched the action-packed battle of Marston Moor, where I felt I was in there with the pikemen. My friend and I certainly enjoyed our day because it was so different and I hope that the rest of the party enjoyed it too.

Barbara Matthews.

EXTRAORDINARY FINDS AT MELLOR

Mellor church, standing in splendid isolation on its hilltop, is a famous landmark in our district. Its position segregates it from the community it serves and Ann Hearle, who lives in the Old Vicarage near the church, believes that the medieval settlement of Mellor must have been closer to its church than the Mellor of today. When she saw brown crop marks in the field behind the Old Vicarage in the dry summer of 1995, she felt that at last there might be evidence of former buildings. In the event, she got more than she bargained for! This is her report:

This summer has seen excavations in Mellor by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit.

The dig was undertaken because of photographs taken in the drought of 1995 by John and Ann Hearle, who live in the Old Vicarage beside the church, of parts of their lawns and the field below the back of the house. They took the photos because of the shapes that appeared on the ground due to the uneven drying out of the soil. Last autumn Peter Arrowsmith, who has written the new book on the history of Stockport, came to see Ann. She showed him the photos and took him on a walk around the hill top. Peter speculated that the hill top could have been used in the Iron Age or Romano times. This spring, his colleague Graham Eyre-Morgan, also came out to Mellor and decided that a geophysical survey of the area should be undertaken. The results of the survey led to three students digging in the Old Vicarage garden!

The first trench revealed, not Anglo-Saxon burials as had been postulated by Graham, but two post holes, date unknown. It was the third trench that uncovered a defensive ditch, 4 metres wide and 2 metres deep cut through the earth and rock. By using dowsing rods it seems that there is a double ditched Iron Age Hill Fort that encloses the Church, the old and new Vicarages and the Glebe Cottage, an area of over five acres. Another excavation in the field below the Old Vicarage revealed another section of the ditch cut through the rock. The number of man hours involved in the digging of the ditch and the building of the associated rampart and palisade of such a length by Iron Age men must have been colossal. ! The finds have been 'mind boggling' ! There are *fire cracked pebbles* and a small piece of *very coarse pottery* of the Iron Age. The piece of pot has been dated at least 100 BC, maybe even older, and is only the seventh piece of such pottery to be found in the North West! Much to the amazement of the archaeologists, finds of the Roman period were also found . Pieces of pot of the late 1st and early 2nd century, pieces of roof tile and glass, a silver dinarius, c 78 AD, a lead door hinge and spinning whorl, a piece of a quern, a lump of copper. It seems that the Hill Fort was abandoned probably around 100 BC and, reduced in size, used by the Roman as a small fort. It has not been an ideal digging weather for the students but the finds have made up for the rain. The discoveries are of major importance and it is hoped to raise enough money to undertake a great deal more work on the area over the next few years.

Factory Farming a hundred years ago

Rosemary Taylor,

A hundred years ago, "factory farming" had a different meaning from today's. The farm was an essential part of each calico printing works. When the Calico Printers' Association was formed in 1899, Strines Print Works owned 100 acres of the surrounding land. This was necessary to control their water supplies. In the nineteenth century, the farm was a department of the Printing Company in charge of a Farm Bailiff. In 1873, when the total workforce was 290, 12 men and one woman were employed full-time in farming together with from 1 to 17 seasonal part timers. By 1891 the total work force had increased to 420, of whom 21 were in farming. The wages books give us a few glimpses of the farming activities:

In 1873 the bailiff was John Chambers who was paid 4s.8d per day. Mrs. Osbaldiston was looking after the dairy for 5s per fortnight. John Chambers was succeeded in 1874, by John Richardson, but by July 1881 Joshua Rowbottom was receiving a special allowance of 10s extra per week while acting as farm bailiff. Evidently this was only temporary as by April 1882, Joseph Webster was appointed bailiff, and Mrs. Webster was expected to look after the dairy and

make the butter. Joseph was paid 26s per week for both of them. In July 1885 James Kirkpatrick became the farm bailiff at 28s and for the next hundred years there was at least one member of his family on the Strines pay-roll. In 1894, James was succeeded by Robert Lofthouse. He too was paid 28s rent free

In April and May 1874 Mrs. Webb, the wife of one of the farm workers earned 21s for planting cabbages; she and her daughter Emily continued to work part-time until July, but what they did is not recorded.

Hay was needed in large quantities because the works kept 30-40 horses. Haymaking was done in June/July and the farming pay-roll almost doubled. Many of the extra workers normally worked on repairs, which could wait, but women and children helped too. In June and July 1874. Sumner brothers, were paid 4s each fortnight for hay-making, and 5s.6d in July for cutting thistles. There were four Sumner brothers: John (20) Jesse, (18) Joshua (14) and Jabez (13); Jesse and Joshua worked full time in the Bleach House so the haymakers were probably John and Jabez.; certainly in the following fortnight, John worked 1½ days for 3s. For several years from 1874 Jabez was paid £1 per year for attending to the post bag on Saturday nights & Sundays In September 1902, the haymakers worked 52½ hours at 4½d per hour, and they had probably worked even longer at the main hay harvest.

In August 1874 Thomas McDonald and others earned £2:18:7 for cleaning (weeding) 703 square yards of turnips.

Corn was harvested in September. In 1874 William Osbaldiston and others had earned £10:8:0 for cutting corn at 14s per acre, so nearly 15 acres of corn, probably oats, was grown. In September 1902, the corn cutters worked 200

at a total cost of £3:1: 5.

Harvest Festival was held at Strines Church in September until 1893. In August of that year Mr. T. H. Nevill died. He was the Senior partner at the Print Works and had provided the church for the village. Because of his funeral, Harvest was postponed, and it has been held on the first Sunday in October ever since.

By November, Charles Richardson and George Hibbert were pulling mangolds. These are a large kind of beet which were stored and used to feed the cows throughout the winter. In 1900, Thomas Garside was paid 3/4 per day for pulling turnips.

The farm certainly kept cows, but I have not found any record of how many. Certainly enough to justify the work of one or more cowmen and a cow lad.

"The Cottage" was quite a large house near the works for the occasional use of the owners, and two servants lived there. In one fortnight in 1880, the Cottage was supplied with 22 quarts of milk for 4s 7d, 1¼ quarts of cream for 1s10½d, and 7 lbs of butter for 10s 6d. From October 1881 until March 1883, "Cat's milk" was recorded at about 7½d. per fortnight.

Another product of the cows which the works required was dung. This was collected and mixed with water in a machine called a 'dunging dolly'. The cloth passed through this machine after printing and the dung removed the unwanted products of the chemical reactions which take place in the cloth when it is printed, and the thickening material used in the printing colour.

In addition to the bailiff and the cowmen there was at least one labourer. Some coal came from Poynton by canal to Strines wharf and thence by cart to the works.

Other coal was brought by rail from further afield and shovelled into carts at the Strines station. In 1873, William Bennett was paid 2d per ton for filling carts with coal. In one fortnight in August he shovelled 78 tons 6 cwt of coal and 33 tons 3cwt. of cannel, which is bituminous coal, and laboured for four days at 2/10 per day. In a fortnight in September, in addition to filling 18 tons of coal and labouring 8½ days, he earned 10s for emptying privies. In November he pulled 24 drills of mangolds at 8d per drill and 29 drills of turnips at 5d and 45 at 6½d. He was still filling coal and labouring as well. Such were the charms of rural life in those days!

All transport was horse drawn, and 30 to 40 horses were kept on the farm, so many of the farm workers were carters, waggoners or lurrymen and there were two blacksmiths in the Repairs department. Within the works cloth was moved between departments in a pony drawn van. In 1899 Henry Fearn was paid 4d per hour for driving the van. The bailiff's younger brother, William Kirkpatrick, was a carter, and in 1887 he was paid 2s per day. By 1907 there were 9 carters who were typically paid 3s 8d per day. Several carters were transporting the coal 10

shovelled by William Bennett and no doubt others as well. The carters in charge of wagons were paid an extra allowance of £1 quarterly. At the top of this horsey hierarchy were the lurrymen. The luries were large, flat vehicles normally drawn by four horses. They transported finished goods to the Manchester warehouse and brought 'grey cloth' back to Strines to be bleached and printed. Two extra horses met them at the bottom of Dan Bank for the steep pull into Marple. Ten heavy horses were kept for this purpose. In 1892 we find "The extra man who goes out with a lurry and returns with it in bad weather is to receive an allowance of 1/3 per journey." In his report to Marple Local Board in October 1882, the Surveyor "called attention to the damage done by carters allowing their cartwheels to grind the curbstones instead of using their brakes. Strines Printing Compants lurry drivers were especially complained of and a letter was ordered to be written to the firm complaining of it " Consideration of the same problem at Chapel-en-le-Frith led Herbert Frood to the invention of improved brakes and founding the company which grew into Ferodo Ltd. The first mention I have found of mechanised transport at Strines was in 1902 when Charles Allen was appointed motor driver at 35s. per week.

As every gardener knows, an estate needs continuous maintenance. George Downs was paid 8s each year for catching moles from 1875 to 1891 and maybe longer. In 1877 John Storer felled 23 trees behind the Cottage These yielded 241 cubic feet of timber, and he was paid at the rate of 1d per cubic foot earning £1:0:1 .

The river water carries silt into the reservoirs which have to be periodically emptied and cleaned, and this task fell to ' Repairs ' rather than to the Farm. In September 1876 30 men were engaged on this task at 2s each, but the following June, 46 men were required and 44 of them were paid 5s. There are many more records of men, particularly Joseph Gee and Wright Shaw, cleaning drains, cleaning soughs and filter beds. In 1913, Joseph Gee was sinking a well in " Rough piece ", the field behind Strines church. A pipe carried water from this well past the church, under the road and across the fields to the works. In 1918, John Fearn was paid time and a half for putting out a fire on an ashes heap on a Sunday.

The whole of the works and the surrounding cottages were whitewashed. In 1875 there are four payments to John Chatterton " on account of limewashing works." totalling £17:10:0. The number of men and the time are not stated, but other entries show that when whitewashing was paid on an hourly basis, the rate rose from 4¼d in 1899 to 4¾d in 1914, 5d in 1916 and 6d + war grant in 1919. Allowing 4d per hour in 1875 means that John Chatterton's men spent 1020 man-hours on the task. After about 1900 carting remained a department of the works. The farm continued to operate with tenant farmers, and now it is owner occupied.

Acknowledgement;- I wish to thank Mr G Cox of Strines Printing Co. for

Stockport Advertiser

28 April 1848

Excellent new Machinery for Preparing and Spinning Cotton ; Portable Condensing Steam Engine, Steam Boiler, Shafting, Steam Pipes &c.

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION

BY MR T. M. FISHER

ON WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY, the 10th and 11th days Of May, 1848, at the *Torr Mills*, New Mills, Derbyshire, by order of the Trustees of Messrs Mellor and Roberts, unless previously disposed of by private contract, of which due notice will be given : sale to commence at eleven o'clock each day :--

THE Capital MACHINERY for preparing and spinning cotton, the whole new, and on the best modern principle, comprising blower with three beaters and lap attached for 48 in. cards, by Hibbert, Platt, and Sons : ditto with one beater, by ditto ; 13 carding engines 48 in. on the wire, with licker-in, 7 rollers, 5 clearers, and Cheetham's coiling motion ; three ditto with ditto ditto and plungers, all by Hibbert, Platt, and Sons ; grinding frame for 48 in. cards, with circular brush, by Crighton ; drawing frame, 3 heads each, 6 deliverers, with plungers and revolving cans ; ditto with 6 deliverers, with ditto and stopping motion, both by Elce ; five 30 and two 28 tube Dyer's frames ; two pairs of mules, each 764 spindles, one pair of do. each 436 spindles ; mule 728 ; do. 764 spindles, 20 in. rollers, 1¼ in. gauge, by Hibbert, Platt and Sons ; two pair of mules, each 764 spindles ; mule 728 ; do. 764 spindles, 20 in. rollers, 1¼ in. gauge, and three pair do., each 710 spindles, 19 in. rollers, 1¼ in. gauge, by Albinson ; 43 40-hank cop reels, skips, cans, spools, driving straps, buffaloes, iron buckets, 10½ inch double and 8 inch single speed lathes, with rests, top speeds, bearers and tools ; 30-inch and 24-inch fans, in wrought iron cases ; scales and weights ; double geared crane, by power ; power racking up press, for 5 and 10th bundles ; sperm oil, smiths' and joiners' tools ; portable condensing steam engine, cylinder 22 inches diameter, 3.6 stroke, by Hill and Holmes ; Butterley steam boiler, 30 feet long, by 6.6 wide with mountings, doors, bars, and brickwork ; polished wrought iron shafting, steam pipes, 50 light gas meter pipes, 38 reflectors, and 86 burners, and other effects.

May be viewed on Monday and Tuesday, the 8th and 9th of May, and catalogues had on the premises ; or from the Auctioneer, 21, Princess-street, Manchester.

Bill Eyre (Whaley Bridge) kindly sent me a copy of this advertisement which is not recorded in John Symond's book on 'The Mills of New Mills'.

The chimney of Torr Mill has a datestone 1846 on it so the date of the advertisement, 1848, is significant being soon after major extensions took place, as they did for all the mills in the Torrs in the mid nineteenth century. The changes which took place in this period are well seen by comparing the New Mills tithe map of 1841 with the first edition of the Ordnance Survey map (1880). Torr Mill (or Torr Top Mill) was also known as Schofield's Mills, the family who owned it throughout its life. It was burnt down in 1912.

The details of the mules are of particular interest. There are eight pairs of mules and four single, a total of 20 which fits in exactly with what one would expect. The total number of spindles is 13,792, average 689 per mule. When Samuel Crompton made a survey of this mill in 1811 he found 14 mules with a total of 2,808 spindles, twelve mules of 216 spindles and two mules of 108 spindles. By the end of the century the number of spindles per mule in the cotton industry generally had increased to over 1000. So this advertisement gives us good information about the mid-century position in the development of the mule. The Butterley company, near Ripley, was a popular maker of boilers for cotton mills in the early part of the nineteenth century. It also manufactured the cast iron fish-bellied rails for the Cromford and High Peak Railway in 1831. I haven't been able to track down the engine makers (Not listed in Richard Hills superb book, 'Power from Steam').

Derek Brumhead

THOMAS EYRE (OF ROWTOR) IN THE HIGH PEAK AND THE MASSEREENE CONNECTION : A FURTHER NOTE.

In 1654, Sir John Skeffington of Fisherwick near Lichfield married Mary the only daughter and heiress of Sir John Clotworthy, 1st Viscount Massereene of Ireland. In 1647 Sir John succeeded his father as 5th. baronet of Fisherwick. By the death of his father-in-law in 1665, Skeffington became 2nd Viscount Massereene.

The 5th. Viscount, Clotworthy Skeffington, was created 1st. earl of Massereene in 1756, one year before his death. He married twice, his first wife dying very young. His second wife whom he married in 1741, Anne Skeffington, Countess of Massereene, was the daughter and heiress of Henry Eyre of Rowtor, Derbyshire, and grand daughter of Thomas Eyre who was granted by the Duchy of Lancaster a huge amount of land in the High Peak in 1674 - amounting to 7,332 customary or Cheshire acres, approximately 15,397 statute acres of commons and wastes of the former royal forest of Peak (the freeholders and tenants - the commoners- received an equal grant of land).

By Clotworthy Skeffington, Anne had four sons (three of whom succeeded in turn to the earldom) and two daughters. He was a spendthrift and was obliged to raise money by selling off his estates in Ireland and even the Fisherwick estate in Staffordshire in 1755, the estate which had provided the territorial designation for the family's oldest title, the Skeffington baronetcy created in 1627.

Lady Massereene inherited from her father, Henry Eyre, the Rowtor estate on his death in 1766. It was valued at £50,000 in 1772. Not much of the estate however survived the family's financial crisis in the second half of the eighteenth century. In addition, Anne had an expensive lifestyle as a society figure in Dublin during her long widowhood. She died in 1805.

The Skeffington and Foster families intermarried in 1810 - Foster heir and Massereene heiress. In 1816 after the death of the last earl (4th) of Massereene, the viscountcy was able to pass through a woman and the earl's daughter succeeded as Viscountess Massereene in her own right and through her the viscountcy has descended to the present day.

In 1817, Thomas Foster who had married Harriet Skeffington in 1816 changed his name to Skeffington. He became 2nd Viscount Ferrard when his mother died in 1824. In 1843 the estates and title in the person of the 10th. Viscount Massereene and 3rd Viscount Ferrard merged.

The surviving records of the Rowtor estate are in the Foster-Massereene papers held in the public record office of Northern Ireland in Belfast

Derek Brumhead

THE LOCAL HISTORIAN

Vol 27 No 4, November 1997

Clive D Field, 'The 1851 religious census of Great Britain: a bibliographical guide for local and regional historians'.

Lorraine Sitzia, 'QueenSpark Books - publishing life histories for the local community'.

David Hey, "The local history of family names".

Richard I Lawless, 'Muslim migration to the north east of England during the early twentieth century'.

Reviews include 'The Oxford companion to local and family history' by David Hey; 'Baldock's Middle Ages' and 'A market town [Baldock] in Tudor times' by Vivian Crellin; 'Witham 1500-1700: making a living' by Janet Gyford; 'Agar Town; the life and death of a Victorian "slum" [St Pancras, London] by Steven Denford; "Wicklow history and society: interdisciplinary essays on the history of an Irish county' edited by Ken Hannigan and William Nolan; 'Religion in the age of decline: organisation and experience in industrial Yorkshire 1870-1920', by S J D Green.

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J H Bettey, "Late-medieval Bristol: from town to city"

John M Fletcher and Christopher A Upton, "The domestic accounts of Merton College, Oxford, 1482-1494".

Christopher Weir, "The Nottinghamshire Luddites" Men meagre with famine, sullen with despair".

Roger Dalton 'Farm sale advertisements as a data source in historical agricultural study: possibilities and limitations [in south Derbyshire]".

Reviews include: "Researching local history" by Michael Williams; "Sex in Elizabethan England" by Alan Hayes; 'Prostitution and the Victorians' by Trevor Fisher; 'English Sexualities' by Tim Hitchcock; "The civil wars in Britain and Ireland 1638-1651" by Martyn Bennett; 'Ships of North Cornwall' by John Bartlett; 'Football and the English; a social history of Association Football' by Dave Russell; 'Local Authority Housing ; origins and developments' by Colin Pooley.. There is the usual list of publications in local history and the 'The Local History News'.

Vol 28 No 2, May 1998

John M Barney, 'Local taxes as a measure of commerce in the eighteenth century: the cases of Poole, Dorset and King's Lynn, Norfolk'.

Andrew White, 'The Victorian development of Whitby as a seaside resort'.

S H Reece and G K Roberts, 'This electric age is Woman's opportunity; The Electrical Association for women and its all electric house in Bristol, 1935'.

A H Schulenburg, 'St Helena: British local history in the context of empire'.

Reviews include: "The tyranny of the discrete: A discussion of the problems of local history in England [Professor Neville Kirk referred to this work in his talk to the Society]; 'Cambridgeshire from the air' by Susan Oosthuizen; Microhistories: demography, society and culture in rural England, 1800-1930' by Barry Reay.

DERBYSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETIES NETWORK

Autumn meeting at County Hall, Matlock, Saturday 7 November 1998
10.00 - 13.00

'Derbyshire Farming past and present'.

Speakers: Roger Dalton, University of Derby, Clarke Field, Broomfield College plus local history publications, displays and information.

Fee £2.50 per person to include light refreshments.

Please reserve your place/s (enclose cheque made out to DCC) with Derbyshire Record Office, County Hall, Matlock, DE4 3AG