

# THE PARAGON

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## SALFORD REMEMBERED

By A.A. McKay  
(1927 - 2009)

When I promised to tell you about the early days of the McKay family, I didn't realise it would take me so long to get it done, and even as I write now, I fear there will be so much more that will come back to me later. Edward, Arthur and I, being the younger end of a family of 12, were so close in years that I can only assume that, living in their shadow, what happened to me is a reflection of their lives also.

As with all stories, the cast must come first, so here we have it:

**Dad Edward** born 6<sup>th</sup> April 1884

Mother Alice, nee Higginbottom, born 10<sup>th</sup> May 1886

Tom 18<sup>th</sup> born February 1908

Alice born 15<sup>th</sup> August 1910, died of TB 13<sup>th</sup> December 1922

May born 1<sup>st</sup> May 1912

Bill born 1914

Lillian born 1916

Agnes 2<sup>nd</sup> born April 1920

Bob born 12<sup>th</sup> October 1921

Edward born 4<sup>th</sup> July 1924

Arthur born 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1925

Albert born 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1927

Tom, Alice, May and Bill were born at number 11, Rosamond Street, then we younger ones were born at 10, Shepherd Street, Salford.3, at the junction with Ford Street. Also at this junction was the old Fire Station. It had been converted into a Smithy and Veterinary when the newer and more modern Fire Station was built on the Crescent opposite Peel Park main entrance. The old Fire Station was a favourite stopping-off place on our way home from school, but more of that later.

I do not have the Birth Certificates for Lillian, Agnes or Bob, so I don't know whether they were born at Rosamond Street or Shepherd Street.

Shepherd Street, where we started our days, was a not too narrow, cobbled street of terraced houses. When I say not too narrow, two horse-drawn carts would have a job to pass each other, and one of them, most likely would have to reverse and give way to the other. The back streets were the same, and it was a double hazard, especially when it was a fine day and the womenfolk had done their washing. They would hang their washing on a line stretched from one side of the back street to the other, and of course, those on the other side would do the same, and there would be a back street full of washing.

Heaven help any coal merchant trying to deliver coal to the back doors. It would mean washing having to be brought in to make way for the horse and cart, otherwise the coal would have to be brought in through the front door, and although the houses were not exactly palaces, nobody would want coal dust through the house.

Another thing I remember were the Black Jacks beetles with hard body shells that used to come around, and under, the front doors. They were ugly things and I would hate to have to describe what it sounded like when you trod on one. Nearly every shop sold powders to sprinkle round the door to kill them off.

The street was our playground and the many children were our playmates there always seemed to be plenty of simple games that needed teams. Needless to say, we had no radio or television. Cinema was in full swing, but money was needed to get in, and there was a great shortage of that in Shepherd Street. Still, when you had your mates and games to play, and a slice of bread and marge, and if you were lucky, a bit of dripping on your butty, you could be happy enough. The only thing that could cause us any upset was to be called in for bed. Mom was always keen on our being in the house at a reasonable time for bed, and heaven help us if she caught us hanging out of the window shouting to our mates! It's funny, how they were always allowed to stay out longer than us.

I can just about remember details of our house. It was a two up and two down. The front door opened directly onto the street and allowed for little privacy. The front room was where Mom did all the cooking on the old black-leaded fire range. She was a most wonderful cook she could make such marvellous concoctions and a banquet out of bits of meat that people would consider only fit for scraps today. Her Pea Soup with a sheet of ribs or ham shank in it, Beast's Heart and her Tater Hash were really special but these were only weekend specials and midweek we had to make do with what we could afford. Those weekends were really something to look forward to.

Behind the living room was the kitchen, where all the washing was done. The usual boiler and mangle were here. Under the mangle I can remember there was a figure of a white horse about 10 or 12 inches high one of those you see advertising whiskey and I think of it now as my very first toy (if you can call it that) and it gave me a lot of joy just playing with it.

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## MEMOIRS OF LILIAN BIRKHEAD



1896 - 1987

### MORE FAMILY TRAGEDY

My father had a remarkable memory, particularly for dates. Even in the childishness of his latter days we could appeal to him for some date connected with a past event and he would immediately supply it.

He also had a slight flair for rhyming. In about 1909 he decided to record our Chapel's history. He spent many hours in the evening after a long day's work, assembling the facts and then setting them to rhyme. At last the work was completed and taken to the printers Hinchcliffe at Deepcar. The result was quite a remarkable chronicle of our church history from 1812 1909. The printed leaflets were sold for 1d!

### MY FIRST CAR

In 1932 I had got my first car a second-hand Morris Minor for £65. The new Stocksbridge School had been built up the hill towards Bolsterstone, the long walk from Green Moor ending in a steep hill. This walk, along with Home and school problems was too much. But learning to drive was a nightmare; however, there was no test to worry about in those days. One could go out alone, practising on the long, quiet road to Hartcliffe. It was good practice, having to make one's own decisions. I have spent many hours on that road, teaching myself, and others, to drive. My first long drive to Scarborough was most beneficial, as I met many more driving problems to overcome. How thankful I have been through the years that I mastered the art of driving, difficult though it was!

Prior to my father's illness we had moved from New Houses into a larger house by the main road *Roisfield*. This was pleasanter, more modern and with a bathroom, but still no water piped in. It was stored rainwater, collected from the roof in an underground tank, and then pumped back up to a tank in the roof before it could be drawn off through the taps. My uncle said it took 400 pumps per day. And still we had no WC.

In the autumn of 1934 our hopes of Mother's recovery were dashed. (There follows a harrowing, detailed account of the progress of Mrs. Walton's treatment for cancer of the nose and throat, which involved several stays in Clarendon and the Royal Infirmary.)

On Christmas Eve 1935 I went by train to my aunt's at Bradwell, unexpected but welcomed, and spent the night there, ready to go into Sheffield next morning to spend Christmas Day at the hospital. What a Christmas! Snow was falling, turning to slush, then freezing again at night, making transport by car or on foot very dangerous.

Doctors tried various new treatments from May 1934 to October 1936 there were six operations. The following summer she died. Was my mother a guinea pig? No doubt the different treatments performed on her have helped in diagnosing symptoms and treatments for others, and so played a part in the world of medicine. But she paid a big price, and so did we, through her suffering.

### Messiah, Christmas 1935

That winter my brother Sidney Walton, our choirmaster, decide to fulfil a long-held desire to give a performance of the Messiah. He had no difficulty in forming an orchestra he was a member of the Stocksbridge Works Orchestra or a choir. Principals for the event were:

**Soprano** Elsie Pickering      **Contralto** Gertrude Worsley  
**Tenor** Peter Elliott      **Bass** Bernard Walton

So rehearsals went ahead. The performance was to be given the Sunday before Christmas when Mother was so ill in hospital. Snow had fallen, making road conditions very bad, and affecting attendance. But the performance itself was a success, and certainly an achievement for such a small village. But we realised it was a mistake to plan such a big event in midwinter.

## THE DIARY OF WILLIS BURGIN

Son of a Yorkshire Miner

Memo to all units of 47<sup>th</sup> London Division and the 50<sup>th</sup> Battalion Machine Gun Corp:

*The Divisional Commander desires to place on record his high appreciation of the services rendered by Brigadier General M<sup>st</sup> G<sup>st</sup>, DSO and the Infantry Brigade, and the attached two Companies of the 50<sup>th</sup> Battalion Machine Gun Corp under Major Brooks and Major Cox M.C., in repelling the enemy counter-attack on 31<sup>st</sup> August and inflicting severe losses on the enemy.*

(Signed) S.H. Hoare, Lieut. Colonel Commander

Continued

3rd September 1918

After two days spent cleaning guns and equipment, the Section marched off under a new Section officer. On his tunic were the ribbons M.C. and bar, also the Distinguished Service medal.

We stopped in a labyrinth of trenches in front of Moslains, which the Germans had occupied only the day before.

Only a few shells were coming over at night now, and these were mostly gas shells, so we had to wear gas masks nearly all night. Lying in the trench we found a big, fat, dead German. Two of us tried to move him, and as we lifted him and turned him over, he gurgled and opened his eyes. We both started back, bumping into Private Turner. "Well, well, well," he said, "running away from a stiff? Come on, I'll help you get rid of the stinker!" It took the three of us to get the body up and over the parapet.

In the trench I found a Jerry's haversack and in it I discovered two pairs of clean socks. This was the first time I had my boots and socks off for ten days and dead skin peeled off with my socks. Having clean socks on was like having new feet.

It was now getting on to the back end of the year, with cold winds and plenty of rain, making these clay trenches very slippery. A Section soldier and I had to go half a mile to Company HQ to get the Section rations. It was a dark night and we had to be careful where we put our feet. WE had an empty sand bag each in which to carry two loaves, cold mutton, four tins of beans, ½ lb margarine and a ½ lb carton of jam a 1lb carton cut in half. I carried the filled sandbag over my shoulders and the ½ lb carton of jam in my hand. I was in the lead, going down a lane that was not only clayey, but also sludgy, when suddenly one foot went in the air and my other went in a long slide down the steep lane.

"Are you all right, Sergeant?", shouted the soldier behind me. "The jam is, and that is the most important thing!" I replied. That jam had to be shared by 14 men.

Our gun positions were in open country and how surprised and startled we were, when visiting the gunners in the early morning, by a covey of partridge taking to the air a most unusual sight in the middle of a battlefield.

We never stopped long in one place and again the Company was on the march always forward. By the roadside now lay the bodies of American casualties, brought from the battlefield and awaiting transport to their final resting place/ Most of these men had been gassed. As we marched we saw long lines of graves being dug for the rows of bodies wrapped in blankets. A chaplain was reading the Burial Service over them and their only mourners were the diggers and soldiers of the Ambulance Brigade, standing with heads bowed.

What I saw was the price paid in our efforts to smash the Hindenburg Line.

## VICTORY CLUB RECORDS

1962 -1966

Compiled from notes by  
Mike Kerrigan

The Committee approved the appointment of Mr. G. Broomhead as Concert Secretary. The standard of Concert artistes was felt to be inadequate.

Sheffield Corporation increased Water charges and the County Council increased the Rateable Value of the premises, so the charges for hire of the Large Hall had to be raised.

Mr. G. Goulding proposed that better artistes could be hired if a Fruit Machine were installed to bring in revenue. This would involve rescinding a previous Minute prohibiting such a move, and an inordinate amount of time was spent for several months on this matter. Eventually a *Governor* and an electric machine were hired at a weekly rental of £20 payment only to commence after the Club had received £250 from it. It was fixed to the Battle Stone wall in the Billiards Room. After two weeks receipts were £38.11.0 and £101.19.6 and the Finance Committee was to consider making extra payment to the Steward for the extra work involved. They also replaced the electric machine with a second *Governor*.

One problem arose when a player nearly got three oranges in a row, but the third orange stopped halfway, preventing a win. His sixpence was refunded.

There was a more serious incident when the Club was broken into and the machines rifled. A loss of over £100 was estimated and the culprits were not likely to be caught. Steel cabinets were installed to protect the machines during closing.

A suggestion that Tommy Trinder be engaged for a midweek concert for a fee of £35 was not pursued. But the Concert Secretary recommended the engaging of Dukes and Lee. (Here Mike shows his age by commenting that this was a popular song-and-dance act at the time.)

## Continued

A Saturday Free and Easy had to be applied for perhaps in view of previous disturbances. The incorrigible J.T.C. was eventually given an indefinite suspension of membership.

An extension was granted for one Easter Saturday to 11.30pm for dancing, but there would be a break at 10.40pm for all drinks to be cleared. A Sunday Free and Easy was held with a group and pop artistes for the younger members.

The Rugby Club left the Large Hall in a dirty condition after their Dance, with childish drawings defacing the walls of the artistes' dressing room, and the microphone was stolen. The Rugby Club had to clean up and try to find the thief.

The Bar Room piano was not judged to be worth reconditioning by Wilson & Peck, who offered a reconditioned model. Pianist Mr. W. Bradshaw was asked to inspect those in stock and report back to the Committee. At the next meeting this had not been done and Mr. Bradshaw said he might terminate his engagement if his estimate for repairs to his car were not approved. And in any case, he would not be available the following weekend. But he did turn up the following weekend and made no allusion to the matter. He must have got over his fit of pique.

Another previous embargo was lifted with Sunday Billiards was allowed for two weeks from 12.00 to 2.00 and 7.00 to 10.30pm. Takings and conduct proved satisfactory, so the trial was extended for a further two weeks, then reviewed every two weeks.

The tradition of a Children's Treat at Christmas continued with a Film Show at the Cinema. But in 1965 they booked a performance of the New Year Pantomime given by the S.W.A.D.S. And the following year they investigated the possibility of taking the children to Barnsley or Sheffield, but this would cost about £200, and it was decided to put on a special children's concert at the Club. This must have been when the Palace Cinema closed down,

Other improvements to facilities were a Public Telephone, a supply of Aspirin tablets behind the Bar and even a Southall's dispenser for the Ladies' toilets. But there was still resistance to a cigarette machine.

The newspapers and magazines supplied were reviewed and the Daily Mirror replaced several titles. They had a problem with pilfering of newspapers.

A close eye was kept on the price of beers, fortified wines and spirits in keeping with increased charges by the breweries. But although the Finance Committee recommended that some were sold at a cut price for one short period, this was not to be advertised! And despite a wholesale price increase, the experiment was repeated a few months later.

A visit by a National Insurance Inspector revealed that the Club had failed to make National Insurance contributions for the pensioners they employed as Billiards attendants and doormen.

He was given details of the hours worked, calculated back for over two years, and payment made of £208/9/11d.

The Club held £200 Defence Bonds that they decided to convert and invest in the Trustee Savings Bank.

Finally, members had to be reminded of the rules about Visitors:

Each member may bring in only one lady; a member may personally introduce a friend as a visitor, but not more than twice in any quarter.

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## FROM WALDERSHELF TO STOCKSBRIDGE

### Stocksbridge in 1881

Only 4 survivors of the 36 individuals shown as living in Stocks Bridge in 1651 can be found in the expanding village 30 years later. Edward and Elizabeth Askew have died and their son Elijah is licensee of the Friendship Inn. Their daughter Ann married William Helliwell, who was publican of the Sportsman Inn, Deepcar in 1871, but both died before 1881.

Hannah Batty died, George took a second wife, Harriet, and they moved to the Friendship Inn. By 1871 George died, leaving Harriet as innkeeper. In 1881 their son Elijah was working as a gardener and living in Johnson Street, while Hannah's son Thomas Edward had become licensed victualler at the Bridge Hotel, Penistone. He was destined to return to take up the tenancy at the Friendship, rebuild the frontage and put the date with his initials over the door.

The Crawshaw children living with Jonathon Hawke in 1851 were the children of his daughter Harriet, who had married Jonathon Crawshaw of Oaks Farm, Midhope. Harriet had died in 1845, aged 28. Charles Crawshaw turns up ten years later, working as a carter at Spink Hall, but we have no later record of him. The grandparents Jonathon and Hannah Hawke of Stocks Bridge had both died in 1856.

The elder of the Helliwell brothers, George died the year after the 1851 census, while John went back to take over his father's farm at Bracken Moor. (You may remember that, of the 985 inhabitants of this area in 1851, 60 were Helliwells and 10 of them were named John!) James, illegitimate son of their sister Sarah, was working for another relative, Joseph Helliwell at Hoyle House in 1881.

The two coke burner's labourers now had their own homes Samuel Marsh was coke-burning at the Clough, Whitwell, and Jonathan Swallow became a labourer in the ironworks and lived on Bacon Row, Woodroyd.

The Spencer household at the manse have moved on and the incumbent in 1881 is the Rev. Henry Robertshaw.

The intervening years have seen much development and the hamlet has grown into a village. A quite revolutionary change took place in the beginnings of the Co-operative movement in this area. A public meeting was held in 1860 in the clubroom of the new public house opened by wheelwright and beer-house keeper George Batty, which led to the formation of the Stocksbridge Band of Hope Industrial Co-operative Society. (This was not connected to the Temperance movement). It seems that the clubroom was actually used as a salesroom as well as an office to begin with. *The Jubilee History 1860 1810* of the Society, written by Joseph Kenworthy, gives all the details of how the enterprise grew and prospered.

The extent of the growing community can be traced from the Census Returns, although the Enumerator Joe Marsden, Clerk to the Local Board, accountant and rent collector, has omitted many addresses. He did note the name *Stocksbridge* on 3 schedules and gave the names of what would be new streets, making possible an assessment of the extent of the new village centre.

The New Inn is the first to be so described, (head: widow Eliza Gill, beer-house keeper), the previous named address being Ling Bank (still there - half way up Hole House Lane). Two schedules further on the name *Stocksbridge* is used again, before the household of Joseph Drabble, wire-drawer, formerly of Lane End, Deepcar, and his widowed mother, both survivors from 1851. Three doors further along is the Coach and Horses Inn. The next two schedules list three policemen, who may have been lodging at the Inn, rather than occupying a separate building. Next comes Hawke Green, which consists of six households (Ruby's row?): a gents' hairdresser and his widowed father-in-law; a widowed former weaver and her blind son; another widow living with her son, ironworker; then a steel smelter, his wife and four children all steel or umbrella workers; a "cordwainer" (shoemaker/ cobbler) and his wife, three children and widowed mother-in-law, and finally, the Independent Minister and his daughter. She and one of the steelworker's sons were born in Bradfield, but not one of the others was native born.

The name *Stocksbridge* is used once more in the Census Return, much further on, after Chapel Row, the Corn Lodging House, the Co-operative Stores, Water Lane, the Friendship Inn, Hives Yard, a tailor's lock-up shop, and New Houses. Here the Enumerator's handwriting lets us down, for the street name, although very short, is almost illegible. It could possibly be Low Street and might refer to what was Low Road before it was renamed Victoria Road. (ie. the easier route to Bolstone churchyard for funeral processions). After that come George Street (later Victoria Street?), Button Row and Johnson Street. Water Lane was so called when people used it as access to the river to draw water and was renamed Gibson Lane. Hives Yard was really Ives Yard, after the tailor who had premises there. Button Row was named for the Button brothers, who contributed to the construction of the new Co-op buildings.

The number of schedules covering the entire area in 1851 was 199 and now in 1881 is 712. This includes 16 for Hunshelf. The population has grown from 985 to 3,737.

# Stocksbridge & District History Society

## *Committee*

### **Chairman**

Roy Mallinson—Tel. 288 8362

### **Secretary**

Basil Spooner—Tel 288 4456

### **Treasurer**

Betty McKay—Tel 288 2269

### **Archive Liaison**

Brenda Duffield—Tel. 288 2349

Barbara Mallinson

Janet Parkin

Mary Read

Dennis Pindar

Meetings are normally held on the second  
Thursday of each Month,

At Christ Church Hall, Stocksbridge at 7.00pm

## PROGRAMME OF EVENTS 2010

Please note that meetings are now held in Christ Church  
Hall at 7.00pm on the second Thursday each month.

September 9th

**PETER WILD**  
**CANALS**

October 14th

**MIKE SPICK**  
**J.G. GRAVES, SHEFFIELD PHILANTHROPIST**

November 11th

**STEPHEN McKAY**  
**THE HISTORY OF LIVERPOOL**  
**SEAMEN'S MISSION**

Saturday December 18th

**CAROL SUPPER**

January 13th 2011

**BRENDA DUFFIELD**  
**AN UPDATE ON OUR OLDEST BUILDINGS**

February 10th 2011

**A.G.M.**