

Merry Christmas

FROM THE DIARY OF WILLIS BURGIN, THE SON OF A COAL MINER

MY FATHER, THOMAS KNOTT BURGIN was small, 5 feet 3 inches, with a little, sandy moustache. Out of doors he always wore a flat cloth cap. The clay pipe he smoked at home was a well-seasoned, dirty brown. He had a quick way of cleaning it, with a sharp knock on the fender or the fire-grate. He always used black, thick twist to smoke, and thin twist to chew in the mine.

I never heard Father use bad language at home. He kept us all in order and only ever told us once to do a thing. One day, on my way home from school, after we had moved to Sibbering Row, I spent 2d. on a joke cigarette at Mrs. Binks's shop, intending to play a trick on my mother and brothers. Thinking Father was out, I walked into the living-room with the cigarette in my mouth, the gas light reflecting on the imitation end of the fag. The next thing I knew, I was picking myself up off the kitchen floor, having received a blow from Father. He didn't like my joke.

He was a hard-working coal and ganister miner, and he knew his job. Both hands had hard skin, the colour of leather, caused by using a 14lb. hammer when knocking in steel drills and making holes in the hard ganister rock in the mine.

Most of the miners liked their beer, at 3d. a pint, and so did Father! But when he got too much, his temper was awful, and many a row he had with Mother. Then He would lie on the sofa and have a good sleep, and when he woke two hours later he would be quite normal. It was when his work in the mine was bad, through roof falls or working in water, that put him in these drinking moods, and caused him to have little pay on the Friday. He would leave the pit-yard in his pit muck, (there were no baths in those days), at 2.30 pm. on pay day and call at the public house at the bottom of Carr Road. At 8.30 pm. Mother would be worried because Father hadn't

come home, and I was told to fetch him. I knew the public house where he called, but was not allowed in when I was under age. If it was daylight, although it was hard to identify the miners, with their black faces and in all the smoke, I knew where Father sat in the Tap-room and knocked on the window outside to draw his attention. How I hated this business of fetching Father, and so did he! There was always a row when he got home.

The next thing I knew, I was picking myself up off the kitchen floor, having received a blow from Father

NEAR UTOPIA

RULES & REGULATIONS IN A
LANCASHIRE MILL OFFICE IN
1852

submitted by Janet Parkin

1. Godliness, cleanliness and punctuality are the necessities of a good business.
2. This firm has reduced the hours of work and the clerical staff will now only have to be present between the hours of 7 am. and 6 pm. on weekdays.
3. Daily prayers will be held each morning in the

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main office.

The clerical staff will be present.

1. Clothing must be of a sober nature. The clerical staff will not disport themselves in a raincoat of bright colours, nor will they wear hose, unless in good repair.
2. Overshoes and topcoats may not be worn in the office, but neck-scarves and headwear may be worn in inclement weather.
3. A stove is provided for the benefit of the clerical staff. Coal and wood must be kept in the locker. It is recommended that each member of the clerical staff bring 4 pounds of coal each day during cold weather.
4. No member of the clerical staff may leave the room without permission from Mr. Rogers. The calls of nature are permitted and clerical staff may use the garden below the second gate. This area must be kept in good order.
5. No talking is allowed during working business hours.
6. The craving of tobacco, wine or spirits is a human weakness, and, as such, is forbidden to all members of the clerical staff.
7. Now that the hours of business have been drastically reduced, the partaking of food is allowed between the hours of 11.30 am. and 12 noon, but work will not, on any account, cease.
8. Members of the clerical staff will provide their own pens. A new sharpener is available on application to Mr. Rodgers.
9. Mr. Rodgers will nominate a senior clerk to be responsible for the cleanliness of the main office, and the private office, and all boys and juniors will report to him 40 minutes before prayers and will remain after closing hours for similar work. Brushes, brooms, scrubbers and soap are provided by the owners.
10. The new increased weekly wages are as here-under detailed: junior boys (up to 11 years) 1s. 4d.; Boys (up to 14 years) 2s. 1d.; Clerks 10s.9d.; Senior Clerks (after 15 years with the owners) 21s.

The owners recognise the generosity of the new labour hours, but will expect a great rise in output of work to compensate for these near Utopian conditions.

FROM WALDERSHELF TO STOCKSBRIDGE - THE HISTORIANS

WALLACE CHARLESWORTH born 1851, a member of an old Bolsterstone family, was a contemporary of Joseph Kenworthy who was interested in the history of his locality, but whose work appears to have been minimal. He left us only one, hand-written record of his research, NOTES ON BOLSTERSTONE, written in 1895. But his descen-

dants tell me that it was his extensive library which Kenworthy used for his own research, so we must acknowledge that there was a certain amount of collaboration.

Wallace Charlesworth listed businesses and their location, roads and bridges and their builders, farmers and their movements, buildings demolished and replaced, trades "done away with". The value of this source of information is that it does provide details lacking elsewhere, such as that William Ellison of Sunny Bank Farm was also a corn-miller, that Justice of the Peace J. Corbett produced shovels from the plate rolled at Tin Mill, and that Thomas Elliott made pocket knives at Horner House.

But the drawback is that few dates are given, and there is no indication of when a particular building was demolished, or when a certain business was carried on - we have to seek confirmation elsewhere. John Grayson is listed as a quarry - and colliery owner and coal-merchant; he died in 1869. The new smithy, which he says was built in opposition to the old one which had been part of the Manor House, was probably the building next to the church gate, later converted to a hearse-house.

He does include details which add local colour, such as the fact that Amos Ridal used home-made bricks when he rebuilt Broomhead Hall and says that it took 7 years to build, but does not give any date. He repeats an anecdote which he may have heard from eye-witnesses of the death of George Staniforth of Bolsterstone at the hands of Joseph Shaw of Poggs Farm over a dog-fight at Broomhead Mill House. Again he gives no date, but it must have been between 1854, when Staniforth's youngest child was born, and 1861, when his widow was Head of household in the Census. Wallace Charlesworth tells us that Joseph Shaw was arrested by Parish Constable Jonathan Grayson of Storth House Farm and taken to York for trial for murder, but does not say what was his fate.

OLIVE HEPWORTH 1877 -1971 SOME HISTORICAL NOTES ON STOCKS- BRIDGE & DISTRICT 1959

Wallace Charlesworth's daughter, Olive Hepworth, produced this work at the age of 82. Beginning with the ancient history about Walder, and more in the realm of legend, a Saxon chieftain called Yew, she moves on to more factual, recent history. Naturally, she used her father's Notes as basis for her own work, listing, as he did, former trades and occupations which they could both see disappearing: coke-burning, corn-milling, lead-mining, pottery and quarrying.

She also recorded developments which she had seen in her lifetime, relating how many houses were in various parts of the valley, and who lived in them,

who built the new churches, town-hall, police-station and the Co-operative Stores. The history of Mail and newspapers would be of particular interest to her, as her husband's relative, Joseph Hepworth, had begun to supply daily papers, taking some of the responsibility for this service away from the new Post Office at Deepcar.

An item of special interest in Olive Hepworth's work is about the water supply, not yet dealt with elsewhere. She says that before a piped supply was laid on, people used to have to queue for water on Ellen Cliff or on Townend Common. The first house with piped water was the home of the Rev. R.W. Wilson up "Back Lane", Haywoods. In time, the Lord of the Manor, R.H. Rimington Wilson, gave the people of Stocksbridge a spring "in perpetuity", although this right was eventually relinquished when the Stocksbridge Local Board sold it to Sheffield Corporation.

Another very useful piece of information to be found in Olive Hepworth's Notes is about Land Tenure. She says that some farms were freehold, but most were rented; that originally they were rent-free as long as the family farmed it in return for "riding", ie. keeping the land cleared.

(Note: In the review of Joseph Kenworthy, his work on Bolsterstone Glass-house was not mentioned. This will be included in a comprehensive article on the subject)

Brenda Duffield

THE HANCE STORY

It all began for me with the family grave, which is next to a yew tree, that acts as a sign post, in Bolsterstone churchyard.

1875 ROBERT HANCE age 33 husband of MARY ANN

1896 JOSEPH GEORGE age 25 son of the above

1906 MARYANN age 63 wife of ROBERT

1906 LUCY age 8 months daughter of GEORGE & ELIZABETH

1918 MINNIE age 6 daughter of WILLIAM & SARAH ANN

1924 WILLIAM age 56 husband of SARAH ANN

1948 SARAH ANN age 79 wife of WILLIAM

Here is the story of the family, before the grave: It starts at a now little-used village church at Dinton, Buckinghamshire, nestling next to a Tudor manor house, which lies, rather forlornly, behind a high wall. If I won the Lottery, I would try to buy the house, in memory of those who had to leave to find work.

The date is January 9th., 1776, when ROBERT HANCE marries SARAH PAXTON. Their son ROBERT (no.2) is baptised in June, 1786.

In 1798, for defence purposes, a Militia List was drawn up of men between the ages of 15 and 60. One is ROBERT HANCE of Dinton, who owns 5 horses, 1 wagon and 2 carts. He must have been quite a prosperous yeoman farmer, as both he and his son could sign their names.

In 1816 ROBERT (2) now aged 30, marries MARY GOODCHILD, of Ford, a hamlet three miles away from Dinton.

1817 sees the baptism of ELIZABETH. ROBERT (3) comes along and is baptised September 26th., 1819. Then tragedy strikes - MARY dies in March, 1820, and is buried in Dinton churchyard.

Between 1798 and 1841, when the story resumes, the family must have fallen on hard times, maybe losing their land due to the Enclosure Acts.

1841 February 15th. ROBERT (3) labourer, marries SARAH POLLARD, 20, servant of Westlington (one mile from Dinton). Both were able to sign the register.

ROBERT (4) is born April 1st. 1842, father ROBERT HANCE, labourer of Ford.

Census June 1841 Ford

ROBERT HANCE (2) 55 Retailer of beer

JAMES (brother?) 45 Agricultural labourer

ROBERT (3) 20 Ag. Lab.

[In the 1841 Census, adult ages were rounded down to the nearest 5, and relationships were not entered.]

Was SARAH at home with her mother?

In 1849 there was a great outbreak of cholera in Dinton and 17 out of a population of 55 in the hamlet of Gibraltar died, including 4 PAXTONS.



[Photograph on this page supplied by Albert McKay]

STOCKSBRIDGE & DISTRICT

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

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SOCIETY NEWS

The Photographic Exhibition which we held at Stocksbridge Community Centre from September 4th – 15th was well attended and aroused a good deal of interest. We were given information about many areas, particularly Horner House, Marsh St. and Vaughton Hill, which our older residents remember from their childhood, particularly during the war. Discussions and reminiscing continued outside the exhibition itself, and perhaps led to the oral testimonies, collected by Joan Banks from her DASH group members, which will be featured in the next issue of *The Paragon*.

Many thanks to Betty and Albert McKay, who provided and displayed the photographs, and to those Society members who helped ensure that the exhibits were hardly ever left unattended.

Meanwhile we would like to hear from anyone who can tell us about the bombs which fell in Ewden Valley.

2001 PROGRAMME

January 11th. Alice Hind: Yorkshire Dialect
February 8th. AGM
March 8th. Mrs. N. Greenwood: The Three Cole Brothers
April 12th. Mr. R. Wilkinson: The U-Boat War of World War I
May 10th. Mr. K. Loxley: For Valour – the story of the Victoria Cross

Census April 1851 Park Leys

ROBERT HANCE (3) 31 Agricultural labourer

SARAH wife 30 Lace maker

ROBERT (4) son 9 Scholar

JESSE son 7 Scholar

WILLIAM son 5 Scholar

ELIZABETH daughter 2

ROBERT (2) father 64 Ag. Lab.

There were three more HANCE families in the area in 1851, including a visiting pedlar, REBECCA, 62 ! I wonder if she was selling the lace which many of the wives were making? Several of the houses were empty – had people fled the cholera, or were they already seeking work elsewhere?

I do not have the 1861 Census. But on Christmas Day, 1865 at Leighton Buzzard, approximately 15 miles away, ROBERT (4) age 23, a labourer of Brentford, marries MARY ANN SMITH, 23, father Matthew Smith, witnesses JESSE HANCE and Elizabeth Smith. The men signed the Register, but the women made their marks.

1867 November 8th. the birth of my grandfather WILLIAM to ROBERT and MARY ANN HANCE at Dinton., followed in November, 1870 by JOSEPH.
(To be continued)

Betty C. McKay



Beauchief Abbey—Leslie Dowson

