



THE PARAGON

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The Journal of the Stocksbridge & District History Society

WHEN HUNSHSELF DEFENDED BRITAIN - Part Two

By DB & WM Horsfall

Continuing the story from the last issue of the PARAGON, this article gives more information about some of the sites mentioned in Part One

The Signal Box on Windy Bank

There is no sign on the ground of this structure even the foundations of several buildings on Windy Bank from this era have been grubbed out by the farmer.

Mr Graham Godley of Hill Top Farm says he cannot remember the signal box, but does recall that the same field was the location of some 40mm Bofors guns, installed to protect the steel works in Stocksbridge.



The field is known in the Godley family as "Gun Pit Field".

Bofors Gun similar to those sited on Windy Bank.

Bofors was a Swedish firm which is now part of BAE Systems.

Stocksbridge Tower (Tata Steels)

These buildings are still there and are at the centre of the new development proposed for the area at the bottom of what is known locally as "Smithy Hill".



This photo shows the tower and the clock tower. It was recalled, again by Mr Graham Godley, that this was the location of the Home Guard and ARP during the war.

The Observatory (Bolsterstone Lookout Post)

The lookout post is still referred to as the "Observatory" in Bolsterstone.

It is sited on private land belonging to Mr Gordon Webster of Castle Farm, Bolsterstone.



The red brick building that was used as an observer post can clearly be seen from the road.

It is now used only by cattle and the occasional walker sheltering from the elements.

There was at one time a wood and glass structure on the top of the building to allow for better sighting, and there remains the openings of two windows.

The building continued in use after the war until the provision of a more modern construction at Edge Hill Lane which was made to resist the effects of a nuclear explosion.

The above photo shows the "Observatory" viewed from the road to Bolsterstone and this one shows it from the fields.



A HISTORY OF THE STOCKSBRIDGE & DISTRICT HISTORY SOCIETY

By Basil Spooner

We are fortunate that in the early part of the Twentieth Century, a gentleman by the name of Joseph Kenworthy lived in our valley and was keenly interested in most aspects of Local History.

He was the author of a number of books, which featured detailed information about people, local industries and businesses. It is these publications which have been invaluable for nearly a century to all those who have enquired into the origins and development of the area.

It was in 1969 that Frank Kenworthy, (the second son of Joseph), in collaboration with others formed a Society known aptly as The Joseph Kenworthy Fellowship of Local History, and the original Committee included Frank Kenworthy, Jack Branton, and Mary Hepworth, and the inauguration meeting took place on the 9th of October 1969. Frank passed away in 1970 aged 78.

Mrs Jessie Clark was the grand daughter of Joseph and she served on the Committee for a number of years and eventually became President.

Members meetings were held on the second Thursday of each month at 7.00pm, when guest speakers were invited to give talks on historical topics of local or national interest.

Membership fees were 15/- per member, or 20/- per married couple, 5/- for students and 5/- for O.A.Ps.

The earliest programmes that we have, indicate a good selection of Speakers and interesting topics. Details of Christmas celebrations, and grand days out are also listed. The latter includes a visit in July 1975, to the Bronte Museum at Haworth followed by a fish and chip tea at Mother Hubbards in Bradford.

The membership numbered approx 85 persons and the meetings were held in what was then known as "The West Riding Library – Stocksbridge." The Fellowship proved to be very popular and usually, approximately 55 members attended.

It is evident that due to its popularity, and with limited space in the Library, the venue was changed in 1980 to the United Reformed Church hall.

In 1989, after a successful 20 year period, the then existing committee felt that they had run the course and due mainly to advancing years and failing health, and faced with evidence of a general decline within the Fellowship, they wished to see "A New Order" with a fresh input.

The Fellowship was thus reborn and reformed under its current title on 15th November 1989 at the first committee meeting with a new team being Graham Norton- Chairman, Basil Spooner- Vice Chairman and Publicity Officer, Mary Hepworth-Treasurer, and Brenda Duffield-Secretary. Our starting finance amounted to £48.70p being the balance of the Fellowship account which had been handed over to us.

The Society chose to return to the Stocksbridge Library as our venue in order to maintain close ties with the Library and help to increase the footfall there which Mike Spick (Librarian) was keen to promote.

A revival became self evident in terms of an increased membership, healthy funds, good attendances at meetings, and a full programme of events.

Over the past two decades, the Society has continued to make progress, with details as follows:

- 1). Within the Stocksbridge Library, an archive has been established which complements other information, as amassed by the Society.
- 2). A collection of items of Bolsterstone Glass and other artefacts are on permanent display within the Library. (Our thanks are recorded to Sheffield City Libraries for their hospitality and close collaboration with the arrangements).

It should be noted that the glassware previously belonged to the Hepworth family, (Fred and Mary) having contributed immensely to the Society, particularly in archaeological research, and the Society were very fortunate in being able to purchase these items from the Hepworth Estate.
- 3). A number of local history publications have been produced, including a Concise History of the District, and two books of local photographs which resulted in a significant increase to our assets.
- 4). 'We have established an assisted service with (local) Family History research, and a CD has been

produced which gives details of Census returns for the District from 1841 to 1901.

A DVD has also been produced with a commentary and photographs, and we issue a newsheet every three months.

- 5). More recently, The Dyson Family have donated to us a collection of what is believed to be Midhope Pottery and a number of other gifts have been received.
- 6). With an increased membership and a good attendance at meetings with invited speakers, it has been necessary to move our venue back to the Congregational Church Hall.

Our yearly programme of events includes an outing to a place of historical interest and a Christmas Celebration with carols and supper.

It can therefore be seen that in a number of respects, we have followed the Fellowship Pathway, but at the same time, the Society has entered into a new era.
- 7). At our AGM on 11th February 2011, Roy Mallinson stood down after serving as Chairman since 2000 during which time he led the Society with distinction.

Dennis Pindar succeeded him and whilst in office and resulting from his foresight and initiative, we now have our own website which offers a colossal amount of local information, and we acknowledge the effort that Graham Sedgwick has made in setting this up.

This was achieved by receiving a £25,000 grant from EPIP.

Again, due to Dennis, as the result of a £10,000 grant received from the National Heritage Lottery Fund, and with the kind co-operation of Stocksbridge Town Council, we will be opening a modest Heritage Centre within the Town Hall in February.

WHAT NEXT? You might well ask, and watch this space.

MEMOIRS OF JOHN PARKIN HOLLING – WRITTEN IN 1959/60 – PART 3

Ponies, Carriers and Characters

Pony trotting was one of the annual events of the district, and this was held in what was called Foresters Football Field, which is now the Market Field, and covered the whole of that eastern area of Hoyle House Lane. Pony trotting can be easily understood because the different coal-clay-ganister mines were all of the drift kind, and pit ponies were the means of transport underground. Some mines kept their ponies underground all the time; others brought their ponies out each night to sleep in the summer. Sleep in the fields near to the pits. These ponies which came out were kept in the very best of condition and I remember one small pony called "NIGGER" in particular, belonging to Grayson Lowood & Co.

Mr. Tom Hirst was the Works Manager and lived at the "Uskers". He was the only one I knew who competed at these Pony Racing Meetings and was known to me from seeing him there and at our Chapel. This particular pony was black, not much taller than an Alsatian dog. It was a stallion, and its mane and tail almost reached the floor. The carriage which it pulled, and trotted with, was like cane, slender but strong. It seemed just two shafts, two wheels and a bit of wood in between the wheels for Mr. Hirst to sit on. It was a dangerous sport I thought then, because of the slender contraption racing

at high speed, with the man almost suspended on nothing.

I remember the Annual Shows held on the field, and the Travelling Theatre and (Maria Martin Shows), the Hurdy Gurdys. These roundabouts were propelled round by a pony which was coupled to the inner ring of hobby horses and cockerels. When the pony stopped running you'd had your 1d worth. The music was provided by an organ operated by a man turning a large mangle wheel which, on rotating, lifted bellows in the organ, allowing a tune to be played. This music was spasmodic and rags were stuffed into the ends of any fluted note pipes not making a proper sound. The proprietor of this show was called "Grimbly". He came each year at the back end and stayed till Easter, generally on the spare ground near Florence Buildings across from Armitage Brick Works. My father found him work throughout the winter months in his Coal Business until spring arrived, and then they went on their tour of Yorkshire Villages.

In those days of horse transport, the fruiterers of the district each went to Sheffield in the early hours of the morning with candle lamps, to buy their produce. Among this group I remember W. Dimmock, J.

Revill, G.C. Knowles, J. Bodsworth, and Stocksbridge Coop. Those that arrived back first had the advantage of hawking their goods first. In this particular Mr. Dimmock used a fiery race horse. It must not have liked being in the shafts, it broke several pairs. I once saw it race away and all the dray was smashed up.

The goods for the general shops were brought to Stocksbridge, some by rail, and some brought direct by the wagons of the firms in Sheffield, one instance being bulk paraffin. Gas lighting was then in its infancy and father had, apart from his Coal Business, a general shop including hardware and sale of paraffin. He also had a hawking business, with pony and dray, with separate days for each district, going out as far as Cranemoor, Ewden, Langsett etc. This necessitated a delivery of 600 gallons per week, which came twice a week from Sheffield. I remember this circular, long tank, being drawn by two horses from the "White Rose" firm of Sheffield. It supplied other shops as well, although I know father had the bulk of the paraffin trade. Candles were also still used extensively. Two gross a day was not unusual because houses were lit by paraffin lamp and candles. On Friday evening, our shop was



kept busy by miners, who came for their tools and candles to work with. They provided their own tools to work with, picks - shovels - iron wedges - dog nails - candles, and kneepads.

Apart from the local tradesmen, who fetched their own supplies already mentioned, there were

two traders who were termed "general carriers". These were Bosworth's of Stocksbridge, and, later J. Revill. These carriers went daily to Sheffield to bring back parcels and goods, which shop-keepers from Stocksbridge had purchased from their wholesalers in Sheffield, and didn't have their own transport to get them home. As a youth I went many times to these places, both with the carriers and father. These goods were taken from the shops by the buyer, or taken by the assistants of the shop to either the "Yellow Lion", or the "Red Lion". One in Castle Street and one in Pond Street. These inns had large premises at the rear for horses and your district's parcels were left in the premises for the different carriers to pick up. It is interesting to note that, and not wishing to in anyway defame or decry the

"carrier" Mr Bodsworth, it was sometimes the horse which brought the dray and goods home, not the driver, for he always liked his pints

Another Character which blazed my youthful remembrance was "Rag Harry" from Sheffield. I remember him with his rag cart and pony. He was very broad, not tall, and almost always wore an open shirt. He used to stop at "Wilson Moorhouses" Beer Off shop just below our house, get a jam jar off his heap of rubbish, go into the shop, have it filled with beer, and drink it standing on the causeway, and then throw it back on the heap of jars on his two wheel cart.

I remember another old Character in my school-days, Harry Birkhead or "Sloper" as he was nicknamed. He sold sticks, bundled and loose, from his donkey and cart. This cart was a large open box on wheels. Mr. Birkhead was around 17 stone and the poor donkey managed to not break its back with the weight. I believe he bought it for his youngest son "Billy", who was almost a midget, and grew up to be a very versatile entertainer. He played the piano and sang, and gave monologues

LOCAL SURNAMES : M

MARSH is the commonest in local records, mostly originating in Penistone Parish.

Thomas Marsh was coachman for Samuel Fox in 1871.

George Marsh farmed 30 acres at Yewden in that year, but had moved to the 68 acres of Midhope Hall in 1881, illustrating how mobile people were in that era of tenancy farming. They had big families and only the eldest son would be able to inherit the tenancy, leaving younger brothers to seek work elsewhere.

This proved to be the case during an extensive study of the MILNES family of Greave House Farm.

Thomas Milnes farmed at Higham near Bamsley in the early 18th century. His next-youngest son, also Thomas, settled in Thurlstone, where he raised a family of 5 sons and 3 daughters. It was his second son, George, who came to Bolsterstone. He and his wife, Ann Yates of Yewden, had no children, so it was Joseph, son of George's brother Joseph, tailor of Whitwell, who became the founder of a further large family. His fourth son John had only one son, Stanley, whom we older people remember well. It was Stanley who bought the Freehold of Greave House from Broomhead Estate for his son Frank. Father and son exhibited Prize Dairy cattle for many years, and although the cattle have now gone, the son still lives there with his family.

SOCIETY NEWS

It seems a long time since our carol concert just before Christmas and with no meeting in January, I have had withdrawal symptoms the last few weeks. The January break has helped the committee this last month, to finalise the new Valley Heritage Centre in the Town Hall with weekly, working meetings, putting in equipment and populating the cabinets. It is your committee's intention to put on an open day for members, prior to our opening to the public towards the end of February.

We now have an archive & reference desk at the Heritage Centre which not only has the website material but also the on-going unpublished stuff, the combined ancestry and burial

records and valley census material.

We hope you appreciate and enjoy the Centre and help us keep it fresh with new ideas of exhibitions you think might suit your Heritage Centre.

Dennis.

When out for walks with the dog, I keep hearing complaints from individuals about the recent levels of snowfall and how cold it is.

Perhaps this selection of photographs will remind us of some of the harsher winters of the past..



WINTERING - (HAYFIELD) BRADLEY ROAD



WINTERING - (HAYFIELD) BRADLEY ROAD

F.P. 10.11.1947

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS FOR 2015

January 8th	Winter Recess No Meeting	
February 12th	The History Of Izal	Joan Jones
March 12th	The History and Origins of Inn Signs	Enid Vincent
April 19th	Family Photographs as Social History	Paul Cutts
May 14th	Annual General Meeting (plus Picture Show if time permits)	
June 11th	The Life Story of George Formby	Roger Glew
July 9th	Annual Outing	
August 13th	Postcard Nostalgia & Cake	David Hampshire
September 10th	How Cathedrals were built	Pat McLaughlin
October 15th	A History Society Presentation	
November 12th	How The Victorians Invented Christmas	Susan Deal
December 10th (Note! this is a Thursday)	Christmas Celebrations (Pre-booking essential - Members only)	
January 14th	No Event - Winter Recess	
February 11th	A History Society Presentation	

Meetings take place in the Christ Church Meeting Room (Under Croft) starting at 7.00pm Prompt

Why not visit our Website at - www.stocksbridgehs.co.uk

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