



THE PARAGON

Journal Of Stocksbridge &
District History Society

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50P [FREE TO MEMBERS]

❁ DOWN THE PIT ❁

In the early 1800's expanding industries relied upon a cheap and expendable labour force, namely children. Low adult wages made it common practise for children from poor families to start work very young to help increase family income.

"...I stand and open and shut the door, I'm generally in the dark and sit me down against the door... I never see daylight now except on Sundays."

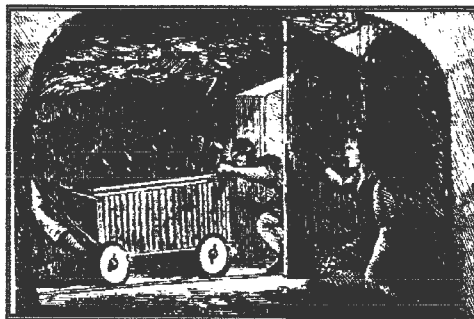
"I have always found the best colliers were those who began at an early age."

"In some parts of the mine passages do not exceed 18 inches in height... the employment of very young children is absolutely indispensable."

"Females submit to work in places where no man or lad could be got to labour in."

These quotations are taken from the reports of evidence given to the Childrens' Employment Commission in 1841 and published in 1842.

In the 1830's enquiries began into the employment of children in factories, attempting to control the long working hours of the children involved. The Factory Act passed in 1833 stopped children under 9 working in textile mills but conditions in many other industries were equally bad. Lord Shaftesbury, a noted victorian reformer campaigned vigorously for the protection of children in industry and eventually the government responded by setting up a Royal Commission to enquire into the working conditions of children in mines, quarries and other



heavy industries.

Men, women and children were interviewed by sub-commissioners and the public in general were horrified when the results of this enquiry were made known. Children started work underground at five or six years old, working the ventilation doors which kept the mine free from gas and the air fresh. Older children were employed as hurriers, pushing and pulling the tubs of coal through tunnels which could be so low they had to go on hands and knees. Coal

mining was, it seems, a family industry. Men hewed the coal whilst women and children filled the tubs and pulled them to the pit bottom. Many mining communities were relatively isolated and people were not aware that women and girls worked underground with men.

It was the sense of moral outrage, rather than the safety and ages of the children involved, which caused the greatest outcry.

In 1842 an act was passed and from March 1st 1843 it was illegal to employ females or boys under 10 years to work underground in a mine or colliery.

Since my dad and many of my forefathers were miners, reading these reports makes me cringe with horror. Most children from mining families will be aware of a type of hated fascination for the pit. The headstocks often towered above a town or village like a praying mantis, never letting us forget that mining was a hazardous occupation. Most children had friends whose fathers had been seriously injured at some time or even killed.

There were other more insidious industrial injuries or diseases that crept up on the men without them realising. Nystagmus often called 'stag' which was a painful oscillating of the eyeballs caused by lack of light. Pneumoconiosis; dust in the lung. Dermatitis; a skin disease caused by dust. Deafness due to noisy

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machinery. My grandfather, John Robert Cooke died at Deepcar in 1909 of acute bronchitis, and since he worked at Lowoods, a notoriously dusty pit, this term probably hid pneumoconiosis, which wasn't recognised at the time. His son, Jonathan Andrew Cooke of Hawthorn Brook, Stocksbridge, suffered from nystagmus and his son (my dad) suffers from dermatitis and severe deafness.

Is there any wonder that mining towns are such close-knit communities? Our forefathers had to give help and support each other in times of need or distress.

Maureen Newton

AN INTERVIEW WITH JACK BRANSTON

Part of a transcript of an interview made in 1980, which asked the late Jack Branston about his time with the Stocksbridge Co-op Society, and his views and beliefs about the Cooperative Movement.

This piece of the interview is asking about the amalgamation of the Stocksbridge Co-op with Brightside and Carbrook.



J.B. The aim of the entire cooperative movement is to share and share alike, it doesn't matter whether you were in Stocksbridge, or Sheffield or Rochdale, where the pioneers first founded the first store, wherever it was it was to benefit the working class and so that the people in this area would still get the benefit from the movement we thought it the wisest to amalgamate.

INT. What proposals had they to help the Stocksbridge because you said they were sinking into the...

J.B. We were sinking into the red. Brightside and Carbrook was perhaps the best of the two societies in Sheffield and we should enjoy the movement as they were enjoying it in Sheffield. Get all the perks that their members were getting you see.

INT. So they were like subsidising Stocksbridge?

J.B. Yes, yes.

INT. When you became a manager of an actual grocery you moved on to the Garden Village grocery, what happened in your career with the Stocksbridge movement after that? Did you go on to be a branch manager?

J.B. No, no that was my last shop, that was the last shop I worked in before I left to go into the steel works. Of course the society we had a young man who had trained, a man called Mr Howchin, he came and took over from me at Garden Village, he was a good lad, a lad I'd brought up and trained, and he took my job over here.

INT. Why did you move from the store?

J.B. Why did I move from the store? Well I'll tell you. When the lads came back out of the forces, there was a lot of them were remiss of going back to their jobs. I had three months off before I went back to my job in the central grocery and when I came back and when I was a manager at Garden Village, rationing was still on and it was a heck of a job making your ration goods go round and you always got that type of person who wanted more than she was entitled to. It was through this unfairness, I called it, with some people, eventually I said I'd had enough. Some of my customers here or one or two of them banded together and thought they weren't getting their fair share. I was reported mind you as a board member. Now the manager in those days I'm speaking about was a man called Mr Dobson who come from the Barnsley British Society to be manager here, and two of these people went down to report me to the manager, which they did. He rang me and he told me "I've got two ladies" I said "you've got two

what?" He said "I've got two ladies in my office who said that you're not allowing them to have some of the certain goods which are rationed." I said "When those people you are calling ladies are fully rationed with me, then they'll be able to have what they're wanting, but not till they're fully rationed." He says "You know Mr Branston we've got to look after our customers." I said if I don't know how to look after our customers after my thirty years with the society you're not going to tell me and we left it at that. When it got to Friday night and the board meeting was on that was where I let them have it, and I got the backing of all the board members. He was my boss in the week, I was his at Friday night and he had to toe the line, which he did. Eventually he had to apologise and to admit that Mr Branston was correct in what he did. There was a lot of this during the war time. Rationing was a headache to the grocery manager keeping track of his commodities....I left the Co-op in 1956 or 1957.

Jack Branston

AROUND STOCKSBRIDGE

Errata & Additional Information

Cover: At least four of these children have been identified as belonging to the SYKES family of No.15 Haywood Park, the date is estimated as 1910

Page 12 top: Misprint - should read JOSEPH HILL'S HOUSE

page 27 bottom: Last man on right, back row STANLEY DUFFIELD

page 37: The date is more likely to be 1902

page 110: The last boy on the front row is thought to be DOUGLAS LANGLEY

pages 124 & 125: The lorry belonged to REVILL SONS & BROADBENT, who used the flat-bed wagon for haulage, sold greengroceries from it in the evenings, then at weekends and holidays added passenger seating. MR

WILLIAM HENRY MACHON, tailor of Old Haywoods, made the hood. The photograph was taken in the 1920's, when the lorry was garaged in Ash Lane.

page 128 bottom: Third from the left is believed to be GEORGE COCKAYNE of Yewden.

Any additional information about the photographs in the book would be most welcome.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

During the war I spent two years working for the Ministry of Food. I was based in Leeds, but also visited many towns in West and South Yorkshire. I had to check large stocks of grain, flour, cocoa beans etc, reserves against the risk of U-boats

minutes to spare. I finished the four routine inspections by two o' clock and got a bus to Stocksbridge. We passed through some pleasant country - small hills, twisty roads and little woods. Stocksbridge is a small, black, stragglng town at the edge of the moors. It has one big steelworks and a gas works and not much else - not even apparently, the warehouse I was trying to find. So I got into another bus and went to Sheffield. We went through some beautiful rich green woods, high up the side of a hill, above a brown, churning stream. There was a lush look about the fields and the cows looked very contented."

After 51 years the blackness has gone, the gas works no longer functions and the bypass has been built, other wise the description still fits.

Margaret Ryle

Thomas Dyson in Hunshelf in 1672.

In 1851 there were two Dyson families in the area - Thomas Dyson, coal miner, with four sons, at School Lane, Bolsterstone; and Amos, also a coal miner, with two sons, at Brackin Lane, Bolsterstone. Both were born in the Parish of Bradfield.

By 1881 there were Dysons living at Yewden, Storth House, Royd Cottages, Wharncliffe View, Holly Busk, Hunger Hill, Lea House, Spink House, Brook Row and Common Piece.

The late George Dyson, onetime member of our Society, had compiled an extensive family tree.

Brenda Duffield

CAN YOU HELP?

As a child I learned this poem in a broad dialect, from my auntie Grace Cooke (nee Garry) who lived at Hawthorn Brook, Stocksbridge, but was born at Penistone. I have tried to write it as I remember and as near the dialect as I can. Have I got it right? It would also be appreciated if anyone could help to fill in the missing line or lines or tell of any other versions.

T' INFLUENZA

Ah wakkened up one mo'arnin, Ah
ached in ivery bo'an Me he'ad felt
lahk hammer, and it weighed abaht a
sto'an

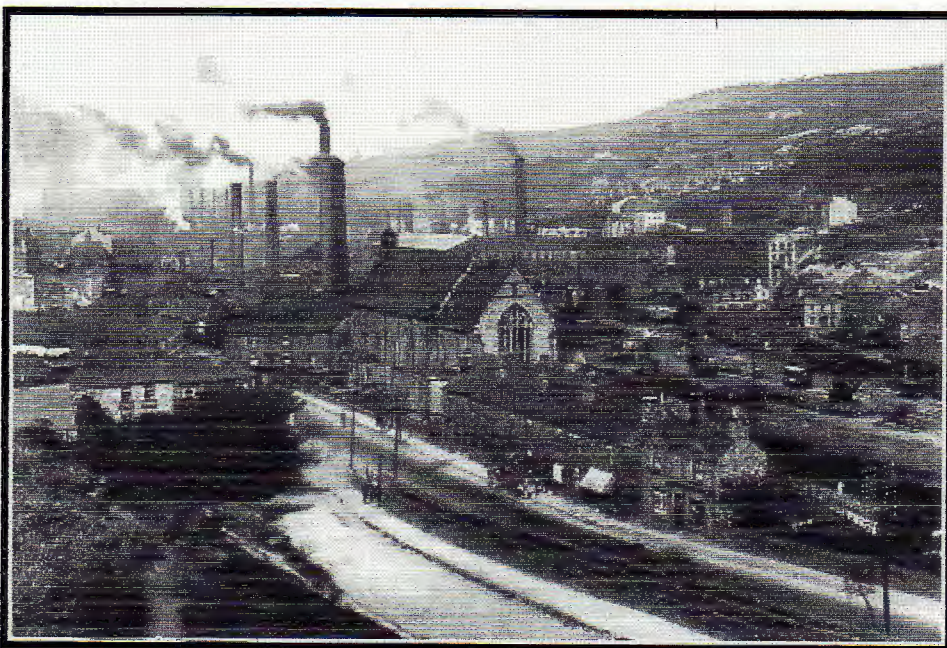
Tha's gotten t' influenza, that's what
me muther said and nowt 'ud do thee
better but a day or two i' bed

(Missing Verse?)

Ah'll fetch thee aunt Maria she'll know
what to do

(Missing Piece?)

We'll after dinner me aunt Maria
came, she filled me hot watter bottle
up t' brim
But it haddent been i' bed a tick or
tack afore t' cork came aht and weet
me beddin thro' an' thro'



sinking whole convoys of merchant ships. Prolonged storage can allow populations of insect pests to multiply and damage food. Our job was to limit that damage.

In 1979 I came to live in Stocksbridge, having completely forgotten about an earlier visit during this work. More recently, on reading an old diary I came across the following:-

"May 16th 1944 - Having overslept somewhat, I had to rush to get the Barnsley bus - and of course arrived with ten

STOCKSBRIDGE SURNAMES

An Occasional Series No.5

DYSON

A patronymic meaning 'son of Di' from Dionisius the medieval form of Denis, it is most common in Yorkshire.

There was a John Dyson of Hunshelf in 1387, and a George Dyson and

Ah weren't a tick or tack at jumpin' aht
a be'ard
Ah fetched me aunt Maria a slap
across 'er he'ard

She put on her shawl an' bonnet ana
went out in a flare She told all the
neighbours for me she didn't care

Next tahn ah've t' influenza ah'll lay
me dahn an dee afore me aunt Maria
comes an' doctors me

Maureen Newton

WICKER COLLAPSE

Whilst researching the articles
on the Manchester,
Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway, I
came upon the following: -

Sheffield and Rotherham
Independent 17th October 1848.
"Fall of the arches of the Wicker
viaduct, not too as serious an extent as
Rother viaduct, and unattended by a
loss of life. 700 yards in length

extending from the present station in
Clay Gardens having its abutments on
the east side of the canal. That
portion of the viaduct above Wicker
and Effingham Lane is greatly
increased in width to afford room for
a passenger station about 300 yards in
length. From Effingham Lane to
termination on the east side of the
canal there are six flat, segmental
arches, two of them being 50 feet and
the others 47 feet span, the latter
having a rise of 10 feet. From the east
end the first arch crosses the road by
the canal side, the second the canal,
and the third (the arch which has
fallen) crosses a narrow private road
between the yard of the Sheaf works
and the canal... About 11 o'clock on
Wednesday morning the third arch
suddenly fell, and several persons had
narrow escapes. Restoration work is
proceeding night and day."

EDITORS TAILPIECE

Those of you who were at the

A.G.M. may remember that I said that
this number of the Paragon might
have to be an emergency edition.
Hopefully, from the presentation, it
isn't too obvious that I'm using not
only new software, but a new
computer as well.

I said at the A.G.M. that I would try
not to change things just for the sake
of change and I'm sticking to that -
the format is more or less the same,
and even the typeface is the same as
the one used in previous editions.

Having mastered the basics of the new
system, I hope to go on to make the
Paragon better and better, not by
sweeping changes but by a process of
continuous evolution, but, as I have
said in the past, I can't do this all by
myself - I need your continued
support in the form of articles etc. for
publication, so keep them coming
please.

Mike Spick - Editor.

STOCKSBRIDGE & DISTRICT HISTORY SOCIETY

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MEETINGS ARE NORMALLY HELD
ON THE SECOND THURSDAY OF
EACH MONTH, AT THE LIBRARY,
MANCHESTER ROAD,
STOCKSBRIDGE, AT 7.00PM

NEXT EDITION

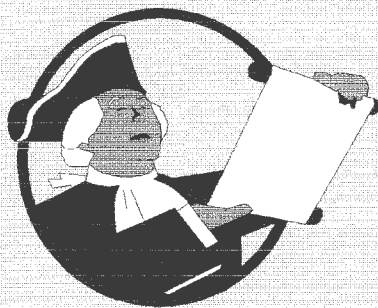
SEPTEMBER 1996

PUBLICATION DEADLINE

THURSDAY 11TH JULY

ALL ARTICLES FOR PUBLICATION
SHOULD BE CLEARLY MARKED
'PARAGON'

AND SENT TO: - MIKE SPICK, C/O
THE LIBRARY, MANCHESTER
ROAD, STOCKSBRIDGE.



☆ PROGRAMME 1996 ☆

STOP PRESS

JULY MEETING

THIS WILL NOW BE THE VISIT
TO THE CUTLERS' HALL

PLEASE NOTE

IT WILL BE AN AFTERNOON VISIT
COMMENCING AT 2.00PM
SEE BRENDA DUFFIELD FOR MORE
DETAILS.

AUGUST

NO MEETING

SEPTEMBER 12TH

JOE CASTLE

VILLAGE FAIRS

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OCTOBER 10TH

W.E. SPENCER

MORE ABOUT HUNSHELF

NOVEMBER 14TH

MARJORIE DUNN

QUEEN MARY'S DOLLS HOUSES

DECEMBER 12TH/14TH

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

☆ NEXT ISSUE ☆

WARTIME

THE NIGHT THEY DROPPED THE
BOMBS ON THE WORKS

CLOSING THE VALVES

THE OPENING OF LANGSETT
RESERVOIR.