

A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS

EDITORS REMARKS

SEASONS GREETINGS and a warm welcome to this the fourth History Society Newsletter. As we draw towards the close of another year, I would like to reflect on the year just passed.

We have had a full programme of talks and events, all of which seem to have been enjoyed by those who attended. We have launched a quarterly newsletter. We enjoyed a pleasant evening stroll in the company of Bradford History Society and we are extending a welcome to them in 1993, to join us for a ramble along the Steel Valley Walk. [See back page for details]

We took part in the Library's History fair, which was a resounding success - an estimated 500 plus people attending during the day. Everyone who was there seems to have thoroughly enjoyed themselves. The members manfully manning the Society stand were overwhelmed by the sheer volume of information being passed to them about Manchester Road and its environs. Unfortunately some information, if printed, would be libellous, a pity as it would have made quite a good article on local customs!

In view of the public response to our project it has been agreed to have a 'Dahn t' Road' exhibition in the Library early in the new year.

The newsletter was initially well received and supported but there now seems to be a scarcity of articles. If YOU keep them coming in I can publish them, if they stop, then I stop and the newsletter stops as well!

CHRISTMAS GOODIES

I recently came across an article listing the contents of a Christmas Hamper in 1931. 1 Dundee cake, 1 box shortbread, 1 tin mixed biscuits, 1 gingerbread, 1 jar spiced beef & tongue, 2 tins sardines, 2 glasses potted meat, 1 pot strawberry jam, 1 pot blackcurrant jam, 2 pots marmalade, 1 bottle barley sugar drops, 1 lb peppermint lumps, 1 tin fruit salad, 1 tin pineapple. The price? - £1.00 - post free!

I think that this would have been an ideal gift - nothing too exotic like you often get in today's hampers e.g. 'pepper

pickled Peruvian peaches' - which no one dares to eat. However in 1931 it would still have been an expensive item to say, a typist whose average weekly wage was about £4.00, or a very expensive item to a cook who may only have earned about £1.50 a week.

In Stocksbridge Co-op in the 1920's prices were as follows:-

4-5lb picnic ham - 2/6d, 6lb tin Fray Bentos corned beef - 4/3d, 1lb jar jam - 8d, tall tin of peaches - 8d, 1b tin of salmon - 11d, tea 9d per quarter.

This would have made a nice little Christmas hamper, at cost of nearly 10/-.

Beryl Walker

[This article had to be written on a special, coal fired, steam operated, pre-decimal word processor!]

A CHRISTMAS REMEMBERED

Father Christmas used to pop his head around the door on Christmas Eve and we would scuttle off to bed early. Sometimes if we had gone to bed he would come upstairs and shake the bed to see if we were asleep - and of course, we always pretended that we were!

Then I realised that Father Christmas was the tall, thin man who came round in the evenings to light the gas street lamps with the twinkling light on the end of his long pole.

The next Christmas I well remember! My younger sisters went off to bed early as usual. I stayed up. We opened drawers and cupboards, finding the things which had been secreted away. There was a doll each - fully dressed, furtively by Mum, with a red coat plus real fur collar and Tam O' Shanter to match. Under this a pretty floral cotton dress and cami knickers - all lace trimmed and tiny socks and patent leather shoes.

There were chocolates, fruit, nuts etc. All these I put into two white pillow cases, which were then hung on each end of the brass rail across the fireplace, beneath the mantel piece.

Then a sack was filled. Into the toe was put a packet of cigarettes, which had been wrapped in layer upon layer of paper then a final Christmas wrap. More paper was pushed in to cover the cinders and more paper. This was a joke that we played on Dad for years - he always acted surprised!

The artificial tree was brought out of its hiding place and I helped to put on the glass baubles and the final touch the angel doll on top. The tiny candles in their brass holders were carefully clipped to the branches and placed so that they could be carefully lighted. The Christmas tree had been bought from Woolworths. It had dropped off the push chair on the way home and broken. It was easily repaired and did good service for many years, travelling to Lancashire and later to Ireland, where it was still trimmed for my sisters's grandchildren. It had cost half a crown - certainly good value for money!!

That year I walked into town with Dad to the Parish Church and heard the bells ring out "Christians Awake" at midnight, followed by carols and I joined in the singing. I returned home tired but happy and tip toed upstairs to bed - but I still wakened early to see what was in MY pillowcase and to watch my sisters open theirs!!

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS!! - Mary Hepworth

17 HOURS OF SING AT CHRISTMAS LONG AGO

Several carol singing groups toured the Stocksbridge District, and one of them, of which I was a member, and which had been carrying out this old tradition for 100 years, came from Green Moor.

We always had a strong party of 25 to 30 and we were fortunate in having a fair complement of string players, several of whom were members of the Stocksbridge Instrumental Society.

On Christmas Eve we invariably met outside Rusby's shop at the bottom of Hunshelf Bank, and as soon as the clock at Fox's boomed out 12, we would strike up with the old Christmas hymn 'Christians awake, Salute the Happy Morn'.

From there we would begin our journey up the hillside to Derbyshire Row, then on to Gentlemen Row, and continue our journey to Prospect Cottages, West View and Brownhill Row.

By the time we arrived at the top of this row it would be 5 am. and a welcome meal was waiting for us at the home of Mr. & Mrs. John Birkhead.

Up to this point we had spent the night in the valley, visiting the homes of the steelworkers of Stocksbridge, who, looked forward to a visit from the carol singers so much that they would stay up until 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning to welcome us.

On arrival at Green Moor, we visited the homes of the farmers and quarrymen. Unlike our Stocksbridge friends, they had spent the night in bed but had risen early in order to have a good blazing fire to greet us, which was most welcome, especially when a cold north-easterly wind blew strongly.

Occasionally, in the farmsteads, one would catch an aroma which told that a turkey or goose was already being prepared for the Christmas dinner.

In the homes of the quarrymen there was nothing luxurious, but everything 'sparkled and shone, so genial was the hearth'.

Refreshments were provided in some houses, helping to sustain us to the end of our round, which usually finished at ten o'clock in the morning. Then we went home to bed, for at 6.30pm we were due to meet again.

For the second round of our carol singing the ladies joined us and we met at the home of Mr. & Mrs. John Wordsworth, Huthwaite Lane, Thurgoland. From there we toured Huthwaite Lane as far as Huthwaite Hall, then along Old Mill Lane to New Wire Mill and forward to the bottom of Well Hill. Finally we had a long trek via Wortley Station to Mr. John Illingworth's farm half way up Finkle Street, where the whole of his family was waiting to greet us. This being our last calling place, we gave good measure and finished at about 1 am. on Boxing Day, with the singing of 'Hail Smiling Morn', then we began our long walk home to Green Moor.

I calculate we must have spent seventeen hours and covered a distance of eight miles on the two rounds.

In our younger days carol singing did not occupy all our time. We did, of course, have all the usual family parties, and always looked forward to these happy reunions. Today these family gatherings are still part of our way of life, but due to our changing methods of communication, carol singing as we knew it seems to be on the wane, and sometimes we older people regret the passing of these old traditions, but why should we?

The same message is still with us, but is being presented in a fuller, wider sense.

[Adapted from an article written by Sidney Walton, written in December 1968, and which appeared in the Green Moor Carol Book.]

LOCAL (PRE?) HISTORY

The Stocksbridge & District Environmental Action Group is planning to erect a notice board on the Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age) site at Deepcar.

This is one of the most important Mesolithic sites in Britain and most local people either don't know of its existence or don't know where it is situated.

The board would contain general information about the period in history and more specific information about the site and its excavation.

If you have any information about this site or any others in the area, or would

like to help with the project - contact Alison Payne. Tel. 882827.

[If this is historical - shouldn't we be involved? - ed.]

The Archive contains the report, by Fred Hepworth, on the excavation of a Neolithic site at Langsett, this information has been passed to Mrs. Payne.

MORE LIGHT ON PENISHALE

In reply to Bernard Wilson's article in newsletter No.2.

All the facts in this reply come from **Kenworthy Handbook No.16 page 22.**

A conveyance of the estate of the manor of PENISHALE otherwise LANGSIDE in the township of LANGSIDE otherwise LANGSETT. From Lord Melbourne to Mr. Payne 1803.

This consisted of 15 Messuages, 50 Stables, 50 Barns & 5 gardens.

1000 acres of arable land

500 Acres of meadows

500 acres of pasture

200 acres of wood

1000 acres of furze and wood

also free fishing, free warren, fairs, markets, Courts Leet, Courts Baron, view of Frankpledge, goods and chattels of felons, fugitives and felons themselves, waifs, Estrays, Deodands, Fines, Amerciacaments, forfeitures, jurisdictions, liberties and privileges whatsoever, with appurtenancies in PENISHAL, ALDERMANS HEAD, HAND BANK, LANGSETT & PENISTONE.

Rather more than a 'Penny Sale'!!!!

The area examined (NOT excavated) by Jack (Branston) & Fred (Hepworth) was plotted and recorded at Weston Park Museum, Sheffield.

Mary Hepworth.

How encouraging to read that the local MP - Mrs. Helen Jackson is taking an interest in the conservation of the buildings retaining the flues and remains of glass making at Pot House.

There had been production of glass and pots since Bolsterstone glassworks were founded by George Fox, who was born in 1643, these works had become derelict by 1778, when Richard Ellis of Midhope bought the works and turned it into a pot house.

It must have been shortly after this that John Ridal, who lived in the cottage at Glass House, allowed his parlour to be used as a Sunday School circa 1800.

This was used by both Anglicans and Independents until 1805, when the

Established Church opened a school at the 'Royd'. The Independents continued to use the parlour at Glass House, with occasional summer services in the barn at Greave House Farm.

In 1816 the Independent Sunday School became affiliated to the Sheffield Sunday School Union. The numbers of pupils continued to grow and larger premises became essential. The worshippers had the foresight to see that as the population of the valley increased, the bottom of the valley was the place to search for a site. Land was bought and a single storey chapel 'Ebenezer' was built, after various alterations the school became the British Hall, which was demolished in 1963 to make way for the shopping precinct.
Roy Mallinson.

ARCHIVE DEVELOPMENTS

Following the death of Mr. Jack Branston last year, the library inherited most of his collection of local history material. I have been working on the books and papers and have incorporated them into existing library stock which is housed in the downstairs storeroom.

One bay of shelving is devoted to local industry, with the Fox magazines and other works on the steel plant, books on Bolsterstone glass, the Co-op, Wortley Forge and the Stocksbridge Railway.

One bay holds books on more general history, not specifically Stocksbridge. These range from Yorkshire to Sheffield, Barnsley and Penistone, including a nearly full range of the Penistone Almanac.

The third bay holds the titles specifically on Stocksbridge, including books of personal reminiscences by local people. There is also a good selection of the books by Kenworthy. Books and papers relevant to other local places e.g. Deepcar, Bolsterstone, Wortley etc. are in labelled boxes. Miscellaneous papers discovered in Jack's collection have been sorted into files labelled 'Local Buildings', 'Local People' and 'Local Music'.

I have produced an A-Z author and title catalogue to the collection.

The photographs still await cataloguing. They have been preliminarily sorted but owing to lack of library finances they cannot be copied yet to allow them to be displayed. Should anyone wish to look through them, this can be arranged through the library staff.

The rest of the archive is open during normal library hours, for reference only. Please ask the staff.

As part of Jack's collection the library received 13 volumes of undertakers accounts, spanning the years 1911 - 1973. We were

January 14th

A. A. McKay
(of Thicketts Shop)
Stocksbridge Buildings

February 11th.

A. G. M.
Plus reminiscence session

March 11th.

Professor D. G. Hey
History of Sheffield Surnames

April 8th.

Malcolm Nunn
History of Bradfield

May 13th.

VISIT
Langsett Water Treatment Works

June 10th

Steel Valley Walk
A visit by Bradfield History Society

July 8th.

Stanley Shaw
Local knifemith-----
Stocksbridge & District History Society
Chairman

Graham Norton Tel. 885512

Deputy Chairman & Publicity Officer

Basil Spooner Tel. 884456

Treasurer

Mary Hepworth Tel. 885295

Secretary

Brenda Duffield Tel. 882349

Meetings are held on the Second Thursday of
each month, at the library Manchester Road,
Stocksbridge at 7.00pm.-----
NEXT NEWSLETTER

MARCH 1993

Publication Deadline

Friday February 19th.All articles and letters for publication
should be sent to:-The Editor,
c/o The Library, Manchester Road,
Stocksbridge,
Tel. 882576.-----
Editor - Mike Spick.(C) 1992 Stocksbridge & District History
Society.
-----informed that they came from the firm of
Murrains, who operated from New Road.At the History Fair in November, several
members of the public said how useful these
would be to people tracing their family
trees.As they are working account books, they
are in chronological order and provide for
each funeral:- Name & age of the deceased,
dates of death & burial, place of
interrment, and cost incurred for coffin,
transport and other funerary items. In some
entries the cause or place of death is
given.It occurred to us that a printed surname
index could be produced, which would be of
use to researchers.The volume from March 65 to April 67 is
missing, if anyone knows of its whereabouts,
could they let us know, although I suspect
that it was discarded as being of no value.
The indexing will take a few months, but
when a printed index is available we will
let you know.

Janet Spick.

JUST FOR FUNCan you identify the following local areas
streets etc. from these cryptic clues and
anagrams? Answers at January's meeting.

1. Blooming big hamlet?
2. Small Jack's abode?
3. Fasteners in a line?
4. A hard pillow?
5. Pentecostal source of water?
6. Do live nuns cross here?
7. Put out the rubbish container
8. Storage space for Teutonic tribe?
9. Could a child minder ascend here?
10. Is marijuana grown here?
11. Place to save your instrument?
12. Smooth miry heath?

Sorry no prize for the winner! - but it
might keep you amused on Boxing day!**AND FINALLY**With the rapid approach of Christmas and the
impending onslaught on our digestive
systems, perhaps this recipe from the 1908
STOCKSBRIDGE ALMANAC will make life easier
for you!**"A SIMPLE CURE FOR CONSTIPATION:-**Take half an ounce of powered senna, half an
ounce of powered ginger, quarter of a pound
of figs chopped fine, and half a pound of
treacle. Mix all these ingredients in a
gallipot and keep for use. Take a
teaspoonful or more as required at night."**HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!**