



# STOCKSBRIDGE & DISTRICT HISTORY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Number 13 Spring 1995

## EDITORS REMARKS

Well here we are, the *Newsletter* has had its third birthday and I think it's time for a few words of reflection.

The *Newsletter* has evolved from a fairly crude typescript to state of the art, laser typesetting, and we have now settled into a 'house style' that I hope is recognisable. The biggest change, though, has been in the *quality* of the writing. **In the past year alone, we have together published nearly 12,000 words about the history of the area, and I would like to thank everyone who has contributed.** We aren't just publishing things for the sake of it either. The *Newsletter* is well used by readers in Sheffield Local Studies Library, this is because there are articles on subjects that haven't been covered anywhere else!!; and we are playing a vital part in recording history before these facts and recollections disappear for ever.

To aid researchers I have produced an index to issues 1-12 [1992-1994] and copies are on sale for £1.00 each [50p goes to Society funds]. It is intended to produce a yearly index from now on. If any member needs a copy or copies of the earlier newsletters to complete their collection, see **Mary Hepworth**, or if they are now out of print, reprints will be available for 50p per issue.

Having introduced laser typesetting, there is now more scope for the inclusion of illustrations to go with the articles, see Fred Hepworth's article and drawings in this edition. Let's see what *we* can do to make the *Newsletter* better and brighter for 1995.

Mike Spick

## THE METER MAN

The table seemed covered in copper coins. Mr. Brown sat at it, his note-book by his side, his hands ready to begin. Just big enough to see over the table top, I stood watching, silent.

He started. His fingers moved swiftly, making the pennies magically disappear into his large hands to re-appear in small regimented piles. He never stopped, it was as if he'd been wound-up and set in motion like a mechanical toy, until all the pennies stood in rows like a miniature army.

He had this magical ability with coins. He must have had power too, for after quickly calculating the totals in his note book, he reached out to take a few of the piles of pennies and push them, counting as he did so, over to my mother.

"There, that's yours Mrs. Harrison," he said.

She hastily and happily garnered them into an empty jam-jar.

Then with one flick of his hand, Mr. Brown turned the regiment of pennies into a pile again, to be gathered this time into the heavy leather bag he always carried. Drawing the string top together, and putting away his note book, he said,

"Good Morning Mrs. Harrison." and the penny magician vanished.

Joan Firth.



## DISCOVERING OUR PAST

Number 2

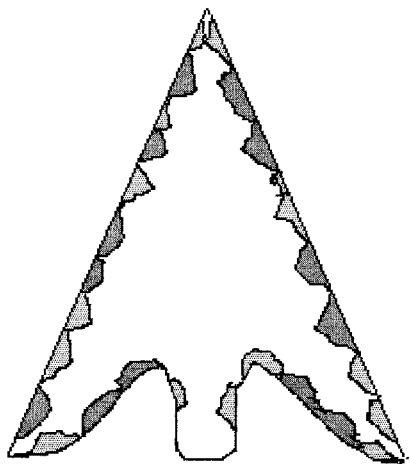
Looking in areas that have been disturbed in the past, such as the large areas of land where the reservoirs were built, has brought to light many of the Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze-age projectiles that hunters have lost while following the rivers where game would gather to drink.

Some have been found broken, many must have been retrieved by the hunter and if they were broken he would re-touch the arrow head for further use. These tend to be a bit smaller and after a while get lost too.

Wind and rain wash the bare ground revealing most of these and the early stone-age families walked across the high moors when the climate was much warmer than today and silver birch was more common. Many arrow heads have been found on Pike Low and across Candlerush Edge and Broomhead moors, proving that the area was settled in ancient times.

This area of ours is on what was an ancient emigration trail, which people used to travel over the land bridges from the continent and to Ireland. Around 12,000 BC the sea level rose and we became an island.

Below is a full size illustration of a barb and tang arrow head, dating from 1400 BC, that came from Underbank



**Barb & Tang 1400 BC Underbank Res**

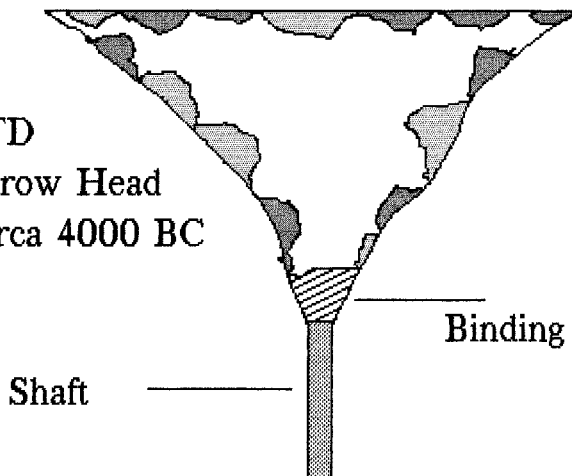
ervoir. Other examples and styles have been found on Woodhead and Broomhead moors, Derwent Edge and in a ploughed field at Morehall where the

new filter plant has been built. Eight similar arrow heads were found in a heap above Broomhead moor, they had been lost by a hunter. On closer examination one arrow head revealed 31 points on one side of the blade and 32 points on the other, the flint was as sharp as a razor.

The 'Petit Tranchet' derivative or P T D is a rare form of arrow head with a very broad surface and a sharp, chisel-like, cutting edge.

It was discovered while experimenting with different lengths of feather flights, that providing one feather was at least 5 inches long, this type of arrow, when released from a modern composite, fibre glass bow of 56 pounds pull, could accurately hit ground targets 50 metres away. If shorter flights were used then the arrow would fly off course after only a few metres, the broad head acting like an aircraft wing.

**PTD  
Arrow Head  
Circa 4000 BC**



Early man found that an arrow head with a sharp point, hitting a bird's feathers, would cause them to compact together and the arrow would glance off, but the broad chisel point of the P T D would stun the bird and the hunter wouldn't go without his meal, and also the broad side of a bird made a better target.

Many of these type of projectiles are not noticed as they don't look like a typical arrow head. They were said to be used in the late Mesolithic era when the bow arrived from Africa by way of Spain and two composite bows dating from this time, have been found in the South of England, but due to the high acidity of our local soils, buried wood rots very

easily, leaving no remains.  
F. Hepworth.

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## MORE LIGHT LESS DANGER?

Nowadays, each newspaper or news bulletin on the television has some disturbing item, mugging or murder taking place on the now well-lit city or village roads.

What a difference from 40 or 50 years ago, when, during the war years we had no street lighting at all due to the blackout, or following the war we had the occasional gas lamp, most of which, apart from those in the city, went out at midnight.

A few years ago I had occasion to be in Sheffield at 2am and the streets were as busy as if it had been midday and the road was well lit all the way home to Stocksbridge.

It was late March or early April in 1950 and I was coming home on leave from R.A. F. Tangmere in Sussex. I arrived at Sheffield Midland station at 12-40am and made my way to the bottom of Snig Hill to board the last tram at 1-30am. This would carry me as far as Holme Lane as it made its way to the tram sheds there. Whilst walking from the station and waiting for the tram I never saw another person.

Alighting from the tram at Holme Lane, I walked to Middlewood terminus, with just the odd, lighted gas lamp, few and far between and I was in complete silence. From Middlewood Hospital I walked home to Oughtibridge in complete darkness, meeting neither another person, nor being passed by any vehicle.

The only fear I had on that pitch black, starless night, was that I might fall into the river at Hangman Bend, just on the Stocksbridge side of Middlewood Tavern. The only protection was a low railing standing about knee high to a grown man. Falling over this would mean falling down a steep slope into the river. I got into what I hoped was the centre of the road and cautiously made my way along until I felt I was safe.

I wonder if anyone walking along that road at 2-00am TODAY, for all the neon lighting, would feel any safer, and who

might they meet?  
Roy Mallinson.



## REMINISCENCES

I have very happy recollections of my life at Bolsterstone from childhood up to leaving in 1922 to take up duty as a head teacher near Boston Spa.

How often have I thought with longing of the masses of bluebells under the beeches in Yew Tree Wood, and the path through the rough pasture fields down to the stepping stones across the Ewden river, and along to Broomhead Mill, now alas, under water!

My life as a scholar and my early teaching years were spent in my father's C of E school at Bolsterstone, until I became head of the Infants, a separate building down School Lane.

In those days studying and teaching went hand in hand. I used to be in school at 7am and work until 8am. Part of the day was allowed for study, which also took up most of the evening.

I joined Clough's Correspondence Class for the certificate examination which I sat in Sheffield, travelling daily for a week from Deepcar Station. It was summer and Sheffield was hot, one of my most vivid memories was of one of the School Inspectors, who was supervising, eating strawberries and cream whilst sitting at the next desk.

After passing the examination, I found I had enough to do, being a Sunday School teacher and organist at the Parish Church. Sundays were very busy with two Sunday Schools and two services.

The 1914-1918 war took its toll of our boys, and brought sadness to many homes.

Rationing was strict, but the children brought me small quantities of foodstuffs, from which I made cakes and posted them to "the front".

We school teachers held a bazaar, hoping to raise £5 but the response was so good that we made £30, and were able to order parcels, from Tuckwood's stores in Sheffield, for all the old boys.

The school joined the League of Young Patriots, and the children knitted scarves etc for soldiers and sailors.

The South Yorkshire Asylum at Wadsley Bridge was turned into a military hospital and I took gifts there from our children. We also raised the money to buy an invalid chair and had a very appreciative letter from some of the men.

One last memory - the day that the war ended. We were to hear a siren sounded from Fox's works at 11am, providing the Germans had signed the peace treaty, and we heard it! Somehow the word went round that there would be a service of thanksgiving that same evening and the church was packed!

Winifred Turner [August 1969]

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### THE LONG ARM OF ...

Always on the lookout for further information about the Ridal family, who seem to be the strongest line in my family history, I was ambling around rural Nottinghamshire and came across the ruined church of St. Mary, Colston Bassett, a scheduled ancient monument, now to be repaired.

Its early history records the gift to Henry I (1100-1135) of lands and churches including St. Mary's from Richard Bassett (Chief Justice of England) and his wife Matildis Ridel!

All I need now is to find the link from the 1100's and Matildis to the birth of John in 1723.

**Great optimists we local historians!!**

Jeanne M. Brown

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### STOCKSBRIDGE SURNAMES

#### **ASKEW**

Originated in a North Yorkshire village name derived from the Norse words for **OAKWOOD**.

Robert **ASKUE** recorded in 1672 Hearth Tax Returns, Thurgoland.

In Stocks Bridge in 1841 Edward **ASKEW**, from Barough near Barnsley, was a blacksmith and licensee of the Coach and Horses.

His son Elijah **Askew** was licensee of the Friendship 1861 - 1881.

In 1884 Elijah married Lydia Grayson of Spink Hall and **ASKEW COURT** is named after them.

Brenda Duffield

## PROGRAMME

APRIL 13TH  
HOWARD SMITH  
MORTIMER ROAD

MAY 11TH  
EVENING WALK  
FOX GLEN WITH ANDY WARREN

JUNE 8TH  
MRS. J. McDONALD  
THE CUTLERS' HALL

JULY 13TH  
JACK BURLING  
PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

AUGUST  
NO MEETING

SEPTEMBER 14TH  
HOWARD TURNER  
SHEFFIELD TRAMS, A NOSTALGIC LOOK  
BACK

### STOCKSBRIDGE & DISTRICT HISTORY SOCIETY

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- CHAIRMAN -

BASIL SPOONER. TEL.288 4456

- DEPUTY CHAIRMAN -

PHILLIP SCOTT. TEL.288 2370

- SECRETARY -

BRENDA DUFFIELD TEL.288 2349

- TREASURER -

MARY HEPWORTH TEL.288 5295

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

#### NEXT NEWSLETTER

JUNE 1995

PUBLICATION DEADLINE

THURSDAY 11TH MAY

ALL ARTICLES AND LETTERS FOR  
PUBLICATION SHOULD BE CLEARLY  
MARKED 'HISTORY NEWSLETTER' AND  
SENT TO:- MIKE SPICK, % THE LIBRARY,  
MANCHESTER ROAD, STOCKSBRIDGE.