

# DISCOVERING



# OLD HUDDERSFIELD

PART THREE

Gordon and Enid Minter

**Front cover:- The Shelter, Ravensknowle Park**  
**Back cover:- Coal Truck, Alder Street**

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**DISCOVERING  
OLD  
HUDDERSFIELD  
PART THREE**

By

Gordon and Enid Minter

Illustrations by  
J.R. Beswick

1998

This book is dedicated to  
Mrs. E. Beswick and the late Mr. J. Beswick  
and  
the late Mrs. M.E. and Mr. A.J. Minter  
our parents  
who taught us to be curious  
about our surroundings.

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'....though no ruins of a once stately abbey or imposing castle be at our door and though we have few historic mansions there is much of genuine interest in our neighbourhood ...'

*Taylor Dyson, 1951*

## INTRODUCTION

Although the format of part three of 'Discovering Old Huddersfield' is similar to parts one and two it differs in three respects: a) it includes a number of optional walks and short drives to see places of interest near to but not on the route; b) some subjects are dealt with in much greater depth than in either of the previous books; c) because of a) and b) there is space for only one tour.

As in parts one and two we have given the directions for the whole route before the commentary and each feature discussed has been given a reference number which appears in the appropriate place in the directions to help locate it. Directions for the options (which are not numbered) will be found in italics within the text, marked O.W. (optional walk) and O.D. (optional drive).

Because the roads covered on the tour are often extremely busy we decided against dividing the route into sections as before. Rather we felt we should leave it to you, the reader, to decide if, when and where you want to stop to explore parts of the route on foot. (Wherever you leave your car always make sure it is secure).

Occasionally on this tour we meet the routes of earlier tours and where we come upon features already described, rather than repeat ourselves, we refer you to the appropriate places in parts one and two. Thus D.O.H.1.ii.No.16 refers to 'Discovering Old Huddersfield' part one, tour two, number 16.

In the earlier books we commented that any guide book is likely to be out of date by the time it is published. Indeed, so speedily does the environment change that several buildings we passed when we started writing this book had been demolished and their sites obliterated by the time we finished. We have not, therefore, confined our commentary to existing features. If a once important house or school or hospital no longer exists we identify its site and tell its story there. For example, in Great Northern Street a trading estate has recently been built on the site of the old tram depot, fairground, cattle market and abattoir. Because the new buildings front onto Leeds Road, Great Northern Street has lost its former importance and to perpetuate its memory we describe it as it was in some detail and provide a small plan to make clear the various locations.



In putting this tour together our main aim was to include two branch roads marked by John Ogilby on his map of 1675 and mentioned by us in 'Discovering Old Huddersfield' part one, tour one. In so doing we discovered a route which, although it does not cover the most beautiful parts of the district, is, nevertheless, full of interest and which we hope will appeal to those people who, like us, have some curiosity about the history of the district.

Thanks are due, once again, to Mike and Cynthia Beaumont of Barden Print to Sue Cottrill and Alison Hughes and to Richard Beswick for another series of admirable line drawings. Thanks also to Mary Ellis for information on George Thomson.

## INDUSTRIES AND INSTITUTIONS

Three years ago, when we put together tour number one (The Old London Road) in part one of 'Discovering Old Huddersfield', we mentioned two branch roads, indicated by Ogilby on his 1675 map, one leading to Rastrick, the other to Colne Bridge. This tour follows both these routes and in so doing passes several schools and hospitals (or their sites) and one or two industrial complexes - hence the title. Of course, as with all our tours much more is included than is suggested by the title and this one looks at old lanes, canals, railways and their relics, old houses and sites of fairs and markets. All these and many other historical features may be seen by travelling just ten eventful miles to the north and north east of the town.

As the tour is circular it may, of course, be joined anywhere along its route that is convenient to you. We chose to start near to the town in Northgate at the bottom of Kirkgate.

## DIRECTIONS

*The tour starts at the bottom of Kirkgate, in Northgate (1). Take the middle lane through the traffic lights at the bottom of Northumberland Street and then the right hand lane (2,3,4) to turn right at the next set of lights into Fitzwilliam Street (5,6). Take the second left into Great Northern Street, s.p. Ray Street Enterprise Centre (7,8,9,10,11,12). After a quarter of a mile at the end of Great Northern Street, turn left into Hillhouse Lane (13) go under the railway and immediately turn right into Alder Street (14). In approximately one fifth of a mile turn left into Whitestone Lane (15) and continue to its junction with Bradford Road (16). This is one mile from the starting point.*

*Turn left into Bradford Road and take the right lane to turn right at the traffic lights up the hill into Halifax Old Road (17,18, O. W.). In a quarter of a mile turn right into Wasp Nest Road (19,20) and at the end of the road turn right into Spaines Road (21, O.D., 22) to the lights at Fartown Bar (23,24,25). Go straight ahead at the lights into Fartown Green Road (26,27) and follow this for three tenths of a mile to the bottom of Woodhouse Hill (28). This is one mile from Whitestone Lane.*

*Continue ahead up Woodhouse Hill (29,30) past Christ Church on the right (31,0.D.,32) to Wiggan Lane on the left. Turn left (33) drive to the bottom of Wiggan Lane (0. W.) and then return to Sheepridge Road and turn left. Follow this for half a mile to the top of Whitacre Street on the right (34). This is one mile from the bottom of Woodhouse Hill.*

*Turn right into Whitacre Street and follow this to the junction with Leeds Road (0. D. W). Turn left into Leeds Road (35,36) and in about half a mile veer left into Oak Road, s.p. Colne Bridge and Kirkheaton B6118 (37). This is one mile from the top of Whitacre Street.*

*At the end of Oak Road turn right into Bradley Road and at the traffic lights (38) go straight across Leeds Road into Colne Bridge Road (39, 0. W.). After crossing the railway, canal and river bridges (40) turn right, s.p. Dalton, into Dalton Bank Road (41) passing the Royal & Ancient Public House on the left (42). Continue along this (43,44,45,46,47,48,49) to the bottom of Jagger Lane where Dalton Bank Road becomes Nettleton Road (50). This is two miles from Oak Road.*

*Follow Nettleton Road (51) as it veers to the right towards the Black Horse public house. Just before the Black Horse the name of the road changes to Briggate (52). At the junction with Long Lane turn right and then immediately left into Dalton Green Lane (53,54,55) and follow this to the traffic lights at Wakefield Road. This is one mile from the bottom of Jagger Lane.*

*Go straight across Wakefield Road at the lights into Greenhead Lane (56). Follow this to the junction with Forest Road where the name changes to Bank End Lane. Follow Bank End Lane (57) up the steep hill to the junction with Almondbury Bank (58). Turn right for about five hundred yards (455M) and turn right into Forest Road (59). This is one mile from the end of Dalton Green Lane.*

*Follow Forest Road to rejoin Greenhead Lane turning left to the traffic lights at Wakefield Road (60,61). Turn left at the lights and continue along Wakefield Road to the main entrance of Ravensknowle Park on the left (62). This is one mile from the beginning of Forest Road.*

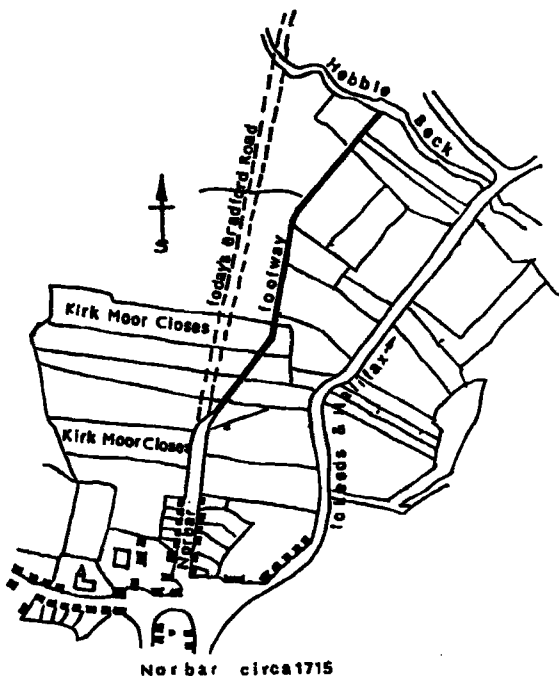
*Continue along Wakefield Road through Moldgreen (63,64,65) and Aspley (66,67) to return to the starting point of the tour. This is one point two miles from the gates at Ravensknowle Park.*

## NORTHGATE (1)

Until 1777, when it became part of a new turnpike road to Halifax, Northgate, then called Norbar, was a narrow lane running towards the fields to the north of the small town of Huddersfield. In 1716, when the first map of Huddersfield was produced, there were six cottages on each side of Norbar, those on the west side (left) having their own garths (gardens). The Rental of the same year reveals that several of the cottages had been recently built and that they ranged in size and quality from James Haywood's 'small new cott' to Mrs. Cooper's 'cott and garth with a good barn in the farm.' The average annual rent for these desirable properties was £1.10.0. However, Widow Fletcher who occupied 'a very poor cott' in Norbar paid only five shillings. Although a good deal of building and rebuilding has gone on on both sides of Northgate since 1716 it seems likely that the present premises on the left hand side, between Beastmarket and St. Peter's Street, preserve the building line of the eighteenth century cottages and, if this is so, then the present unlovely Tomlinson's Yard must overlies one or two of the long forgotten, once productive gardens.

About 180 yards (164M) beyond the cottages in Norbar, in the region of the present day (Fletcher's) car showrooms, the lane narrowed down to become a footpath which ran north east across the fields to the Hebble Beck (see map).

Although it is possible that the path crossed the beck to join Hillhouse Lane, once the main highway to the north, it is unlikely that it was ever a main route for inter-town traffic. The long, narrow



closes on either side of the path had probably been enclosed from one of Huddersfield's medieval open fields (called Kirkmoor) and the most likely explanation of the footpath is that it provided access to Kirkmoor during the time when it was farmed in strips (see map p.3).

When the new turnpike road to Halifax was constructed in the 1770s its builders followed the line of the residential part of Norbar and then struck a new route northwards to join the highway to the north at Hillhouse (see D.O.H.1.i.No.16). Shortly afterwards the old name, Norbar, was dropped in favour of North Street or Northgate. The new road, naturally, eclipsed the old footway but it remained in use for the next hundred years or more and it can be traced on several local maps up to and including the 1854 O.S. map.

As the town began to expand northwards in the second half of the nineteenth century most of the old Kirkmoor closes were sold off to developers and several new streets made their appearance on both sides of Northgate. As a result, a part of the old footway was built over and thus obliterated although, as we shall see, a section of its line, near to the Hebble Beck, was preserved.

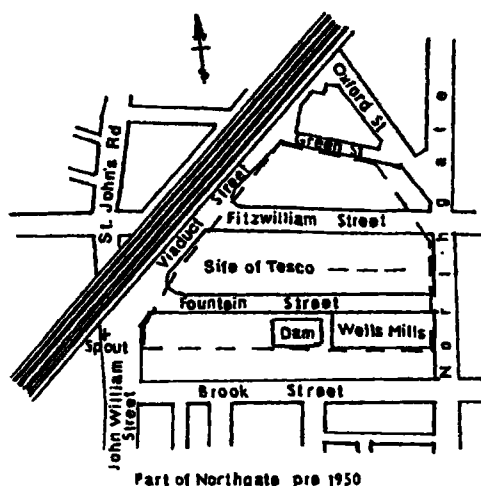
Further massive changes occurred in the 1960s when Northgate became part of the ring road. At that time several of the Victorian streets were either realigned, truncated or demolished and most of the old buildings on the east side of Northgate were swept away to make way for the present day sports hall, business premises and high rise buildings.

Looking at this busy area today it is difficult to imagine the vast open field it once was where the inhabitants of the small town came along a quiet lane with their ploughs and oxen to prepare their strips and to sow and eventually reap their harvests of oats, barley, peas and beans.

## WELLS MILL (2)

A look at our map (p.5) will reveal the site of Wells Mill, one of the town's early woollen mills, which stood on the corner of Northgate and the now defunct Fountain Street. Built during the early years of the nineteenth century, Wells Mill was occupied by Henry Brook & Sons whose operatives in 1832, at a time when Trade Union organisations were finding their feet, successfully came out on strike for an increase in their wages. In the 1860s the premises were let on a room and power basis - in 1866, for example,

there were no fewer than nine yarn spinners at work there as well as two woollen manufactures and a broach turner. By the end of the century the number of occupants had decreased to just two yarn spinners and thirty years later the mill was unoccupied. During the Second World War, soldiers of the Royal Corps of Signals were billeted at the mill. After the war the premises were opened up again but not to textiles; the occupants were W. & T. Avery, weighing machine manufacturers (many of our readers will remember Avery Scales) and R. Tailford, fish merchant. Wells Mill was demolished, and the site cleared towards the end of the 1950s.



Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Wells Mills was its name. Only 200 or so yards (182M) to the west of Wells Mill an everlasting spring, called Bradley Spout, bubbled up to the surface. The spring, which until the mid-nineteenth century was one of the town's most important water supplies (sec D.O.H.1.ii.No.1), might well account for the name Fountain Street as 'spring' and 'fountain' have the same meaning (from the Old English 'funta' meaning spring). Wells Mill certainly took its name from a number of wells in this part of Northgate and it is highly likely that the Northgate wells, sometimes called Brook's Wells, were on the same spring-line as Bradley Spout and also that the mill's large dam was fed by the same reliable under-

ground source.

Today, the sites of Fountain Street and Wells Mill lie beneath part of Tesco supermarket's lower car-park. The supermarket, which was opened by Messrs Hillards on 12th November 1979 at a cost of three million pounds, became part of the country-wide Tesco chain in June 1987 after a bitterly contested takeover battle.

Just beyond the supermarket, notice that although the present-day road out of town swings to the left on a line constructed in the 1960s, the road into town follows old Northgate on a line unaltered since it was laid out in 1770 as the new Turnpike to Halifax.

### THE RAILWAY (3)

Whilst driving along Northgate notice the long railway viaduct straight ahead.

On 26th April 1845 the Huddersfield and Manchester Railway and Canal Company was authorised by Act of Parliament to construct a railway line from Huddersfield along the lower Colne Valley to join the existing line at Heaton Lodge. The work which began on 10th October 1845 involved digging deep cuttings, constructing several embankments and bridges and building the long viaduct into the town. The first train into the new Huddersfield Station arrived amidst great rejoicing on 2nd August 1847. Although much has been written about the viaducts at Lockwood and Denby Dale there are few references to the Huddersfield Viaduct perhaps because it is not as high as the other two and is, therefore, less impressive. Nevertheless, the fact that the whole line, including this forty-five arch viaduct, was completed in just twenty-one months must be regarded as a great achievement and a triumph for its builders.

### THE MAJESTIC (4)

Before turning right into Fitzwilliam Street notice to the front left the large building occupied by Majestic Design. The left-hand end of this building once housed one of the town's popular cinemas. Originally the premises of Hirst's Yorkshire Toffee Company, the building was converted into a cinema in 1912 and opened as the Olympia on 21st October that year. The Olympia offered comfortable upholstered seating for nearly nine hundred

people and a few rows of cheap seats at the front of the auditorium in the form of backless wooden benches. In April 1916, the management showed the film 'Five Nights' which, for some reason, had been banned by the Corporation Watch Committee and as a consequence lost their music licence and were subsequently forced to close.

Under new management and renamed the Star, the cinema opened again on Christmas Day 1916, still offering its twopenny wooden seats. It was during its years as the Star that the cinema became known, widely, unofficially and probably unfairly, as the 'Flea Pit'. On 3rd August 1939 the screen and stage were destroyed by fire. After extensive modernisation, including the removal of the benches, the cinema reopened in 1940 as the Majestic. Two decades later, owing to the increasing popularity of television, audiences at the Majestic, as at cinemas everywhere, declined and the final curtain fell in 1968.

When Majestic Design moved into the building in 1991 they found the 1940 projectors still in place and, happily, the directors decided to retain them and make a feature of the old projector room to contrast old cinema technology with their own state-of-the-art computer systems. Thus, a little of the town's history has been preserved.

## FITZWILLIAM STREET (5)

Although our route follows only a short section of Fitzwilliam Street we feel a little should be said about the street as a whole.

In the 1840s a short residential street was laid out between Trinity Street and Dyke End Lane (the present day Portland Street) and named Fitzwilliam Street in honour of Earl Fitzwilliam, uncle and trustee of Sir John William Ramsden, who at that time was playing an important part in the affairs of the town. By 1850 plans were in hand to extend Fitzwilliam Street in a north-westerly direction to connect Trinity Street with Leeds Road. On its way it would cross New North Road and Northgate and thus provide a connection between four of the main turnpike roads out of the town.

The land through which the new street ran was, apart from the recently built railway viaduct under which it passed, largely empty at the time of construction. Fifty years later most of the land on both sides of the street had been taken up by the usual Victorian mixture of factories, small businesses,



shops, terrace houses, public houses and chapels. There were also two small private schools for young ladies and, at the other end of the scale, a Ragged School.

Massive reconstruction and road realignments in the Northgate area in the 1960s resulted in the disappearance of the central section of Fitzwilliam Street and its associated buildings. Today the lost section lies beneath the entrance to the supermarket car-park from where the alignment of the two remaining sections may be clearly seen. However, because it has been so divided Fitzwilliam Street can no longer claim the record it once held of being, at two thirds of a mile, the longest street in Huddersfield.

Once in Fitzwilliam Street look out, on the right, for William Street South. It is at this junction that we cross the lost line of the old footpath extension to Norbar, a line we will shortly meet again.

## THE RAGGED SCHOOL (6)

The large building on the corner of Fitzwilliam Street and William Street South, presently occupied by a Muslim Association, was once the premises of the Fitzwilliam Street Ragged and Industrial School. The country-wide Ragged School Movement attracted the support of several Victorian philanthropists including Anthony Ashley Cooper, seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, who was Chairman of the Movement for forty years. As the name suggests, Ragged Schools provided an education for some of the poorest children in the community. They were charitable foundations, usually in the charge of a Master and Matron and often provided for orphans and foundlings who, of necessity, lived on the premises. In 1880, for example, there were nine girls and seven boys between the ages of six and thirteen living at the Huddersfield school. Most of the children were born locally although one girl came from Worcester and one from as far away as India. At that time the master was Peter Grant, aged sixty five, a retired police sergeant from Devon, the matron was his wife, Mary Ann, and the assistant matron their daughter, Catherine.

The Huddersfield Ragged & Industrial School was built by Joseph Sykes of Marsh House and given by him into the hands of trustees selected from each protestant religious denomination in the town. The first constitution stated: 'The general plan upon which the School shall be conducted shall be

as follows, viz: to give the children an allowance of food; to instruct them in Reading, Writing and Arithmetic; to train them in habits of Industry by instructing them daily in such sorts of work as are suited to their years; to teach them the truths of the Gospel making the Holy Bible (comprising the Sacred Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments in the Authorised Versions only) the groundwork of instruction. On the Sabbath the children shall receive food as on other days and such religious instruction as shall be arranged by the Committee.'

The Committee was made up of twelve men and twelve women but the day-to-day supervision of the school was left to the women, two of whom, Miss M. M. Haigh of Greenhead Cottage and Mrs. Wright Mellor, wife of a one-time Mayor of Huddersfield, served for some thirty years.

The first Master, George Higginbotham of Bristol, making his views clear in his letter of acceptance said: 'In Huddersfield I shall be able to labour unshackled in proclaiming the glorious truths of the Gospel of our Blessed Lord. Where I am, I am too much surrounded by Unitarians to labour as freely as is congenial.' Higginbotham took up his post on 1st January 1862 at a salary of £90 per annum. Two years later his remuneration was altered to £85 p.a. plus house, gas, water and coals provided he undertook to clean the school and find 'all that is required for that purpose for 8d. a week.'

In 1865 the committee became concerned about the status of the institution as a certificated industrial school which, apparently, implied the reception of juvenile delinquents who could be committed under schedules relating to industrial schools. The secretary accordingly was instructed to give notice to the Secretary of State to withdraw the certificate. Shortly afterwards the institution became an Industrial Home, its newly stated object, 'to reclaim the neglected and destitute children of Huddersfield by affording them the benefit of a Christian education and by training them in habits of industry so as to enable them to earn an honest livelihood and fit them for the duties of life.' After 1874, the children were educated at Beaumont Street Board School.

The home, for its running, relied on subscriptions, donations and legacies and a considerable number of gifts including bedding, fabrics, cast off clothing, shoes, boots, caps and bonnets, books, religious tracts, toys and food of all description including, every month, a pot of dripping and a basket

of broken cakes.

The children themselves, through their industry, earned money for the home. The girls were employed in sewing, knitting, darning and mending and the boys in woodwork, tailoring, rug making and making between three thousand and six thousand paper bags a month. But in addition to work there were occasional treats, lantern shows for example and concerts, Christmas parties and even excursions by train to Fairhaven. Although some children ran away and others were expelled - occasionally for begging - the committee believed that the Institution achieved a homely character and that most children 'formed a loving attachment for the place which time and absence did not break asunder.' In a small way that belief is borne out in a letter sent to the committee in 1902 by Jere Mellor, a former inmate, which thanks them for 'the loving care, council and kindness I received over many years' and in which he enclosed a donation of £5 - a considerable sum in those days.

In 1899 the trustees decided to renovate and extend the Home. An appeal to businesses and private individuals raised a total of £1760.8s.0d. including £105 from the Sykes family and £104 from Sir J.W. Ramsden. The new premises, which were described as light and airy and fitted with the most modern requirements, had space for forty beds - double the previous number. The Institution, renamed The Orphan Home, was reopened on 4th April 1900 by Mrs. F.W. Sykes, wife of the Founder's nephew. At the ceremony several speakers stressed that increased subscriptions were vital to keep the enlarged Orphan Home going. After all, as one speaker pointed out, 'each child costs about £15 per annum for food and clothing.' Tributes were paid to Miss Mary Bickerstaff, the then Matron, who 'made such a pleasant home for the children who were happy with her as she was happy with them.'

Miss Bickerstaff stayed at the Orphan Home until its closure in 1924. Subsequently, the premises were used as the Dyers, Finishers and Textile Workers Club.

## GREAT NORTHERN STREET (7)

Shortly after turning left into Great Northern Street notice the Hudawi Community Centre on the left. This new building stands on the site of Beaumont Street School, opened in 1894, one of the first board schools to be

built in Huddersfield and certainly the first in the central area. Hemmed in by housing and industry and with the railway nearby, the tall, neo-Gothic building soon became black and grimy and the small playground could have offered only limited facilities for healthy exercise.

On 12th July 1993, many years after its use as a school ceased, the building was destroyed by fire. At the time of writing, the old boundary walls and the gatepost survive to remind us of the school but it is likely that these too will soon disappear.

Just beyond the community centre, Beaumont Street crosses Great Northern Street. Notice here the redundant railway on the right which marks the route of the Huddersfield gasworks railway which was opened in 1922 to haul coal from the Newtown sidings to the gasworks (see D.O.H. 1.i.No. 47). Both the writers have clear memories of the 'Beaumont Street Flyer' as the engine was known and it was the cherished but unachieved ambition of one of them to be not the engine driver but the flag carrier who walked in front of the engine to make sure the line was clear.

## MARKETS & FAIRS (8)

Great Northern Street dates back to 1877 when the Corporation found a site for their new cattle market near to the old Norbar footway, part of which still existed at that time, and not far away from the Hillhouse railway sidings. To understand the past importance of the area it is necessary to consider, very briefly, the history of Huddersfield's fairs and markets.

It is possible that fairs have been held in Huddersfield since medieval times. Certainly, a survey of Almondbury made in 1584 mentions two little fairs held in the town of Huddersfield. The word fair is derived from the Latin '*feriat*', the holy days of saints, and they often took place or commenced on the feast day of the patron saint of the local church. Appropriately, one of Huddersfield's fairs was held on St. Peter's day but the origin of the other, held on St. Ellen's day, is not clear.

Fairs were important events in the community when men, women and children would be freed from the daily grind of work to attend-holy days are, of course, the origin of our holidays. Although the primary purpose of fairs was commerce, from earliest times there was an element of entertainment and merrymaking attached and on fair days the light-hearted in holiday mood

would flock in from all over the district. As well as acrobats, dancers, minstrels and story-tellers there would be sideshows, fortune tellers, freaks, performing animals, boxers and wrestlers and no doubt some form of mechanical merry-go-round. Thus we can see in the early fairs the ancestors of our modern fairs which come, as they have always done, to offer us all the fun of the fair.

Until the late nineteenth century Huddersfield had no traditional or permanent fairground and it is likely that the booths, stalls, trestles and standings of the main commercial and pleasure fairs were set up on any available ground at the edge of the town.

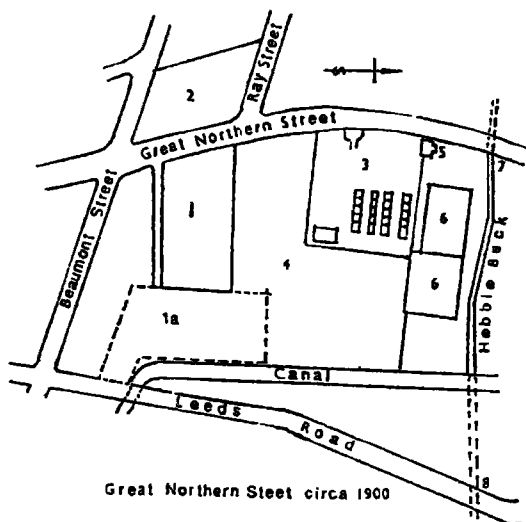
In 1671, King Charles II granted to Sir John Ramsden a Charter which allowed him to hold a weekly market in Huddersfield and soon afterwards a marketplace was laid out near to the church. Here the general market was held whilst speciality markets were established in different parts of the town. Corn and cattle markets, for example, were held in the area of the present day Beast Market and, in the 1840s, a swine market was established in Victoria Street near to the Shambles which itself had stalls selling flesh and fish.

Some two hundred years after the Charter was granted, the Corporation purchased the market rights from Sir John William Ramsden and immediately decided to rationalise market arrangements in Huddersfield. In 1880, a new and prestigious covered market opened in King Street on the site of the Shambles and, a year later, a wholesale fruit and vegetable market opened in Brook Street. A few years later a cattle market was established in the newly laid out Great Northern Street, to be followed shortly afterwards by a slaughter house on the same site. At the same time a large area of land behind and to the side of the cattle market was designated a permanent fairground.

Although the annual fair moved away from Great Northern Street in the 1950s the cattle market lasted until 1991 when, much to the consternation of some local farmers, Kirklees Council announced its intention to discontinue the market and sell the site. It was not, a spokesman pointed out, a satisfactory situation to have a prime site near to the town centre used only on one day a week especially as letting or selling the site would bring in a great deal of money. Four years later, in November 1996, work began on clearing the land on the east (right) side of the street to make way for a large retail park and thus an important part of Huddersfield's recent history is no more. Nevertheless, we hope the following description of the area as it was, along

with the map below which numbers each site, will perpetuate a remembrance of this once busy area.

N.B. It is worth reiterating at this point that, beyond Beaumont Street, Great Northern Street follows the route of the previously mentioned old footway.



## THE TRAMWAY DEPOT (9)

The tramway depot (No. 1 on the map) which stood opposite the present day Ray Street Enterprise Centre was built by Huddersfield Corporation on part of the new fairground and opened in July 1887 four years after the Corporation became the first local authority to operate its own public transport service. The depot replaced a smaller timber structure which stood on the site of the present day General Post Office. The accommodation in the new building for thirty steam engines and thirty tramcars was more than adequate as the steam powered tram fleet never reached that number but after the system was electrified in 1901/2 and extended thereafter, all the space was taken up. After a new and larger depot was opened at Longroyd Bridge in 1921 (see D.O.H.2.ii.No.13) the depot here was used mainly for repairing and maintaining rolling stock.

In 1967 an inscribed stone tablet was affixed to the front of the building to commemorate the efforts of one of the town's luminaries. It read:

County Borough of Huddersfield

On 13th day of March 1967

This tablet was unveiled by  
Alderman H.A. Bennie Gray

C.B.E., J.P

at the wishes of the Council to  
commemorate his long association with the  
Corporation Passenger Transport Department.

Alderman Harold Andrew Bennie Gray, a well known figure in the town, was chairman of the Passenger Transport sub-committee from 1937 to 1967. We understand that the tablet has been removed to the new bus depot in Leeds Road.

#### THE LUMP (10)

It was, perhaps, because the tramway depot was built on part of the fairground that a small area of land on the opposite side of the road (see No.2 on the map), now occupied by the Ray Street Enterprise Centre, was brought into use as an overspill when the fair arrived in town. Here, at a safe distance from the fast rides and adult side shows, children's roundabouts were to be found along with roll-a-penny stalls, and sellers of windmills, balloons, candy floss and the delicious fried potatoes called chats.

This land, called the Lump by many local people, was also the site of a weekly open-air retail market which, although it was held on a Monday rather than the traditional Tuesday market day, replaced the general market held in the Market Place. Here, on the Lump, all manner of merchandise was offered for sale including fruit, vegetables, clothes, shoes, bags, household linen, hardware, floor coverings, fabric, fents and fancy goods. On 9th March 1981 the last Monday Market was held on the Lump. A week later, a twice weekly market, held on Mondays and Thursdays, opened in and around the newly renovated Wholesale Market in Brook Street.

#### THE CATTLE MARKET (11)

Sixty yards (55M) beyond the tramway depot was the gateway to the

cattle market (No.3) its tall stone pillars appropriately surmounted by stone animals, a sheep on the left hand side and pig on the right. Inside, permanent sheep and cattle pens stood on the cobbled surface in front of single storey refreshment rooms which catered for buyers and sellers attending the market.

During the demolition of the cattle market the sheep and the pig disappeared. We presumed that they had been removed for cleaning and renovation and would be eventually relocated and displayed as a small part of the town's history. In an effort to trace them and record their whereabouts in this book we contacted the demolition contractors, the architect, the builders, the planning department, the *Examiner* and Tolson Museum. Nobody knew what had become of them - apart from a suggestion from the architect that they had been stolen. If this is so then the theft was not a casual one as the sculptures weighed upwards of ten hundredweight and their removal would have required a crane, a lorry and several men. After the *Examiner* published our enquiry we received an anonymous telephone call telling us that the sculptures were taken away on a butcher's wagon one Saturday in July 1996. Despite further enquiries the trail went cold and we must presume that the sculptures are lost to the town forever.

The main fairground (No.4) was laid out behind and to the south side of the cattle market. Here on fair days were to be found fast and thrilling roundabouts, the enormous steam operated swinging boats called Shamrocks, and such dubious delights as boxing booths, flea circuses and bearded ladies. When the fair was not in town the fairground was used as a convenient storage space for buses, an arrangement that lasted until 1928 when a new bus depot (No.1a) was built behind the tramway depot.

Thirty yards (27M) past the gateway to the cattle market a tall Gothic-style house (No.5) fronted onto Great Northern Street. This was for many years the home of successive Superintendents of Markets who were also Inspectors of Weights and Measures. Behind the house, between the cattle market and the Hebble Beck was the slaughter house (No.6) built to replace the old shambles in King Street.

## HEBBLE BECK (12)

Just beyond the site of the old house (No.5) Great Northern Street crosses the Hebble Beck (No.7) which may be seen emerging from its culvert on the



right hand side of the road. This water course flows south east from the Grimescar Valley through Birkby and Bay Hall to Bradford Road from where, as the Hebble Beck, it continues to its confluence with the river Colne near Bradley Mills. As the stream was culverted for much of its length in the nineteenth century it is worth a short stop to see one of the few remaining open sections, not, we hasten to add, for its beauty for here it is not beautiful, but because of its historical interest.

The stream which, here in its lower reaches, divides Huddersfield from the hamlet of Fartown was for centuries known simply as the Town Brook. In 1716 the close on the south side of the stream was also called Town Brook; this was where the slaughter house was to be built in later years. Interestingly, the field opposite Town Brook Close on the north side of the stream was called Hayford and it may well be that before the stream was bridged people, ploughs and hay carts made use of a forded crossing. By 1780, the name Town Brook Close had changed to Hebble presumably because by that time the stream was known as the Hebble Beck. Seventeen years later, in the Huddersfield Valuation of 1797 the same close, tenanted at that time by Josiah Mitchell, is named Hardy Beck Close but as this name has not come down to us we can, we believe, consign it to the realms of all short-lived names and concentrate on Hebble.

In the northern dialect a hebble was originally and specifically the wooden handrail of a short, narrow plank bridge but the word soon came to be used of the whole bridge. It follows then that somewhere here there was such a primitive bridge, erected to replace the ford.

Because a bridge - or ford for that matter - would not exist without permanent lanes leading to it there are two possible locations for the hebble: where the present day Leeds Road (the old highway to the north) crosses the beck (No.8) or somewhere on the line of the Norbar lane. By the late eighteenth century, when the name Hebble appeared, most of the flimsy wooden bridges of earlier years had been replaced by more sophisticated structures on the main highways. It is possible, however, that a hebble survived here on the less important route, erected to carry the lane over the beck to connect up with a footpath leading across the fields to Fartown. Such a route would certainly provide a shorter, easier and less hilly way from Huddersfield to Fartown than the main highway which, until the Halifax turnpike was

opened in 1777, followed the present day Old Leeds Road, Leeds Road, Hillhouse Lane and Wasp Nest Road. If the hebble was, as we conjecture, part of the Norbar lane it would stay in some sort of use until the beck was culverted when the railway line was brought through the area in 1847. Its most likely site, judging by the alignment of footpaths shown on nineteenth century O.S. maps which post-date the railway, was a few metres to the west of the present day Great Northern Street, where the railway viaduct gives way to embankment.

Incidentally it is unlikely that the present Hebble Bridge on Bradford Road, which was built as part of the 1777 turnpike, is on the site of the original hebble as it is situated some distance away from the area of Hayford Close. Much more likely is that Hebble Bridge took its name from the beck, which had taken its name from the earlier bridge situated a little way downstream.

### HILLHOUSE LANE (13)

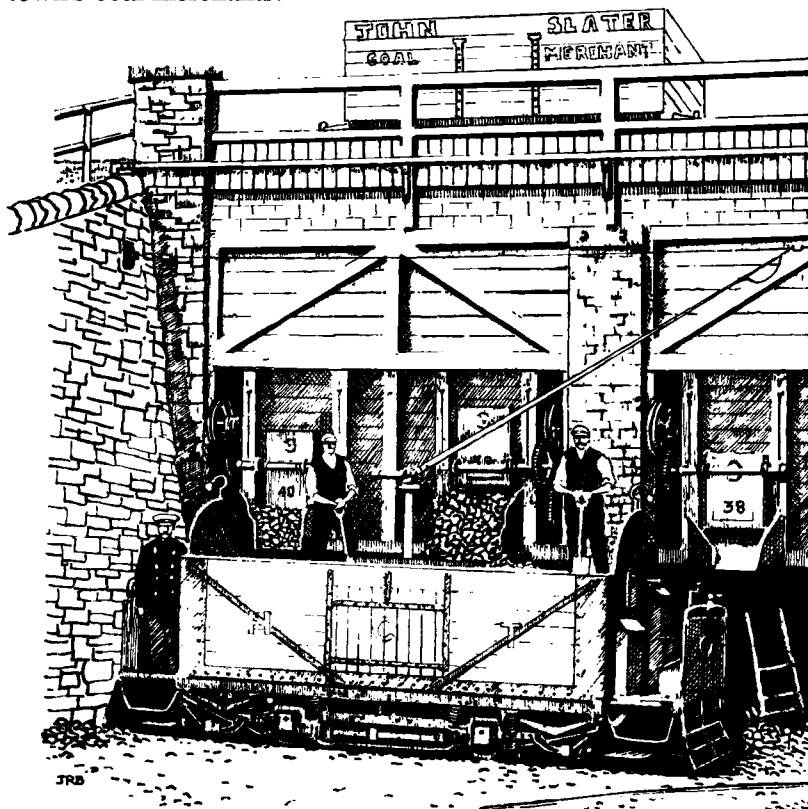
At the end of Great Northern Street our route turns left to briefly touch Hillhouse Lane, once part of the old highway to the north. Before the improvements and new road construction of the turnpike era the route from Huddersfield to Halifax and the north followed the present Old Leeds Road, Leeds Road and Hillhouse Lane to Clough House from where it climbed the steep Cowcliffe Hill and continued on through Fixby and Elland Upper Edge to the bridge over the Calder at Elland. This hilly route was superseded in 1777 by the Halifax turnpike which followed a more direct route out of town and, from Clough House, an easier route through Grimescar Wood. (see D.O.H.1.i.No.16).

Beyond the railway bridge notice that Hillhouse Lane veers to the right and that the road straight ahead is Willow Lane East. As we have travelled the latter before (D.O.H.1.i) and as the former is no longer a through road, our route turns sharp right, immediately after the bridge, into Alder Street.

### ALDER STREET (14)

Laid out during the second half of the nineteenth century, Alder Street preserves the line of the previously mentioned footpath to Fartown. The most obvious feature in Alder Street is the long line of coal hoppers with

their numbered chutes to be seen over the wall on the right hand side. Here, coal, delivered by the railway company, was stored to await collection by the town's coal merchants.



Stop by the second gateway for a good view of the coal hoppers and notice, beyond the gate, a short length of tramtrack. In 1903, the Huddersfield Corporation Passenger Tramway Department received powers to lay a single line tram track from the coal yard, along Whitestone Lane, to join the passenger tramway in Bradford Road and another short stretch of track from the main line in New Hey Road along Crosland Road to the premises of Messrs Patrick Martin's Wellington Mills at Oakes. Coal shutes numbers thirty nine and forty were rented by the mill from the railway company and

the Corporation purchased two coal trucks, specially designed to allow them to be positioned near to the chutes for easy loading. Thus coal was delivered speedily to the mill via the main tramway system.

By 1905 Messrs. Ben Crosland of Oakes Mill and Messrs. Edward Sykes of Gosport Mill, Outlane were also making use of the new service which, per journey, proved to be more profitable to the Transport Department than the passenger service. To reach Gosport Mill the line was extended from the existing terminus at Outlane to a new one about a third of a mile further up New Hey Road. From there a single line connection was laid to the mill yard. Incidentally, the extension at Outlane gave the town a tramway terminus which, at 909 feet above sea level, was one of the highest in the country. The delivery of coal along the passenger tramway system lasted until 1934 when trams began to be phased out in favour of trolley buses. Now, the rusty tramlines inside the coal yard and a power line bracket high up on the retaining wall to the left are all that remain - along with the coal chutes-to remind us of a tramway practice unique to Huddersfield.

The railway embankment above and behind the coal hoppers was the scene of one of the many accidents that occurred on the railways in mid Victorian times. On Tuesday 7th June 1870 a luggage train left Huddersfield for Leeds at 7.45p.m. When the train arrived on the embankment the engine, somehow, came off the line, tore up the metals, broke the coupling chain and slipped diagonally down the embankment to the field below where it landed upside down. Miraculously, both the driver and the fireman were unhurt. A bystander, who knew that the Leeds express was due to arrive at any minute, scrambled up the embankment and ran along the line to give warning. Fortunately, he was spotted by the driver who brought the express to a halt just in time to prevent it running into the wrecked carriages of the luggage train.

#### WHITESTONE LANE (15)

This was the way the coal trams came from the coal yard to join the main tramway system in Bradford Road. At the end of Whitestone Lane notice Hillhouse Lane (now Croft Cottage Lane) coming into the junction from the left and its continuation on the opposite side of Bradford Road. As well as travellers to Halifax those bound for Bradford must also have come

this way to Hillhouse from where they would follow a circuitous route through Fartown, Sheepridge and Toothill to the old bridge over the Calder at Rastrick. Their journey would be shortened somewhat after 1777 when the Halifax turnpike was opened but it would be another sixty-three years before a direct route between Huddersfield and Bradford was achieved.

### **BRADFORD ROAD (16)**

Work on the new road, which was the last turnpike to be constructed in the Huddersfield area, started circa 1836 and was completed in 1840. It ran from the 1777 turnpike at the bottom of what is now Halifax Old Road to Fartown, where it bisected the older route, and continued on to reach Bradford via Brighouse, Low Moor and Wibsey.

As one of the features of this tour is old footways and highways it would be logical to follow the short stretch of Hillhouse Lane to the branch road at Hillhouse but as it is almost impossible to cross the busy Bradford Road we turn left from Whitestone Lane to the traffic lights and then right into Halifax Old Road.

It is at this junction that the 1777 and the 1840 turnpikes met.

### **HALIFAX OLD ROAD (17)**

One hundred and sixty five yards (150M) after joining Halifax Old Road notice Hillhouse Lane coming in from the right. From this point to Clough House the 1777 turnpike followed the line of the old highway to the north and somewhere on the right, just beyond the junction stood the Hillhouse Bar. By the mid-nineteenth century the original barriers or pikes at many bar houses had been replaced by chains and so we find reference in the 1860s to Hillhouse Chain Bar. The last toll collectors here, before the Hillhouse tolls were abolished on 31st October 1867, were Edward and Hannah Waite.

### **HILLHOUSE (18)**

About a quarter of a mile further up Halifax Old Road notice King Cliff Road coming in from the left. Although we have discussed King Cliff in an earlier work (D.O.H.1.i.No.35) we inadvertently omitted the information that behind the buildings on the corner is the site of the house that gave the area its name - the aptly named Hillhouse.

Built in the first quarter of the sixteenth century Hillhouse, like several other homestead sites to be found north of the town brook, was early associated with the Brook family. In 1751, the house was purchased by Thomas Thornhill of Fixby Hall and it remained in the possession of the Thornhills until 1854 when it was sold to Sir John William Ramsden.

Hillhouse stood to the north west of a round, tree covered knoll called Ark Hill Mound or, more simply, the Mount which could easily be mistaken for an ancient earthwork. To the west and south of the site the land drops steeply down to the valley of Clough House Mill Beck and it is this slope, rather than the Mount, that is likely to be the origin of the name Hillhouse. The house was demolished in 1871 to make way for new housing in the present Beacon and Back Beacon Streets. Later, a large factory was built on the steep hillside but, despite these intrusions into an old scene, the area is still, by any standards, of interest and deserves a leisurely inspection on foot.

*O. W. The site of Hillhouse may be reached by walking a few yards along King Cliff Road and then turning left into Back Beacon Street which follows the line of the original entrance to the house.*

The levelled area to the right of Back Beacon Street is where the house stood - notice the large flagstones which may have been in situ before the Victorian houses were built. To the front left a few rather decrepit garages spoil the view to the Mount but walk on to the opposite side of the site where a clearer idea of the knoll's shape and size may be obtained. At the factory gate - the limit of the short walk - notice the stepped path which replaced an earlier footpath leading up the hillside from Bay Hall to Hillhouse. From this point it becomes apparent that the house was well named. With these few observations we leave the site, which lends itself to personal interpretation, to you.

## WASP NEST ROAD (19)

It is at Wasp Nest Road that we reach one of Ogilby's branch roads, marked 'to Rastrick' on his 1675 road map. From here to Sheepridge our route follows the probable line of the branch which, as an outlet to the north east, continued to be of some local importance until the Bradford turnpike was opened in 1840.

Originally called Fartown Green Road, Wasp Nest Road takes its present name from a small settlement called Wasp Nest which in the mid nineteenth century stood on the left hand side in the area of the present Buckrose Street. Whether the name referred to a concentration of insects or whether it implied the industry or social behaviour of past residents is, of course, a matter for conjecture.

The large school on the right of Wasp Nest Road was, in fact, two schools. The buildings nearest the road were opened in 1887 as Hillhouse Board School and, as may be seen, it had, like most schools of that time, separate departments and playgrounds for boys and girls over the age of seven. Below that age it was believed that boys and girls could safely be educated together.

The building behind the board school was opened in 1909 as Hillhouse Higher Grade School (later Hillhouse Central School) for boys and girls. The first headmaster of the new school, Mr. R. Montgomery, was highly regarded in the town and one of his ex-pupils, the late Mr. J. Beswick, remembered a special and impressive ceremony at the Town Hall in July 1924 to mark 'Monty's' retirement. Speeches applauding his long service and his understanding and sympathetic treatment of his pupils were made by the Mayor and the Chairman of the Education Authority and other speakers added to the praise and presented gifts.

In 1924 Hillhouse Central School became a selective secondary school for boys only, the girls having transferred to a new school at Longley Hall which had been officially opened on 24th May that year. In 1958 the school left Hillhouse for new modern premises at Salendine Nook where it amalgamated with Huddersfield College to become Huddersfield New College.

Opposite the school, look along Percy Street for a distant view of a monument, erected in 1954, as a memorial to that great cricketer, George Herbert Hirst. A closer view of the monument is part of our next option.

## **HONORIA STREET (20)**

Just past the school, the Victorian terraces to be seen on Honoria Street represent one of the earliest moves towards suburban living in the Huddersfield area. Until the mid nineteenth century, there were few houses in the Hillhouse area but as industry in and around Huddersfield expanded a

need arose for housing to accommodate the burgeoning working, artisan and lower middle classes. The principal landowners in the Huddersfield area, the Ramsdens, at first refused to countenance leases of more than ninety-nine years and disallowed the building of back-to-back houses on their land, although they relented later. Naturally then, the earliest suburban development tended to take place on land where the landowners were more tolerant.

Hillhouse, within easy walking distance of the town but far enough away to escape the worst of its noise and pollution, was an obvious location for suburban development and as early as 1852 the Thornhills of Fixby, who were less restrictive in their conditions than the Ramsdens, had drawn up plans for three interconnecting residential streets to be laid out on a parcel of their land situated to the south east of Wasp Nest Road. The new streets, Honoria, Clara and Eleanor Streets were so named after members of the Thornhill family. Over the next several years plots were taken up and houses began to appear on the new estate, a process that undoubtedly speeded up after 1858 when horse drawn omnibuses started running along Bradford Road.

#### FARTOWN SPORTS GROUND (21)

From the end of Wasp Nest Road notice, straight ahead, the now disused entrances to the world famous Fartown stadium. The origins of this local, national and international sports venue can be traced back to a meeting held on 16th November 1864, at the Queen Hotel, Huddersfield, when a provisional committee was chosen to form the Huddersfield Athletic Club. The first chairman was Mr. John Dew and the first president, Lt. Col. Crosland. On 24th June 1865 the club held their first festival day at the Rifle Fields, Greenhead, when athletes competed for silver and bronze medals in running and walking races, long and high jumps, cricket ball and hammer throwing, Indian clubs, vaulting, boxing and what was described as a 'consolation scramble'. The club was an undoubted success and at the eighth Annual General Meeting, held on 13th November 1872, the treasurer reported a balance in hand of a healthy £251.

In 1876, the club amalgamated with St. John's Cricket Club at Fartown to form the Huddersfield Cricket and Athletic Club. St. John's cricket field was laid out in the 1860s on land that was formerly part of the Greenhouse estate (see No.22). After the amalgamation it became the home ground for



the Huddersfield team who, in 1891, as Huddersfield United, joined the newly formed District Cricket League. Ten years later Huddersfield won the local championship. St. John's cricket field had been a venue for occasional county matches before the amalgamation and thereafter, until 1954, Yorkshire County Cricket Club frequently played at Fartown.

The stadium at Fartown is, of course, also known for its rugby football ground. From the earliest days of the Athletic Club, rugby was a club activity and in November 1878 Huddersfield Rugby Club played their first game at Fartown. In those days, the game was strictly amateur but after a bitter meeting, held at the George Hotel, Huddersfield, in August 1895, twenty clubs, of which Huddersfield was one, broke away from the English Union to form the Northern Rugby Football Union (later the Rugby League). Thus began a split between the two rugby codes that has taken a century to heal.

Huddersfield achieved their greatest success in the years 1913-1915 when they won many cups thus earning themselves the name 'Team of all Talents'. Their last major success was in 1975 when they won the Division Two championship. Today, the team plays at the McAlpine Stadium and their old ground is used for training and minor-league matches.

A report of a meeting of the H.C. & A.C. held at the Town Hall on 14th July 1923 reveals that the habit of blaming management committees for the failure of sporting teams is not a new phenomenon. At that meeting the five members of the football section resigned en-masse. Their spokesman, Cllr. A.E. Sellers, said that another five ought to serve and he went on, 'The old committee, travelled between six and seven thousand miles last season, looking for players but those we saw were 'rabbits' and not good 'rabbits' at that. In my opinion the position is due to the aftermath of the war. After all the nasty things that have been said, I do not think it worth while to spend every Saturday in the winter and two evenings a week on the work of the committee. When nasty remarks are made to my wife and those intimately associated with me it is time to put a stop to it.' It was with some difficulty that five new committee members were found who were willing to take the job on.

*O.D. For a better view of the stadium turn left into Spaines Road and in one tenth of a mile right into the main entrance.*

From here the two fields, the mock-Tudor pavilion and some old stands

may be seen. As well as the cricket and football clubs there was a thriving bowling club here with two greens and small pavilion. Over the years many athletic meetings were held on the cricket field and at one time cycle races took place on a track around the periphery of the field.

The tall monument, originally a clock tower, was erected in 1954 as a memorial to George Herbert Hirst of Kirkheaton, Yorkshire and England. Nineteen years later a tablet commemorating his team-mate, Wilfred Rhodes, was added. After years of vandalism and neglect the edifice has been recently restored.

*Drive back to rejoin the main route of the tour at the end of Wasp Nest Road.*

## GREENHOUSE (22)

Seventy yards (63M) after turning into Spaines Road from Wasp Nest Road notice Fartown Grange on the left. The Grange stands on or near the site of Greenhouse which took its name from its position on the edge of Fartown Green. Dating back to the fifteenth century, or earlier, Greenhouse was, like several other farmsteads situated north of the town brook, occupied by a family called Brook in its early days and, typically, its name includes the suffix 'house'.

The surname Brook(e) has been numerous in the Huddersfield area certainly since the fourteenth century and by the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries several Brooks had prospered and achieved the status of yeoman and occasionally gentleman. The name appears frequently in Tudor and Stuart taxation returns. For example in 1523, to finance his military operations in France, King Henry VIII was granted a subsidy on land, goods and wages. Only the most prosperous members of society were liable for the tax and out of twenty-seven men and women listed in the Huddersfield returns there are no fewer than ten Brooks. One of these, Edmund Brooke of Greenhouse, paid one shilling on goods worth two pounds. The Brookes continued at Greenhouse well into the next century for we find that in 1664 Rodger Brooke of Greenhouse paid tax on three hearths. This suggests that the house had some status as out of a total of a hundred and forty householders listed in the Huddersfield Hearth Tax returns only twenty five paid tax on three or more hearths.

By the early years of the eighteenth century the Brookes had been replaced by a family called Horsfall who tenanted the house and about thirty acres of the land around, including the closes called Stubble Croft, Schoolhouse Croft, Fourlands and Doles where, in later years, the sports stadium was to be built. The Horsfalls were still in possession at the time of the Huddersfield Survey of 1778 when the premises were described as a house and barn with a fold, orchard and garden. It is likely that the barn and outbuildings still to be seen behind Fartown Grange date from that time or earlier.

During the nineteenth century a number of tenants lived at Greenhouse which name continued to be used until circa 1900 when it was replaced by Fartown Grange. Presumably the name change coincided with a major rebuilding that resulted in the house we see today. Looking at the house it is difficult to decide whether or not it incorporates some of the fabric of the earlier building. Certainly the chimney stacks and quoins at the west end are in the style of an earlier age. Suitably, at the time of the alterations, or just after, the house was in the occupation of a James William Brook.

Just past Fartown Grange notice Greenhouse Road which originally gave access to the old farmstead. Beyond the entrance it continued as a well defined footway running north-west across the fields to Cowcliffe and Netheroyd Hill. Now, a large housing estate obscures much of the original line of the path and although short sections of it remain they have to be sought among the modern houses.

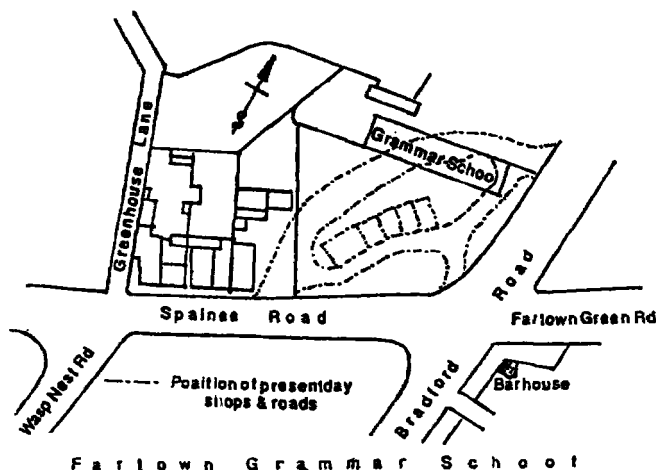
### FARTOWN GRAMMAR SCHOOL (23)

Just before the end of Spames Road notice the area on the left, between a curved service road and Bradford Road. This was once the site of Fartown Grammar School. As no boundary walls, no building outline, no old alignments have survived we include a map (p.27) which will help to locate the position of the school.

Although the school is long gone we hope a short account of it will be of interest for the light it sheds on the origins and practices of a small boarding and day school founded a century before the Education Acts of the late nineteenth century addressed the problem of education for all.

Fartown Grammar School was founded in 1770 but, interestingly, the Huddersfield Rental of 1716 lists a Schoolhouse Croft among the holdings

of John Horsfall of Greenhouse and the map of the same year shows its position in the immediate vicinity of the house. There are two possible explanations of this: either the profits from the croft went towards maintaining a school elsewhere or a small school was in existence in the area well before 1770.



The Grammar School was built on a parcel of land enclosed from the commons of Huddersfield and the cost of building was defrayed by public subscription. In the early years, the legal owners of the land had the right to appoint the schoolmaster. In 1834, Sir John Ramsden, Thomas Thornhill, John Whitacre, Rev. James Franks and Rev. Wyndham Carlyon Madden were recognised as acting trustees of the school. In fact, only one of these men, John Whitacre, still held his post in that year and in order to regulate the governance of the school he nominated four new trustees to act jointly with himself and conveyed to them the premises and the land. Thereafter, new trustees were appointed as and when necessary.

The two storey stone-built premises comprised four classrooms and the master's house, all under one roof. The schoolhouse had three living rooms, kitchen, scullery and six bedrooms three of which were used to accommodate six boarders. For many years during the nineteenth century a Fartown man, George Binns, was master at the school assisted by his wife, Mary Ann, and

eventually by his youngest son, George. Not surprisingly, the school was known in his time as Binns' Academy.

After Binns' death in 1881 the trustees of the time decided to make the school an efficient secondary establishment to supply the needs of its large, lower-middle class neighbourhood. To that end the premises were renovated and enlarged and the school reorganised under a new, young master, W.P. Yates B.A. His salary was £100 per annum plus two shillings capitation per pupil. He was assisted by his wife and a certificated male teacher, a kindergarten teacher and a student governess. Two peripatetic teachers, Annie Wood and George Galloway, taught art and shorthand respectively. The curriculum included maths, botany, drill, singing, scripture, Latin and French; no provision was made for teaching science.

For the first hundred or so years of its existence the school undoubtedly functioned as a boys only establishment; until the mid-nineteenth century, or later, schooling was not considered necessary for girls. After the reorganisation in 1882 girls were admitted, an innovation probably encouraged by Mr. Yates and his wife who was, herself, a qualified teacher. Although Yates adhered to the then common practice of keeping separate entrances and play-grounds for boys and girls, most uncommonly he introduced mixed classes, a system he considered worked well as it led to '...the manners of the boys being softened and the emulation of the girls quickened.'

The pupils, who rarely stayed on beyond the age of fifteen, came mainly from the lower-middle and artisan classes as a list of their fathers' occupations (made in 1897) shows:

professional men and ministers of religion	9
manufacturers and large tradesmen	23
small tradesmen and shopkeepers	29
artisans	25
no occupation	3

Fees at this time were five to seven guineas a term for weekly boarders and eight to ten guineas for full term boarders plus tuition fees and extras of two to three pounds per term. Presumably, day pupils paid similar tuition fees. Five scholarships (later reduced to three) were available at the school, paid for out of Holroyd's Charity (See No.24).

Under Mr. Yates' leadership the school quickly became popular and successful and remained so for twenty years. However, after a higher grade school opened in New North Road in 1893 attendance at Fartown declined and by the end of the century the school, which could accommodate a hundred and eighty scholars, was only half full. As the twentieth century progressed the number of local authority secondary schools offering a modern curriculum increased and all over the country small private schools found it increasingly difficult to remain viable. The school at Fartown was no exception and despite a last-ditch attempt to keep it going as a preparatory school it finally closed in 1928. The building was demolished in 1971.

#### HOLROYD'S CHARITY (24)

In 1830, Thomas Holroyd of Birkby set up a charity trust fund of £800 3% Consols to support four cottage almshouses at Upper Birkby. Under the terms of the Trust the trustees were to use part of the income to maintain the property and from half of the surplus, 'purchase warm clothing in December and January for twelve poor and aged persons belonging to the township (sic) of Fartown whether living in the cottages or not. 'The other half of the surplus was to be used to support the education of five poor children at the school at Fartown Green.

In 1874, under a legacy in the will of John Taylor Armitage, a former trustee, the endowment of the Charity was increased by £200. From the increased income the trustees were required to provide coals at Christmas for the occupants of the almshouses. The surplus income was divided into two equal shares and used, as before, to provide a clothing dole and scholarships to Fartown School. The clothing was distributed annually on the first of January at the school, the headmaster assisting in the distribution. Although the Trust still specified only twelve recipients, in practice, after 1874, some forty persons received clothing to the value of five shillings each.

After the school was reorganised in 1882, fees were increased and the number of poor children supported by Holroyd's Charity was reduced from five to three. The scholarships were awarded to local children, generally boys, on the result of examinations to standard four of the elementary education code and they were usually held for two to three years. By the

1890s the awards were worth five guineas a year, which barely covered tuition fees.

N.B. Although they are at some distance from the route of our tour, readers might like to know that the cottages mentioned above still exist, at Birkby Fold, off Birkby Lodge Road.

### FARTOWN BAR (25)

Just past the site of the grammar school, the Bradford turnpike crosses the older route to the north (Ogilby's branch) at Fartown Bar. Because of modern buildings and road improvements it is impossible now to determine the exact location of the bar house from which the area took its name but it stood somewhere on the east side of Bradford Road near to its junction with Fartown Green Road. (See map p.27)



Fartown became one of the first districts in the Huddersfield area to benefit from a frequent transport service when, on 11th February 1858, omnibuses began running along Bradford Road to Fartown Bar. The service was successful and by 1873 Lockwood, Lindley, Edgerton and Moldgreen could also be reached by horse drawn omnibus. In that year, T.W. Coney, a cab and omnibus proprietor, was, weather permitting, operating a weekday service to Fartown, the buses leaving the Market Place corner every half hour between 8.30a.m. and 8.30p.m. and returning to Huddersfield on the

quarter hour. The fare was a penny outside and twopence inside. The omnibuses, which were drawn by three horses, had seats for eight or nine passengers inside and more than a dozen on top. It must have been an unpleasant journey for the people perched on the top in inclement weather and a precarious one at all times as the buses rattled and jolted over the rough roads of the times. Nevertheless, the majority of passengers were willing to put up with the discomfort for the sake of saving a penny a journey.

By the end of the decade the days of the horse drawn bus were numbered. In 1880, an Act of Parliament authorised the Corporation to construct a tramway system and by 1882 the tracks had reached several outlying areas, including Fartown. On 11th January 1883 Huddersfield Corporation became the first local authority in the country to operate its own tramway system when an inaugural tramcar, pulled by a steam engine, left Fartown Bar for the terminus at Lockwood Bar travelling via Bradford Road, Northumberland Street, John William Street, Buxton Road and Chapel Hill. Until a new tramway route to Fartown via Birkby was opened in 1892 Fartown Bar was the terminus for crowds attending matches at the nearby stadium and for a few years, until the Corporation Passenger Transport Department built up its fleet of steam trams, horse trams were also used on match days to provide extra capacity. Steam trams served Fartown for almost twenty years until they were replaced in June 1902 by electric trams.

The advent of the tramway system, undoubtedly brought about great changes in the lives of ordinary people who welcomed the tramcars, noisy and cumbersome though they were, for the service they offered: cheap, regular, reliable and unaffected by the state of the roads and the vagaries of the weather. As well as stimulating suburban living, tramways made it possible for people to use their small amount of leisure time to become familiar with distant townships and villages. For example, a family living at Fartown could, via the tramway system, explore the old village of Almondbury, enjoy the open spaces on Lindley Moor or tramp across the hills near Slaithwaite and (after 1914) Marsden. And it is probably not a coincidence that whilst the first tram tracks were under construction two of Huddersfield's major parks, Greenhead and Beaumont, were being laid out and that a third, Norman Park, was opened shortly after trams started running to Birkby.



## **BLACK DYKE (26)**

Fifty yards (45M) after entering Fartown Green Road notice, behind a small car park on the left, a sadly dilapidated house with an attached barn. This is Black Dyke which, as it is half a mile away from the nearest stream, possibly took its name from the marshy nature of the low lying land around. Black Dyke is probably the house mentioned in the Hearth Tax Returns of 1664 where it is recorded that John Brook of Blackdike paid tax on two hearths. There is little about the house today to suggest such antiquity as the south-east gable with its small extension as well as three gables and a larger extension on the north-west side were all part of alterations carried out in 1900 by Sir John William Ramsden. Nevertheless, a careful examination of the stonework will reveal the dimensions of the original small rectangular farmhouse with its central chimney stack.

Writing in 1933 the local historian, Philip Ahier, mentions two fireplaces which were placed in the middle of the house and were back to back. Presumably, these were the two hearths for which tax was demanded in 1664. Mr. Ahier goes on: 'Previous to 1913 an old open fireplace some four feet wide and four feet six inches high stood in the present dining room but in that year a modern fireplace was inserted.' The fireplaces in situ today which are still 'back to back' are of a 1930s vintage, small, tiled and unimpressive.

The house is presently for sale and when a buyer comes along perhaps he or she will take pleasure in revealing the ancient fireplaces, exposing old beams and restoring order to what was once a pleasant front garden.

## **FLASHHOUSE (27)**

Just past the car park mentioned above, and on the opposite side of the road, modern houses on the left hand side of Leonard Street stand on the site of another of the area's old farmsteads, Flashhouse, which was demolished some forty years ago. The prefix 'flash', which the English Dialect Dictionary defines as a shallow pool, or swamp, suggests that the house, like Black Dyke, was built at a time when the surrounding land was marshy.

Readers will not by now be surprised to learn that Flashhouse, which dates back at least to the sixteenth century, was for hundreds of years tenanted by a family called Brook. The house is not mentioned by name in the Hearth

Tax Returns of 1664 but a Thomas Brook of Greene is recorded as paying tax on one hearth and it is quite possible that he resided at Flashhouse which, of course, stood on Fartown Green.

The Huddersfield Rental of 1797 describes the property, then in the tenancy of 'Mr. John Brook', as a house and barn with fold and garden. The appellation 'Mr.' - unusual in the Rental - indicates that he was considered to be of higher status than most of the other tenant farmers of the time. He farmed a number of closes comprising some thirty acres of land lying between Fartown Green Road and the Ramsden Canal to the south east. John Brook, a staunch non-conformist, was a founder member of Highfield Congregational Church in Huddersfield. He was the last Brook to live at Flashhouse and after his death in 1820 the property was let to a succession of tenants including, in 1913, the butchering department of the Huddersfield Industrial Co-operative Society.



The main line railway to Huddersfield, completed in 1847, passed within a quarter of a mile of Flashhouse shattering forever the slumbering peace of

centuries in John Brook's former fields. Some fifty years later the Midland Railway Company's branch line was constructed only a few yards away from the house itself. The track of this railway which ran to Newtown in Huddersfield (see D.O.H.1.i.No.7) has long since been lifted but the broad swathe of land it occupied remains and may be seen, along with two original bridges, by walking along Leonard Street and turning left just before the first modern house on the left.

## **BLACK HOUSE (28)**

At the bottom of Woodhouse Hill, on the left, notice a white cottage with a blocked up doorway at the left hand end. This is all that remains of Blackhouse part of which was demolished in the early years of this century when the road was widened. The earliest mention of Blackhouse is found in the Subsidy Roll of 1523 which records that Edward Brook of Blakhouse paid one shilling tax on goods worth two pounds. The Brooks continued at Blackhouse until the mid eighteenth century when William Steel, who married a Brook daughter, took up the tenancy. The remaining cottage is, as my be seen, typical of the mid eighteenth century and it is likely that Steel, when he moved in, modernised or rebuilt the old house.

William Steel, an arch opponent of the Luddites and the Trade Union Movement, was a successful farmer who through hard work, diligence and parsimony amassed a considerable fortune. When he died in 1828 he was succeeded as tenant of Blackhouse by his son, John. Even more miserly than his father, John Steel was the victim of a notorious robbery which for several years afterwards was the talk of the neighbourhood. A retrospective account of the crime was published in the Huddersfield Chronicle on 2nd March 1912 and, as we pass Blackhouse, it is worth summarising.

Johnny Steel, as he was known, was an eccentric character who, having no faith in banks, insisted on keeping his vast fortune at Blackhouse where he could see it and, perhaps, regularly count it. He hoarded it, in fact, in an oak chest fastened with heavy iron bands and secured by several padlocks. His friends warned him several times that he might be robbed but he believed that the chest was too secure to be broken open and too heavy to be carried away. As added security he had a gun which he said he would make speak to any intruder. Johnny was content.

Unfortunately, he did not allow for a gang of men from Deighton who, with blackened faces, broke into Blackhouse one night in 1842. Disturbed, Johnny did indeed make his gun speak, once, but without effect and before he could reload he and his housekeeper were overcome. The intruders attacked the chest with sledge hammers and crowbars and soon had it open. The booty was a rich one and the thieves made off into the night carrying a fortune in gold and silver coins. The oak chest they left behind. One of the robbers who had filled his hat with gold coins was less fortunate than the rest as the hat split spilling the contents on the ground. As it was dark and he was, naturally, in a hurry he was unable to retrieve his ill gotten gains. For years afterwards it was whispered that one or two of the town's successful businesses were founded on money retrieved from the roadside in the days following the robbery.

Some days after the raid the robbers met in a secret place and shared their loot by measuring it out in a pewter pint pot they had stolen from an inn in Deighton. That done, the thieves made haste to leave the country. One man, Robert Peel, succeeded in reaching Liverpool from where he made his escape to America. The others went together to Hull and, after making arrangements for sailing, decided to have one last drink in an English inn. Unwisely, one of them loudly proposed a toast to the old oak chest and the pewter pint pot. The landlord, who had read about the robbery in the newspaper, sent for the police. The villains were arrested, taken to York for trial, found guilty and sentenced to transportation across the seas for life.

After the robbery Johnny Steel left Blackhouse to live at nearby Fieldhouse Green. Towards the end of his life he took to strolling along the canal bank behind Fieldhouse where he would look towards Deighton and loudly deplore the behaviour of 'those Deighton thieves'. He died, aged eighty, in 1860. Two years after his death a man digging in a field at Storths in Birkby found, underneath a large flat stone, an iron posnit (a small cooking vessel with feet and a handle) containing five hundred guineas. It was widely believed at the time that the money was part of Johnny Steel's fortune.

Of the men transported to Australia the fate of only one is known because he managed, against all the odds, to escape. Ned Lumb, a Deighton man, deciding that the hardship of a convict's life was not for him, schemed with six others to capture a suitable vessel when the opportunity arose and sail to

freedom. The escape was successful, the small fast boat they had commandeered outsailing all pursuing craft. Unfortunately for them, several days out of Australia, a storm overtook them and their boat was wrecked near the rocky shore of an uninhabited island. Four of the fugitives drowned in the wreck but the other three, who included Ned Lumb, managed to scramble ashore. Shortly afterwards one of the three died and, having no food, the two survivors only managed to stay alive by eating their dead companion.

When a party of less than friendly natives landed on the island the two took to the sea again in a small rowing boat that had been washed ashore from the wreck. After several days in the open boat without food and water their situation was desperate and they were close to death. Almost at the last minute they were spotted by the crew of an East Indiaman on passage to Calcutta and taken aboard. From Calcutta Ned Lumb worked his passage to London from where he made his way to his family home in Deighton. His mother was amazed and delighted to see the son she had believed lost to her forever but her pleasure soon turned to apprehension when Ned recklessly insisted on meeting his old cronies and regaling them with the story of his remarkable adventures. Realising the secret of Ned's presence could not be kept, his mother eventually persuaded him that he had no future in England and three weeks after his dramatic return Ned left for Liverpool in the hope of taking ship for America. It is here that the newspaper account ends. Two other reports, current at the time, are vague and contradictory. One says that he was arrested at the dockside and transported to Australia again, the other that he succeeded in reaching America where he became a wealthy and respected citizen.

### WOODHOUSE (29)

One tenth of a mile past Blackhouse notice on the right, near the junction of Woodhouse Hall Road with Woodhouse Hill, a large house, now a residential home, called Sun Woodhouse. It stands on the edge of the former Woodhouse Hall estate and was, during the nineteenth century, the home of John Whitacre, Deputy Lieutenant of the West Riding, Magistrate and Trustee of Fartown School. Born in 1786, Whitacre was an influential and devout Churchman who, in the early 1820s, built Christ Church, Woodhouse at his

own expense (see No. 31). A wealthy mill owner he suffered a severe setback when, on New Year's Eve 1830, fire destroyed his factory, Woodhouse Mills in Leeds Road, causing £10,000 worth of damage and the death of a fireman, John Hartley.

Whitacre was a prominent Tory who, along with his brother-in-law the Rev. W.C. Madden and several others, supported the candidacy of Richard Oastler in a by-election and a general election held in 1837. In both, Oastler was defeated by a Whig candidate and afterwards blamed his defeat on the influence of the Ramsden family and the presence of troops brought into town to keep order at the hustings.

John Whitacre never married. He lived at Sun Woodhouse with his sister, Ann, for some thirty years and was a much respected member of the community. When he died on 13th March 1869, aged eighty-three, an obituary said: '...with him died almost the last generation of fine old West Riding gentlemen in this neighbourhood.'

### WOODHOUSE HALL (30)

Further along Woodhouse Hall Road, the several buildings of Fartown High School stand on land once occupied by Woodhouse Hall which was built in the early years of the nineteenth century when newly prosperous merchants and manufacturers were spreading their wings and moving away from the town to the suburbs. The house which, like many of its kind, was built of local stone stood in five acres of well laid out, wooded gardens. It had an impressive pillared entrance leading to a large hall with a stone flagged floor. From an inner hall doors led off to an oval dining room, a drawing room and a billiard room. A splendid staircase, lit from above by a glass dome, gave access to the first floor where there were four large bedrooms each with its own dressing room.

During the 1860s the Hall was occupied by Lewis Randal Starkey, his wife, two sons and seven servants. A member of the wealthy Starkey family, woollen manufacturers of Longroyd Bridge, Lewis Starkey, at the age of thirty-two, stood as a Conservative candidate for the Southern Division of the West Riding in the general election of 1865. He was defeated and when he tried again in 1874 and 1880 he was again unsuccessful.

Another tenant of the Hall with strong political views was George

Thomson who took up residence there in the 1880s. Twice Mayor of Huddersfield and a Freeman of the Borough he was a man much respected and admired throughout the district. George Thomson was born in 1842 at Lower Head Row, Huddersfield. His father, William, a cloth merchant, came to Huddersfield from Scotland and, for a time, lived at Newhouse, Highfield. George was educated at 'Old Tatterfields' school in Ramsden Street and at Bramham College, York. At the age of sixteen he entered his father's warehouse and, four years later, the two started a cloth manufacturing business at Priestroyd Mills, Firth Street. In 1880, two years after his father died, the firm, William Thomson & Co. Ltd., moved to Woodhouse Mills, Leeds Road, the premises once occupied by John Whitacre of Sun Woodhouse.



**Mr. GEORGE THOMSON.**

Whilst still a young man, George had come to admire the ideas of some of the great Radical thinkers of the times and in particular Ruskin, Hollyoak and Hughes. Not surprisingly, he was a strong supporter of the Co-operative Movement and he became a popular speaker at co-operative and other social meetings which aimed at some improvement in the conditions of industry and the working classes. In 1886, with a confidence born of maturity, he determined to put his beliefs into practice and started a profit sharing scheme at Woodhouse Mills. Four years later, the business suffered heavy losses and was only saved when the employees voluntarily paid back their wages to help pay the shareholders. After this setback the fortunes of the company improved, the workers' contributions were paid back and the profit sharing scheme continued. After deducting five per cent for dividends to shareholders and ten per cent to the reserve fund the profits of the company were divided equally, half going to the employees and half to co-operative societies whose directors purchased goods from the firm amounting to £50 in any one year. By 1895, £1163 had been paid to the employees and £1097 to various co-operatives.

Profit sharing in a private company was unusual enough for the times but more was to follow. In 1893, an eight hour working day came into operation along with a non-contributory sickness benefit and pension scheme and in 1910 an annual paid week's holiday was introduced. Such a caring employer was, naturally, held in high esteem by his employees and, as a token of their respect, they presented George with a silver rose bowl to mark the coming-of-age of the partnership.

George Thomson, as might be expected, gave a lifetime's service to the affairs of the community. He was a member of the Huddersfield Chamber of Commerce, serving as President in 1902-03. For many years he was Honorary Secretary of the Mechanics Institute and, later, a governor of the Technical School. Always a keen co-operator he presided at the opening day of the twenty-seventh Co-operative Congress when it was held in Huddersfield in 1895. A vice-president of the Liberal Association, he was elected to the Borough Council in 1898 and served the Fartown ward for twenty years. In 1910 he was appointed Mayor of Huddersfield and reappointed for a second term the following year specifically to give him the honour of greeting King George V and Queen Mary when they visited the town in 1912. When he



retired from the Council in 1918 he was made Freeman of the Borough.

George Thomson died in 1921 aged seventy-eight. At his well attended funeral he was, with good reason, described as a man of vision and remarkable energy.

In the late 1920s Woodhouse Hall ceased to be a private residence and on 5th June 1929 it was opened as a school for delicate children by Margaret McMillan, the pioneer of open-air education.

In his admirable and learned essay 'Settlements in Huddersfield before 1800' (printed in 'Huddersfield a Most Handsome Town') George Redmonds says that the earliest reference to Woodhouse is found in 1383 and its earliest tenants were the Brooks. Commenting on the remarkable concentration of Brooks in the Fartown area in Tudor times and earlier Dr. Redmonds says: '...it is tempting to see all this deriving from the Brooks of Woodhouse.'

It has been suggested by local historian Philip Ahier that Woodhouse Hall was built on the site of the early Woodhouse but we are not convinced that this is so. On an estate map of 1797 Woodhouse is clearly marked close to Woodhouse Hill whilst on Jefferys' map of 1772 a building called Sun House is shown in a similar position. On neither map is there a building shown on the site of Woodhouse Hall. From all this it seems much more likely that the original Woodhouse evolved over the centuries into the house now called Sun Woodhouse.

## **CHRIST CHURCH (31)**

Further up Woodhouse Hill, Christ Church, on the right, was built at his own expense by John Whitacre of Sun Woodhouse for the hamlets of Deighton, Fartown and Bradley. Whitacre's altruism was inspired, no doubt, by the example of his brother-in-law, Benjamin Haigh Allen of Greenhead, who, in 1819, built Holy Trinity Church, Huddersfield.

The first stone at Christ Church was laid by Thomas Walker of Berry-Hill near Mansfield on 24th June 1823 and the church opened for worship the following year. Around the same time Whitacre built the Gothic style vicarage across the road. Initially, the patronage of the church was vested in the founder and his heirs. The first incumbent was the Rev. Windham Carlyon Madden M.A. who was married to Whitacre's sister, Mary, and the second was the Rev. John Willis Crane who married Annie Madden, Whitacre's niece. In

1845, in order to obtain a permanent endowment from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, Whitacre resigned the patronage to the Bishop of Ripon who, in 1851, appointed the Rev. Robert Crowe, then curate at Kirkburton, as the third incumbent. A tall monument commemorating Mr. Crowe's long ministry survives near the path on the south side of the church.

Two other monuments nearby are of interest. One of these commemorates Richard Oastler, friend of John Whitacre and the Rev. Madden, and praises his patriotism, his loyalty to the church and the oppressed and his fearless advocacy of 'all the hapless factory workers.' The other is a stone cross dedicated to the men who fell in the First World War. At its foot are several rough stones on which are recorded the names of the battlefields of France and Flanders where local men fought and died: Mons, Loos, Ypres, Givenchy, Somme, Neuve Chappelle, Arras, Bullecourt and Cambrat. Also commemorated are the sea battles Jutland and Falklands and the landings at Suvla Bay in Turkey.

Recently, we visited the quiet Hill 10 Cemetery overlooking Suvla Bay to pay our respects to local men of the Lancashire and Yorkshire and the Duke of Wellington's Regiments who fell so far from home. There on the Stone of Remembrance was the simple and moving inscription to be found not only in most C.W.G.C. cemeteries but also on this small cross at Woodhouse:

'Their name liveth for evermore.'

The names of ninety five men from this small area who lost their lives in the Great War are recorded on a brass plaque inside the church, beneath a stained glass window depicting Christ appearing on the battlefield to comfort the wounded and carry away the dead

#### THE BELLE VUE (O.D)

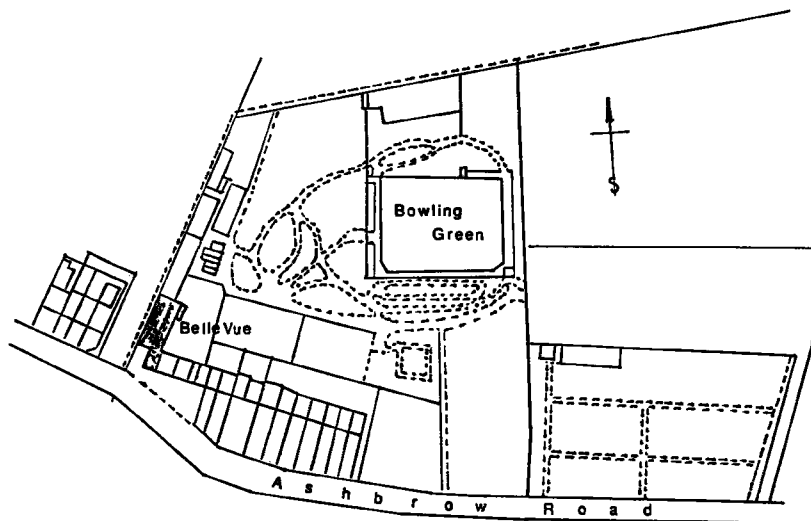
After the church, our tour continues straight ahead still following the old route to the north-east but at this point we include an option to look at the site of what was described in the 1870s as 'the most popular place of resort between Leeds and Manchester.'

*To take the option turn left along Ash Brow Road and drive about a quarter of a mile to the Belle Vue public house, formerly the Belle Vue Hotel*

*and Pleasure Gardens.*

Here, terraced gardens, laid out in the 1850s by John Aspinall who was the proprietor of the establishment for more than twenty years, once delighted the eye. Looking at the Belle Vue today there is nothing to remind us of those past delights except, perhaps, the lie of the land and the site of the bowling green (see plan). The latter was described in an advertisement as 'commanding a fine view, unequalled in the district, of the surrounding country, overlooking the town of Huddersfield and the far distant hills.'

On 17th July 1871 a Mr. Youens made an ascent from the gardens in his balloon, 'Stanley'. This may seem an unlikely name for a balloon but it was probably named after Henry Morton Stanley who was conducting his famous search for Dr. Livingstone in that year. Taking place, as it did, almost a hundred years after the first ever manned balloon ascent, this was not the first flight to be seen in Huddersfield (that happened in October 1828) but it was a rare enough event to attract curious and excited crowds and no doubt hundreds of people strolled along the flag-bedecked terraces and promenades that day, eagerly awaiting Mr. Youens' daring ascent.



Belle Vue c. 1880

In 1878, a new proprietor, George Hesketh, made extensive improvements to the hotel and gardens. Among his innovations were ornamental flower beds, rose gardens, rock gardens with alpine plants and glass houses containing what he described as a rare natural history collection. For children there were swings, roundabouts and rocking horses and he encouraged the newly fashionable pastime of 'pick-nicking' by providing hot water and cups and saucers. There was also a large open-air platform where customers could round off a delightful day in the country, dancing to the music of a brass band. Such was the Belle Vue in the high summer of Victorian England.

George Hesketh's stay at the Belle Vue was comparatively short for he left in 1884 to become proprietor of the Queen Hotel, Huddersfield. After his departure the pleasure gardens were less vigorously maintained. In 1901 a new tramway was laid from Fartown Bar via Bradford Road and Ashbrow Road to Sheepridge. Ironically, this new service which certainly improved access to the Belle Vue also brought about its decline. Tramways tended to stimulate suburban development and soon after 1901 terrace houses began to appear in Ashbrow Road, some of them built on part of the pleasure gardens. By the 1920s only the bowling green remained of the former outdoor amenities.

Today, the bowling green is overgrown and disused, coarse grass and rough bushes grow where once roses, alpine and exotic plants bloomed and it takes great effort of the imagination to picture the scene as it must have been when Mr. Youens ascended in his balloon or when the young in heart danced the evening away to the accompaniment of a 'splendid' brass band.

*From the Belle Vue drive back along Ashbrow Road and turn left into Sheepridge Road to rejoin the main route of the tour.*

## THE RIALTO (32)

Two hundred and ninety yards (266M) beyond Ashbrow Road the Catholic Church on the left was once the Rialto Cinema. Designed by J.H. Freer of Fenay Bridge the Rialto was the last pre-war cinema to be built in the Huddersfield area. The opening ceremony was performed by Councillor and Mrs. James Gregson on Thursday, 3rd November 1938. The film chosen for the occasion was Winifred Holtby's 'South Riding' and among those present at the ceremony was Miss Joan Ellum, a member of the cast.

## WIGGAN LANE (33)

Two hundred and ten yards (190M) past the Catholic Church turn into Wiggan Lane on the left. It is here that the old route swings northwards to make its way across the edge of Sheepridge Common towards Toothill and the river crossing at Rastrick. The name 'Wiggan' was probably originally 'wiggin', an old north country name for the mountain ash.

The industrial buildings on the right hand side of Wiggan Lane, originally Wigganfield Mills, were for many years the premises of the Huddersfield Sanitary Steam Laundry, one of two large laundries operating in Sheepridge during the first half of the twentieth century. Soon after the old laundry, Wiggan Lane bears right and then left. This lower section remained undeveloped and unsurfaced until the 1920s when the bungalows on the right were built. The semi-detached houses on the left followed a decade later.

So far there has been no great feeling of age along the old route we have followed from Fartown to Sheepridge but at the bottom of Wiggan Lane notice the path straight ahead. This part of the old road remains much as it must have been in Ogilby's time, and it is full of interest. We therefore include an optional walk to Toothill at this point which not only offers a view of road conditions before the turnpike era but also allows a glimpse of the locality from what may be an unaccustomed view-point. The total length of the walk is about three miles there and back (see map p.47). Readers who do not wish to take the option should drive back up Wiggan Lane, turn left into Deighton Road and turn to page 51.

## OLD LANE (O.W.)

*Leave your car at the bottom of Wiggan Lane (taking care that it is secure) and follow the path ahead as it begins to climb gently uphill.*

From here to Bradley Road the old highway is called Old Lane and the obvious question with such a name is how old is 'old'? The most likely answer is that the lane was so designated soon after it was eclipsed in the 1830s by the Wibsey, Low Moor and Huddersfield turnpike (the Bradford Road of today) which took travellers in much the same direction as the old highway although to a newer crossing of the Calder at Brighouse. Occasionally in our area an old house took the name of the highway near to which it was built

and it could be that the original name of the lane is preserved in the name of the house, Bradley Gate, soon to be seen on the right. In the north the word 'gate' for a street or road derives from the Old Norse 'gata'. It is most familiar in old towns but it was also used for routes across open country and there are several such to be found in the Huddersfield area, at Marsden for example and at Kirkburton, Kirkheaton, Farnley and Lepton. Invariably, old long distance highways undergo a number of name changes before they terminate and certainly the ultimate destination of this lane (or gate) would be perceived locally as less important than its more immediate destination, Bradley.

The 1854 O.S. map shows five buildings near to Bradley Gate (the house) two of which were on the opposite side of the lane. These are now gone but in summer their sites can be located by the abundance of nettles growing there. Stinging nettles are most interesting plants. They are greedy for phosphate and grow where people and their animals have lived and left their waste - in stables, barns and styes and in ash pits, privies and rubbish heaps. When people move out, their buildings may be demolished or just tumble down into ruin and disappear but the phosphate they leave behind lasts for hundreds of years in non-acid soil. Nettles are quick to colonise such phosphate rich areas and often they are the only obvious indicators of long abandoned living sites.

Beyond Bradley Gate and through the stile, Old Lane continues to climb between open meadows on the right and the eastern end of Lower Fell Greave Wood on the left. In winter and spring it is easy to discover the footings of a substantial wall which once separated the wood from the lane. A little higher up, the old hedgerow on the right has at least five species: hawthorne, elder, alder, sycamore and beech. Notice here evidence of layering, the age-old method of setting a hedgerow. About a hundred and twenty yards (109M) beyond the second gate there is, through a gap in the hedge, a fine view over Dalton Bank to Kirkburton, Whitley and Emley. Nearer, the modern houses across the field on the right stand on or near the site of Bradley Wood Sanatorium, an isolation hospital where victims of tuberculosis were treated.

As we are passing so close to the site of the sanatorium we include a short reminiscence by Mrs. Ellen Ramsden (former Matron of St. Luke's Hospital, Crosland Moor) who, as a young nurse, worked at Bradley Wood

during the 1940s. Mrs. Ramsden says:

'It was an old style sanatorium, open cubicles with a covered walk-way to give the staff a little overhead cover whilst working but open to the elements at the front. At the end of the cubicle ward there were four to six huts on the lawn occupied by men, one man to a hut. The accommodation was basic, very spartan.

As there was no medication to treat tuberculosis at this time, treatment involved a long regime of bed-rest, fresh air and good food. It was not always successful.

The cubicle doors were open all day but closed at night. The patients had high temperatures in the evening leading to quite severe night sweats. When the cubicle doors were folded back on cold winter mornings and the patients sat up to wash, steam would rise from their hot sweaty bodies.

The advent of streptomycin in the early 1950s was the breakthrough in drug treatment which started the cure for T.B.'

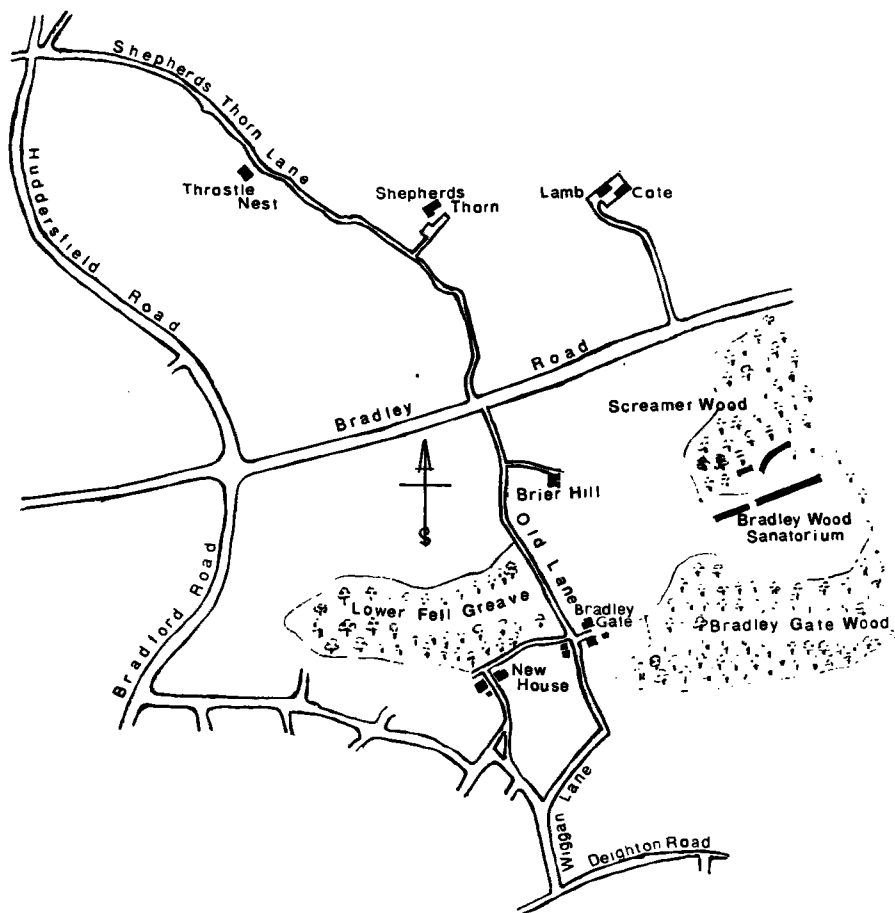
Continuing up the lane, about a hundred yards (91M) further on, a wide overgrown footpath once led to the small settlement of Brier Hill which stood some fifty yards (45M) to the right of Old Lane. Little remains of the buildings now but the site can be easily identified by an abundance of nettles.

After another tenth of a mile Old Lane reaches Bradley Road. This too is an ancient route, a section of an old north-south highway which, in 1759, was upgraded to become part of the Elland to Dewsbury turnpike. A bar house on this turnpike, which stood on the left hand side of Old Lane at its junction with Bradley Road, survived until the 1940s. It was presumably placed there to catch travellers entering the turnpike by way of Old Lane.

At the end of Old Lane we leave the unspoilt section of the old highway behind. For various reasons a number of changes have occurred in recent years along the next section but here and there pockets of the past remain and the route itself is for the most part unchanged.

From the other side of Bradley Road the old highway, now surfaced with fine aggregate, continues as Shepherds Thorn Lane. After skirting a large field on the left the lane picks up its previous north-easterly heading, the course unaltered since earliest times. Recently, however, the view to the right has changed dramatically. Where once were fields and pasture belonging

to Shepherds Thorn and Lamb Cote farms (see map) are now the tees, fairways, bunkers and greens of Bradley Park Golf Club. Lamb Cote farm has gone but Shepherds Thorn survives, the house dating from the early nineteenth century but built on an older site. About a quarter of a mile along the lane a wide path to the right leads to Shepherds Thorn but our route follows the narrow path to the left. The path soon widens out and the original width of the old highway may be seen between a high bank on the left and a low bank on the right. Here again in the hedgerow there are good examples of layering. From this part of the lane there are fine views towards Clifton and Brighouse.





All the way along Shepherds Thorn Lane the continual roar of traffic can be clearly heard and soon the source of the noise is reached. The motorway (M62) cuts across and destroys the line of the old highway for a short section but a bridge preserves the right of way. Once across the bridge turn left and, after seventy yards (64M), look back across the motorway to see how the lane on the opposite side aligns with the path ahead. It is at this point that we rejoin the old route.

Just beyond a field gate on the right the lane begins a steep descent to Bradley Park Dike. Here, until very recently, there was fine example of a raised paved causey. Causeys were laid to assist the passage of people and animals over difficult terrain and for obvious reasons they are often found where there is a steep gradient. Sadly, of the forty or so original stones only two now remain, the rest presumably having been thoughtlessly removed to make someone's garden path or patio.

In the valley bottom Bradley Park Dike, which is the boundary between Bradley and Rastrick, is culverted beneath the lane. From this point the lane has recently been surfaced to improve access to the camp in Bradley Park Wood. On the left, as the road begins to climb out of the valley, some low walls and an arched cellar are all that remain of the small settlement at Throstle Nest but in summer the extent of the site is, of course, marked by nettles. On the right, as the lane continues to climb, the raised verge of a causey can be seen but again only one or two stones survive. Near the top of the rise however, old stones have been re-set and at present the causey remains intact.

Soon, Shepherds Thorn Lane meets the turnpike road that superseded it, now, in this section, called Huddersfield Road. *This is the turn round point of the walk.* From the other side of Huddersfield Road the route of the older highway continues straight ahead along Toothill Lane for a short distance and then turns right down Toothill Bank to the old bridge at Rastrick where there has been a crossing of the Calder since at least the thirteenth century.

*From the turn round point follow the same route back towards Sheepridge. On the way we include a short diversion to look at Newhouse Hall.*

*On reaching the houses at Bradley Gate take the narrow footpath to the right (marked by a red arrow on a wooden post) into Lower Fell Greave Wood. The footpath soon widens out and crosses a muddy stream by a modern footbridge. Across the bridge follow the path which skirts the bottom of the*

*wood and after about a tenth of a mile notice, on the left, Newhouse Hall, its mullions, string courses and finials proclaiming it to be a house of considerable age. Turn left along a narrow path which soon widens out into a track. Follow the track past the side of the house which may be glimpsed through the trees. Continue along the track for another sixty five yards (59M) and then turn left through a gap in a low wall. From here a distinct path leads back to Old Lane and your car.*

## NEWHOUSE HALL

Newhouse, like the other 'houses' in the area was, in its earliest days, occupied by a family of Brooks. During the sixteenth century several branches of the Brook family were engaged in the textile industry - a list of local manufacturers dated 1533 mentions five Brooks one of whom was Thomas Brook of Newhouse. In his will, proved in June 1554, Thomas Brook describes Newhouse as being recently built by himself. He was succeeded at Newhouse by his son, grandson and great grandson, all called Thomas. The fourth Thomas made extensive improvements to the original house including building the west wing.

It might be of interest to readers (especially any called Brook) to know that the tombstone of this Thomas Brook has survived and may be seen in the south east corner of Huddersfield Parish Churchyard near to the vestry steps. Its badly weathered but quaint inscription reads:

'Here resteth the bodie of Thomas Brook the Elder  
of Newhouse gentleman who was buried November 17  
Ao Dni 1638.

In the chvrch myllitant I fovt so vnshaken  
That to the chvrch trivmphant I am taken  
I am one oth Chvrch still  
Greve not frends to know me advansed higher  
Whilst I stayed I prayed  
And now I sing in the quier.

Act Svae 87

As the fourth Thomas Brook's eldest son, Thomas Brook 'the younger', had died unmarried in 1637 he was succeeded at Newhouse by his only surviving son, Joshua. Joshua Brook was the last direct male heir to live at

Newhouse. After his death in 1652 his widow, Sarah, lived there with her daughters and the family's status at this time is indicated by the fact that in the Hearth Tax of 1664 she paid tax on no fewer than eight hearths. Only one person in Huddersfield paid more tax than Mrs. Brook.

After Sarah Brook's death in 1683 the house and estates passed to her daughter, Helen, who married John Townley, and from her to her descendants the Wilkinsons and the Whites. In 1751 the house was sold to the Thornhill family who afterwards let it out to tenants. A century later it was purchased by Sir John William Ramsden who rebuilt the east wing. It was probably at this time that Newhouse became Newhouse Hall. When the Ramsdens sold their land and property to Huddersfield Corporation in 1920 Newhouse Hall was included in the sale and it remained council property until 1996 when part of it was sold to the von Mickwitz family. According to a recent newspaper account Mr. & Mrs. von Mickwitz are fully aware of the historical importance of the house and determined to carry out the structural work necessary to ensure its survival.

As with most old houses, there are many stories and legends attached to Newhouse. There is an unlikely tradition that Oliver Cromwell slept there after the Battle of Marston Moor in 1644 and a more believable account that the Luddites raided the house in 1812. The house is said to have a number of secret panels, behind which, of course, is hidden treasure. Secret chambers are supposed to have been used from time to time to conceal religious and political fugitives who used a secret underground passage to make their escape when danger threatened. Two murders, said to have been committed in the house at different times, went undetected as the bodies of the victims were concealed in the cellar and never discovered. And, of course, the house is haunted. In the mid seventeenth century, the story goes, a daughter of the house fell in love with a young man who lived at Toothill. Unfortunately, her father disapproved of her suitor and forbade the two to meet. Undeterred, the young man trained his dog to carry love letters to and from his beloved. One night her father discovered the dog and the letter it was carrying and with a stroke of his sword cut off the poor animal's head whereupon it immediately turned and ran headless through Fell Greave Wood. Discouraged, the young man left the district and his sweetheart, naturally, pined away and died of a broken heart. For many years after these supposed events the ghost

of a young lady was occasionally seen walking through Newhouse and the ghost of a headless dog terrified anyone rash enough to enter Fell Greave Wood on moonlit nights!

Hidden in its leafy hollow and unknown to many people in Huddersfield, Newhouse Hall, whatever the truth of the legends, represents four and half centuries of local history. We should be grateful therefore that there are people like Mr. & Mrs. von Mickwitz who are willing to shoulder a great financial burden to preserve what is of interest to us all.

Should our readers wish to know more about Newhouse Hall they will find a detailed account in Philip Ahier's 'Studies in Local Topography' which may be consulted at the local studies department of the Central Library in Huddersfield.

*At the end of the walk drive back up Wiggan Lane and turn left into Deighton Road.*

In about two fifths of a mile, shortly before turning into Whitacre Street, notice, in the garden of Deighton Working Men's Club, a war memorial dedicated to the memory of local men who were killed in the First World War. One hundred and fifty seven names are inscribed on the monument and they speak more eloquently than any words of ours could do of the sacrifice, heartbreak and futile waste of that terrible conflict.

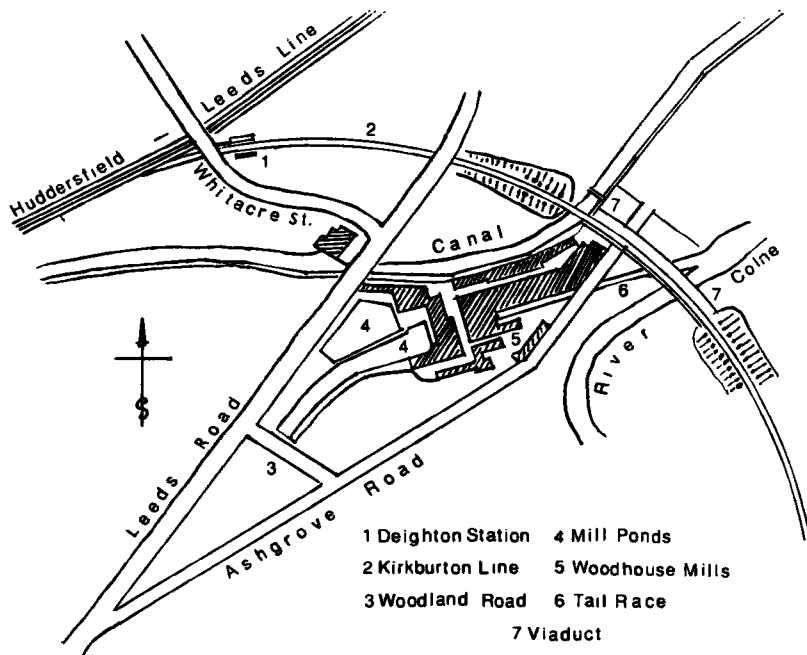
## WHITACRE STREET (34)

It seems likely that Whitacre Street, which was constructed in the late 1860s, was so named in honour of John Whitacre of Woodhouse who died in 1869.

Between Deighton and Leeds Road, Whitacre Street crosses three railway lines, two of which are now defunct. The bridges crossing each line have the massive rock-faced stone parapets so typical of railway architecture and are easily recognisable. The first, about a hundred yards (91M) down the hill, spans the short-lived Midland Railway branch line which was completed in 1910 and abandoned in 1937 (see D.O.H.1.i.No.7).

A hundred yards further on, the second bridge crosses the main Leeds to Huddersfield line and it was somewhere in this vicinity that the first sod of Huddersfield's first railway was cut on 10th October 1845. The third bridge, which crosses the old Kirkburton branch line, can be seen soon after the

second, where the road narrows. Between the second and third bridges is the entrance to Deighton Station.



When the main line was completed in 1847 a footbridge, called Falls Bridge, was constructed on the site occupied by the present bridge to give access to the land on both sides of the railway. Falls Bridge had no approach roads and it was not until the late 1860s, when Deighton Station was opened on the Kirkburton branch line, that Whitacre Street was built to provide access to the station. The original Deighton Station was on the east (left hand) side of Whitacre Street. A steep flight of steps on each side of the line led down to the station from street level and although these have now been removed the old entrances can still be located by the slightly different wallstones and the concrete copings in the parapet on the left hand side of the road. Messrs. Ember Rentals Ltd., van and truck hire, now occupy the site of the old station, all traces of which have disappeared except for a short stretch of the platform almost hidden in the undergrowth. It was only after

the branch line closed that the present Deighton Station was opened as an unmanned halt on the main line.

The Kirkburton branch line opened on 6th October 1867 and, although the passenger service was withdrawn in 1930, it continued to be used by goods trains until 1965 (see D.O.H.1.i.No.80.). From Deighton the line described a wide arc across Leeds Road, the canal, the river and the lower Colne Valley and then continued in a southerly direction via Kirkheaton and Fenay Bridge, where there were stations, to Kirkburton.

The line was carried across the canal and the river by a seven arch viaduct which was approached on each side by steep embankments. The viaduct survives but, because of its secluded position, it is not well known. It may, however, be easily reached from this point of the tour and we give details of its location in our next option which also includes the site of Woodhouse Mill and a short walk to look at some interesting masons' marks on a canal bridge (see map p.52). Readers who do not wish to take the option should turn left at bottom of Whitacre Street into Leeds Road.

#### THE VIADUCT (O.D.W.)

*At the bottom of Whitacre Street turn right into Leeds Road and after 220 yards (200M) turn left into Woodland Road.*

In 1890 a tramline was laid along Woodland Road and Ashgrove Road to carry refuse to the sewage works. The project was short lived as the track was lifted in June 1902 just before the tramway system was electrified.

Stop just before the second lamp post on the left hand side of Woodland Road to look over the wall at Woodhouse Mill dam. In its early days Woodhouse Mill was water powered and because the fall of the river is slight in the lower Colne Valley it was necessary to dig a long head race to bring water to the mill wheel. A weir was constructed half a mile upstream and sluices were installed to control the supply of water along the goit to the dam. More sluices at the dam regulated the flow of water onto the mill wheel and the spent water was returned to the river by way of a much shorter tail race (see map) remains of which still survive. The long head race, however, disappeared many years ago.

*Drive on to the T junction and turn left into Ashgrove Road.*

Woodhouse Mill, which was owned by John Whitacre of Sun Woodhouse

and later by George Thomson of Woodhouse Hall, occupied the site now used for storing cars. Just before a short brick wall on the left, stop to look at the remains of the tail race which ran diagonally under the road to reach the river just beyond the viaduct. The tail race and the brick wall and, of course, the dam are all that remain of the once sizeable Woodhouse Mill.

Although it has been abandoned for thirty years the viaduct, built of Staffordshire blue bricks, is still a handsome structure. Its construction though was not without its difficulties. By January 1866 the first and second arches (to the left of Ashgrove Road) were completed up to the string courses, the timber centre supports having been removed some time previously. The other arches were, at this time, in various stages of completion. Early in February, a small subsidence of about two inches was noticed in the second arch and it was intended, after the other arches had been completed, to repair this section of the work. Unfortunately, a long period of heavy rain followed by a sharp frost further weakened the structure and at about two o'clock in the morning of 15th February the second arch fell pulling the first down with it. As a result of the collapse the canal underneath was blocked and closed to traffic for several days. Rebuilding started immediately and the viaduct was completed, without further incident, ready for the official inspection which was carried out on 13th September 1867.

*To see the canal bridge and the masons' marks mentioned above leave your car in Ashgrove Road and walk along the rough path to the left which runs in front of the viaduct. At the canal bank turn left and walk a short distance along the towing path to Woodhouse Mill Bridge (the bridge under Leeds Road).*

From earliest times masons incised their own particular symbol on the bed of the stones they dressed so that their work could be identified and paid for. The dressed stone would then be laid with the symbols concealed. Very occasionally, even in the most prestigious buildings, a mistake would be made and here and there in some of our great cathedrals it is possible to spot a mason's mark. However, on more modern, mundane canal and railway structures unconcealed masons' marks are fairly common and more than twenty have been identified along the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, many of them appearing over and over again on the various locks and bridges.

Although there are fewer marks to be found along the Ramsden Canal,

Woodhouse Mill Bridge on its own almost makes up for the lack, as a close inspection will reveal. This is, in fact, the only bridge we have found where there are masons' symbols on most of the stones. In addition and most unusually the numbers of the arch courses up to the eighth course at least are marked on the stones. As all the stones in an arched bridge are wedge shaped it must have been a deliberate policy to mark the face of each stone rather than the bed but the reason why this was done baffles even the one of us who spent many years in the building industry!

*From the bridge return to your car, follow the same route back to the bottom of Whitacre Street and continue along Leeds Road on the main route of the tour.*

### LEEDS ROAD (35)

In 1765, an Act was passed authorising a turnpike road from Huddersfield via Bradley to Birstall where it would join up with a road from Leeds. For the most part this involved improving and widening existing roads but, unusually for the time, the section between Huddersfield and Bradley was a completely new route. With its construction Huddersfield for the first time gained direct access to the crossing of the Calder at Cooper Bridge (see D.O.H.1.ii.No.15). On a wider scale the new turnpike provided a through and fairly direct route from Leeds to Manchester via the turnpike road over Standedge.

Ninety yards (83M) beyond Whitacre Street the Kirkburton branch line crossed Leeds Road on its way to and from the viaduct. Although the bridge has gone the brick abutments remain and may be easily spotted on both sides of the road.

### HOLLIDAYS (36)

Just after the railway bridge, the factory on the right hand side of the road perpetuates the family name of the man to whom must go the credit for establishing, nearly one hundred and fifty years ago, dyestuffs and chemicals as one of Huddersfield's principal industries (see D.O.H.1.ii.No.13). Read Holliday died in 1889, many years before this factory was founded, but the events that led to its foundation are of interest and we believe they are worth recounting here.



For seventy years, Read Holliday and his sons played an important part in the development of the chemical and dyestuffs industry and their factory at Turnbridge grew and prospered. In April 1901, the last of Read Holliday's five sons, Robert, died and he was succeeded as Chairman of the Company by Mr. (later Sir) Joseph Turner who had joined the firm in 1881 at the age of twelve. Six months later, Read Holliday's grandson, Lionel Brook Holliday, joined the Board.

L.B. Holliday, son of Read Holliday's eldest son, Thomas, was born in 1880 and he was destined from birth to follow his grandfather and father into the family business. After leaving his public school, Uppingham, he was sent to Owens College, Manchester, one of only two institutions in the country at that time specialising in teaching chemistry. From there he proceeded to Germany where he completed his education at Bonn University. Thus he received the best scientific and technical education available at the time. After he joined the Board of Read Hollidays in 1901 he was instrumental in helping the company towards a new prosperity and doubtless he would have succeeded as Chairman of the Company had not a world war intervened.

During the early years of this century, although dyestuffs production increased in this country, the undoubted leader in the field was Germany where the system of technical and scientific education and research was far superior to that in Britain. In 1914 it was stated that three quarters of the dyestuffs used in this country was produced in Germany and when war broke out between the two countries, in August of that year, the cessation of supplies of German dyes resulted in a great deal of panic. At Hollidays, for example, the pressure for a dye called Sulphur Black was so great that, late in 1914, customers waited with their own carts at the gates of the Turnbridge works and accepted unground, untested Sulphur Black lumps as they were knocked hot out of the drying trays. Like most emergency steps this was unsatisfactory as the lumps rapidly decomposed, became acid and lost strength while some casks actually burst into flames in the dyehouses. The shortage of dyes was such that obtainable prices frequently made it more profitable for a dyer to sell his dyes than to use them. It was well known at Hollidays, for example, that one dyeing group made £80,000 in one year by selling on their dyes.

Such a situation led to searching political and press comment as a result of which the Board of Trade announced, in December 1914, that the

Government was prepared to assist an effort to establish a factory for the large scale manufacture of dyes and intermediates. This resulted, in July 1915, in the amalgamation of Read Hollidays with Levinsteins of Manchester under the name British Dyes Ltd. Sir Joseph Turner was appointed manager of the new company and L.B. Holliday was offered a place on the Board. Holliday however did not take up the offer as, at the outbreak of war, he had immediately joined the army, serving with the Duke of Wellington's Regiment in France where he soon achieved the rank of Major.

In early 1915, the shortage of supplies of explosives in this country was extremely grave and this situation made Holliday, with his technical knowledge, an extremely valuable man. Consequently, at the suggestion of Lord Moulton, then Head of the Department of Explosive Supply, Holliday was recalled from France and asked to undertake the manufacture of picric acid. As it had been his intention to carry on the family name in business after the war he readily agreed.

Late in 1915, the Government built a small factory on an isolated site at Bradley (now part of the sewage works) and work commenced under Holliday's management on the manufacture of the explosive. In its first year the factory produced one hundred tons of picric acid per week which was conveyed to the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, every night by special train.

Simultaneously Major Holliday acquired the site here at Deighton from the Ramsden Estate. His intention was to eventually fill the site with a dyestuffs factory. Manufacture at Deighton commenced early in 1916 and during the period of the war the Major, as he was invariably known, with a total labour force of thirty, produced a number of wool dyes specifically made for the dyeing of uniform cloth.

The site at Deighton was ideally situated as it was adjacent to the main Leeds Road and the railway, canal and river. It was not long before the firm had its own private railway sidings and the canal was used during the war by barges bringing acid from Widnes and nitro toluene from Castleford. After the war the canal continued to be used to bring in intermediates, mainly from Germany, and its use only ceased during the Second World War.

Throughout the inter-war years the firm grew steadily as more plant was erected and new processes were introduced. The total labour force rose during this period from thirty to more than seven hundred. By the early 1930s the

pay of the process workers had risen from the sixpence per hour of the war years to elevenpence per hour. During these years the Major played an important and active part on the two committees formed to regulate the dyestuffs industry in this country.

During the Second World War Hollidays once again contributed to the country's war effort when the Government built a small plant at the factory for the manufacture of Carbonite which was used in explosives to slow down the reaction of the explosion. After the war, sales of dyestuffs and intermediates increased annually and new markets were found all over the world as the firm kept well apace with all the new developments in the synthetic dyestuffs field.

Major Holliday, a lover of horses, maintained several teams of draught horses for carting products direct to local dyehouses and, long after wagons had taken over the delivery work, horses continued to be used for moving goods within the factory. It was said of the Major that if he discovered any of his horses in a distressed condition he would instantly dismiss the teamster responsible.

Major Holliday was a well known and successful breeder of race horses and his ambition to win a classic race was achieved on 1st June 1951 when his horse, Neasham Belle, ridden by Stanley Clayton, won the Oaks at Epsom. On 9th July 1951, to celebrate his win, the Major took his entire workforce to Blackpool where he provided lunch and tea at the Winter Gardens - an event that perhaps one or two of our readers will remember.

Shortly before his death the Major became involved in a legal argument between Huddersfield Corporation, Imperial Chemical Industries and his own firm. Hollidays had always taken water out of the river Colne for cooling purposes and put it back downstream. In the early 1960s the Corporation decided to apply for an Act of Parliament (the Huddersfield Water Act) to allow I.C.I. to do the same. But the situation of the I.C.I. works, only a few hundred yards up stream from Hollidays, meant that had this been allowed the cooling water, when it reached Hollidays, would still be warm. The Major decided to fight, maintaining that such action would be detrimental to his firm's interests. After much discussion and advice from independent engineers, I.C.I.'s engineers declared themselves impressed with Holliday's arguments and the case was as good as won. Sadly, Major Holliday died

before the proposal was finally dropped.

Lionel Brook Holliday died on 17th December 1965 and control of the firm passed to his son, L. Brook Holliday. By 1980 the firm was in difficulties and in October 1981 the bank called in the receivers. Messrs L.B. Holliday and Sons Ltd., closed down in February 1982. When the assets were gathered in all creditors were paid in full. Shortly afterwards new owners started trading as Hollidays Dyes and Chemicals Ltd., and thus the name Holliday remains prominent in the synthetic dyestuffs industry of Great Britain.

## OAK ROAD (37)

After the chemical works, continue along Leeds Road and in three quarters of a mile look out for the Woodman Inn on the right. Just after the inn fork left into Oak Road (s.p. Colnebridge and Kirkheaton) which was part of the 1765 turnpike. This short section was replaced in 1824 by the present main road which follows a straighter route between the Woodman and the White Cross Inn at Bradley.

In Oak Road notice, on the left, a charming mid-eighteenth century cottage. This, according to the authors of 'On the Trail of the Luddites', was once a beerhouse where local Luddites met and plotted their attacks.

At the end of Oak Road turn right into Bradley Road and continue down the hill to the traffic lights. Bradley Road, part of an old north-south route, was turnpiked following an Act of 1759 'for the repairing and widening of the road from Dewsbury to Ealand.' Notice to the left, the White Cross Inn built at a convenient place to serve both the Leeds and Dewsbury turnpikes.

The traffic lights at the bottom of Bradley Road stand on a site once occupied by the Bradley tram terminus waiting room, a wooden octagonal building with a conical roof and arched windows. Such shelters, always painted olive green, were a familiar part of Huddersfield's tramway scene. They were much appreciated by passengers and never subjected to the mindless vandalism inflicted on so many of our modern bus shelters.

Steam trams started running from Huddersfield via Northgate and Leeds Road to Bradley on 15th April 1892. The terminus was in front of the White Cross Inn where a turning circle was laid, one of only two in the entire local tramway system, the other being in St. George's Square. Ten years later the line was electrified and the first electric tram ran to Bradley on 13th July 1902.

## **BRADLEY 'CO-OP' (38)**

Branch number ten of the Huddersfield Industrial Co-operative Society opened in Bradley in 1875 in a rented cottage. This served until 1889 when the directors of the Society were confident enough to build new premises at the corner of Leeds Road and Colne Bridge Road. The new store was designed by Joseph Berry the Society's favoured architect. Over a hundred years later the building, now occupied by Mill Carpets Ltd., is little changed and the original loading door, landing and cat-head have survived. The undoubted success of the Co-operative movement was due in no small part to the dividend paid to customers; when branch number ten opened, for example, the dividend was a generous three shillings in the pound.

## **COLNE BRIDGE ROAD (39)**

It is at Colne Bridge Road that our tour joins the second branch road mentioned in our introduction. On his map Ogilby notes a road at Almondbury leading to Colne Bridge. Although he gives no details of its course it is likely that the branch followed the present day Bank End Lane, Greenhead Lane, Dalton Green Lane, Nettleton Road and Dalton Bank Road to Colne Bridge. This route which afforded access to the bridges over the Colne and the Calder would be a local outlet from Almondbury to the market towns in the north east. Of course, as we follow the old route to Almondbury we are travelling towards the London Road rather than away from it as we did at Hillhouse.

Immediately after entering Colne Bridge Road notice the terrace houses on the left. In the mid-nineteenth century, long before the houses were built, a small colliery, called Upper Staith Coal Pit, was operating here. Horse drawn carts carried the coal along a wooden train road to a small wharf on the nearby Ramsden Canal where it was loaded on to coal barges. The tram road is, of course, long gone but the line it took has been preserved, probably inadvertently, in the gap between the last terrace house and the Working Men's Club.

A little further on, to the right of a new traffic roundabout, the site of Colne Bridge House is now almost obliterated. The house, a handsome Georgian residence which sat comfortably in its large wooded gardens, was recently demolished in the face of some local opposition. In the early

nineteenth century Colne Bridge House was occupied by Thomas Atkinson, a member of a wealthy family of mill owners, who had their roots in Cumberland. Atkinson was one of the first local mill owners to make use of shearing frames when he installed them in his factory at Bradley Mills in 1800. Like his friend, William Horsfall, Atkinson was outspoken in his condemnation of the Luddites and their machine breaking activities and in 1812 the lives of both men were threatened in a letter directed to Mr. Justice Radcliffe at Milnsbridge. The letter, signed 'General Snipshears', stated that '...those who are among our greatest persecutors, Mr. Horsfall and Mr. Atkinson will soon be numbered among the dead.' It was received by Mr. Radcliffe on 27th April 1812 the day before William Horsfall was murdered at Crosland Moor by four Luddites. Atkinson, however, was spared probably because the assassins prudently decided to lie low to avoid the hue and cry raised after Horsfall's murder.

After the traffic roundabout the road passes over the railway and the Ramsden Canal. Our next option offers a short walk to see the confluence of the rivers Colne and Calder, the entrance to the canal from the river at lock number one and the site of Colne Bridge Mills where a disastrous fire in 1818 killed seventeen girls. Readers who do not wish to take the option should continue along Colne Bridge Road and turn right at its junction with Dalton Bank Road.

#### RIVER AND CANAL (O.W.)

*Just after the canal bridge turn left into an unnamed road, drive past the buildings on the right and park by the side of the river. Walk along the metalled road, keeping the river on the right, and then take the wide rough footpath towards a metal bridge. Continue along the path under the railway bridge and at the far side of the bridge walk over the rough ground on the right to a metal rail from where there is a good view of the confluence of the two rivers.*

To anyone coming upon the scene for the first time this wide stretch of water (often complete with swans) will be a pleasant surprise, a placid, almost rural prospect in what is predominantly an industrial area. It must be admitted, however, that if the wind blows from a certain quarter one's enjoyment of the scene may be tempered by the pervasive emissions coming from the nearby

sewage works.

An interesting event took place here on Wednesday 1st August 1866 when a life boat was launched on the River Calder near to the confluence. Public subscription had raised the thousand pounds necessary to purchase and equip the boat and before the launching it had been paraded round the town. The ceremony was performed by a Miss Cresswell who named the boat *Huddersfield* on behalf of the women of Huddersfield. After the vessel had been put through its paces to the satisfaction of the spectators it was taken by road to its permanent station at Happisburgh, Norfolk.

Before leaving the confluence notice a single storey house on the opposite side of the river. This stands on the Cooper Bridge Cut, part of the Calder-Hebble Navigation. Unlike a canal, which is a wholly artificial waterway, a navigation is a river made navigable by the provision of locks and short artificial channels, often called cuts. The Calder-Hebble Navigation dates from 1758 when an Act was passed authorising improvements on the River Calder from Wakefield to the River Hebble at Sowerby Bridge. As part of the improvements the Cooper Bridge Cut was constructed to avoid a shallow unnavigable bend in the river. Entry to and exit from the cut at the south east end is through a lock some eight feet deep and the house mentioned above, which stands hard by the lock, is an excellent example of an early lock keeper's cottage.

The navigations and canals of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries played no small part in the industrial evolution of the country. Before the advent of railways and modern roads the quickest and most reliable way of transporting goods was by water and as early as the sixteenth century the limits of navigation on some rivers had been extended by the development of locks. As industry expanded in the mid eighteenth century engineers such as Brindley and Telford recognised the possibility and profitability of extending the system by constructing canals to reach industrial centres far removed from navigable waterways. Because water offers little resistance to movement and because towing paths have no significant gradients a single barge horse could pull a large heavy load which, if taken over the steep, muddy, rutted roads of the times, would have required several teams of wagons and horses. Of course, canals have their drawbacks as ice in winter and water shortage in summer can temporarily bring traffic to a halt but

nevertheless they proved a cheap and reasonably swift method of transportation and for a short period they became the industrial arteries of Britain.

Profits from early navigations were enormous. For example, in 1788 shareholders in the Aire and Calder Navigation were receiving dividends of twelve percent; by 1820 dividends had risen astronomically to two hundred and seventy percent. Such profits naturally stimulated other navigation and canal enterprises and the years between 1780 and 1820 have been described as the time of canal mania. Canals in the north of England constructed during those years include the Sir John Ramsden, the Leeds and Liverpool, the Rochdale and the Huddersfield Narrow, none of which was to be as profitable as the early navigations.

*Walk back to the path and follow it to the right to the canal bank. Turn right and walk along the towing path to lock number one on the Sir John Ramsden Canal where several interesting features may be seen from the lock-tail bridge.*

The opening of the Calder and Hebble navigation in 1758 put Huddersfield within reach of a navigable waterway but the four mile road journey to Cooper Bridge and the transfer of cargo from wagon to barge was costly and time consuming. Consequently, by Act of Parliament dated 9th March 1774, Sir John Ramsden and his trustees were authorised to construct a canal from the Calder at Cooper Bridge to a terminus near the King's Mill at Huddersfield. The work, which was completed in 1780 at a cost of twelve thousand pounds, resulted in a broad canal approximately three and a half miles long with a total rise of ninety three feet through nine locks. The overseer for the whole project was Luke Holt, well known locally as a bridge and navigation engineer. With the Ramsden Canal, Huddersfield gained a direct and advantageous link with Wakefield, Leeds, the Midlands and the east coast ports and although transport was slow by modern standards it was more reliable and cheaper, at one and sixpence a ton, than moving goods over the difficult roads of the times.

With the advent of railways the importance of canals declined but, unlike the Huddersfield Narrow, the Ramsden Canal remained navigable and continued to be used commercially until the 1940s.

Interest in the country's inland waterways revived in the 1960s as a result



of the growing popularity of pleasure boating. However, the Ramsden Canal, in the heart of the industrial West Riding was little regarded and it was not until September 1970 that the first pleasure boat, 'Constancy', on passage from Market Drayton, came to Huddersfield via the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, the Aire and Calder and Calder and Hebble Navigations and, of course, the Ramsden Canal. Her journey along the latter was not without incident as the locks were difficult to operate, rubbish in the water fouled the propeller and the abundant weeds caused the water-cooled engine to fail several times. Unsurprisingly, after two miles the engine would take no more and, as nightfall was approaching, desperate measures were called for. Fortunately, two temporary but intrepid members of the crew, J.R. and C.R. Beswick, volunteered to haul the boat for the last mile to Aspley Basin and thus journey's end was achieved.

Since then the canal has been improved and today it is quite common to see boats working their way towards Huddersfield, especially in September when there is a well attended annual canal festival organised by the Huddersfield Canal Society.

From the lock tail bridge notice a long weir a little downstream from lock one. This was built to ensure an adequate depth of water in front of the lock for craft entering or leaving the canal. Because the river below the lock is unnavigable boats heading down stream for Wakefield and Leeds must first travel upstream (under Leeds Road) for short distance, enter the Cooper Bridge Cut through a storm lock at the north east end and rejoin the lower reaches of the river through the lock at the south east end.

A close examination of the cottage at the side of lock one reveals features that suggest that the building was originally constructed as a warehouse with, perhaps, living accommodation for the lock-keeper under the same roof. The most obvious clue is the blocked up taking-in door once used to give access to a warehouse which probably occupied the entire first floor. On the front of the building, notice that the present central doorway was originally a much wider opening. This suggests that the left hand side of the ground floor was also used as warehouse space whilst the right hand side, once entered through the blocked up doorway, would have been the living quarters of the lock keeper and his family.

Only one other lock keeper's cottage was built on the Ramsden Canal

and this too survives. It stands at the side of the top lock at Red Doles and is probably of a later date than the cottage here. There are no indications that it was ever used as a warehouse.

## COOPER BRIDGE

One of the most obvious features to be seen from the lock tail bridge is the important road bridge which carries Leeds Road over the Calder. The present handsome structure is, clearly, a bridge of the 1930s but it stands on or near the site of a much earlier river crossing. Most local historians agree that the name 'Cooper' is a corruption of Cowford (which would be pronounced locally as Cooford) and if this is so then the earliest crossing of the Calder in these parts would be by ford.

This first bridge near to the Cowford was erected by the monks of Fountains Abbey who during the twelfth century acquired extensive lands in Bradley. Their business interests, which included grazing sheep, burning charcoal and mining the Black Bed Ironstone, were supervised by their agent from the monastic outpost at Bradley Grange. The monks had, of necessity, to build bridges to open up their estates and the bridge at the Cowford was in place before 1200. As long as the estate was profitable the timber bridge would be kept in good repair but by the fourteenth century the monks' interest in Bradley must have declined for there was, at that time, a dispute between the Manor of Wakefield and the Abbot of Fountains concerning the ruinous state of the bridge. At a Manor Court held in 1310, for example, the bridge was described as '...broken and in ruin to the grave damage of these parts and the great peril of men and animals crossing it...'. Despite frequent injunctions issued by the Court to amerce and distrain the Abbot the dispute dragged on and as late as 1366 the then Abbot was amerced six shillings and eight pence '...for not repairing the bridge over Keldre.'

Nearly three hundred years later 'Cowper Bridge', which by then had become the responsibility of the West Riding of Yorkshire, was still a matter of concern to the authorities. In April 1638 an order issued by the West Riding Court of Quarter Sessions described the ruinous state of the bridge and declared that it '...very necessarily ought to be built of stone.' Work began later that year and resulted in a bridge with a paved roadway thirteen and a half feet wide supported by two piers with cutwaters, between three

arches. Cutwaters, triangular stone projections built at the bases of piers, divide the current, thus reducing damage from erosion and debris.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century the bridge was widened and thereafter, well maintained, it served its purpose until 1936 when it was replaced by the bridge we see today.

*Leave lock number one and walk along the towpath under the railway bridge and past lock number two towards the road bridge over the canal.*

A hundred yards (91M) after leaving lock one notice a flat overgrown area in front of a pylon on the opposite side of the canal. This is the site of a small wharf where the short tram road from Upper Staith coal pit terminated.

Whilst walking under the railway bridge notice the stone abutments of the original line built in 1847 and the blue brick abutments built c. 1884 when the line was widened.

## COLNE BRIDGE MILL

Just beyond lock two a low wall along the towing path is all that remains of Colne Bridge cotton mill where, until the 1960s, many of the inhabitants of the once populous hamlet of Colne Bridge found their livelihood. It was an earlier Colne Bridge mill, owned by Thomas Atkinson of Colne Bridge House and situated nearer the river and road, that became notorious in 1818 when it was destroyed by fire and seventeen young girls died.

On Saturday 14th February 1818 at five o'clock a.m. a ten year old boy, James Thornton, was sent down to the card room in the mill to collect some rovings. Unfortunately, he lit his way with a naked candle instead of using the glass safety lamp provided for the purpose. One of the overlookers saw James disappearing with his candle and, realising the danger, ran after him. Sadly, he was too late to prevent the calamity for as he entered the card room he saw that several skips of oily cotton and card laps were already ablaze.

The overlooker retreated, closely followed by James Thornton who, panic stricken and distressed, dashed up the stairs and out of the building. So rapid was the progress of the fire that when a girl who was following close on James' heels reached the landing, the floor gave way and she dropped through into the flames. Two minutes after the fire started the stairs were ablaze and the conflagration quickly spread to the top floor and engulfed several thousand pounds of cotton stored there. The situation of the children trapped in the

upper rooms (strong local tradition holds that they were locked in) was now desperate. In an attempt to reach them, a ladder was placed against a small window at the end of the factory farthest from the seat of the fire but when the window was broken a dense column of smoke and flames drove the would-be rescuers back. No sound was heard from the children and it is likely that they were already dead, suffocated by the fumes from the burning cotton. Less than half an hour after the fire started the roof and floor fell and any lingering hope that some of the children might be found alive gave way to despair.

Of the twenty-six persons at work in the mill that night, nine escaped and seventeen perished.

Those who escaped were:

William Smith	aged 60	Mary Hay	aged 12
James Sugden	40	Sarah Moody	11
Dolly Bolton	35	David Sugden	10
Mary Smith	20	James Thornton	10
Esther Brook	18		

Those who died were:

Betty Moody	aged 18	Mary Dutton	aged 12
Nancy Carter	18	Ellen Stocks	12
Sarah North	18	Frances Sellers	12
Sarah Sheard	15	Betty Stafford	11
Mary Laycock	15	Abigail Bolton	10
Mary Denton	14	Martha Hey	9
Sarah Heeley	14	Mary Hey	9
Mary Moody	13	Betty Drake	9
Ellen Haylack	13		

The three Moodys, one of whom escaped and the other two who perished, were sisters; all the other children were from separate families.

The remains of fifteen of the children were buried together in Kirkheaton churchyard where their gravestone may still be seen. The other two, Sarah Sheard and Betty Stafford, were never found. In 1821 a tall impressive monument listing the names of all the dead was erected near to the grave. The monument was restored in 1968 to mark the Centenary of the Trade Union Congress and it serves as a graphic reminder of the times when it was

accepted that children not only worked full time in local factories - where fire precautions were unheard of - but also worked through the night.

## THE CANAL BRIDGE

The road bridge over the canal was built in 1775 and, apart from the roadway being raised and levelled in 1847, it remained much as it was for over two hundred years. As the years went by the bridge was carrying more and much heavier traffic than was ever intended and by the 1980s tell-tales inserted in the parapet revealed that it was subsiding. As the date stone in the voussoirs shows, the bridge was strengthened and widened in 1988 and, as a result, the old parapet on the Cooper Bridge side disappeared from view behind the new work.

Walking under the bridge it is easy to recognise the two phases of building but notice also a concrete insertion in the roof of the older arch where the original date stone of 1775 was set. There are also a few masons' marks to be spotted in the older structure.

On the Bradley side, the bridge remains in appearance much as it ever was and a couple of links with the past may be seen, one in the form of a few blue bricks inserted to replace stones worn by the leading ropes of barge horses and a flat steel plate fixed to protect the bricks. More obvious is the old stone dating from the year after authorisation for the canal was obtained, which was removed from its original position and reset here in 1988.

*Walk back under the bridge and turn right along a narrow footpath.*

From the end of the footpath notice ahead and slightly to the right a modern aluminium clad building. This stands on or near the site of the factory destroyed by fire in 1818. Before the mill, the site was occupied by an iron forge which was established in the early years of the seventeenth century and continued working for some two hundred years. In 1620, Colne Bridge Forge was the scene of an affray when Arthur Pilkington, lord of the manor of Bradley, and a number of his tenants assembled on Colne Bridge and mounted an attack on the ironmaster, Thomas Barneby, and his workmen in an attempt to dismantle the works, destroy the dam and stop the watercourse. Apparently this dramatic action was the result of a serious disagreement between Pilkington and Barneby over the terms of the lease. Details of the attack were discovered by local historian Dr. George Redmonds and should

readers wish to know more they will find a full and fascinating account in his book 'The Heirs of Woodsome' (1982).

Colne Bridge Forge was not the first in the area and, indeed, it is possible that it replaced an earlier forge on the same site. From earliest times an iron industry was likely to develop wherever there was an accessible source of ironstone and an adequate supply of timber for charcoal production. Until circa 1500 iron was produced by the bloomery hearth method whereby iron ore and charcoal were combined in a clay furnace fanned by hand bellows. The metal was then repeatedly reheated and subjected to vigorous hammering in order to remove the slag. The resulting slag free bars of iron were called blooms. Charcoal was the only fuel used in iron production until the eighteenth century, continuing in favour even after Abraham Darby in 1709 had carried out successful experiments using coke as the purified smelting fuel. Around the year 1200 water powered hammers were developed for beating out the semi-molten ore and access to controllable rivers and streams became important.

It is known that in the thirteenth century the monks of Fountains Abbey exploited the Black Bed Ironstone at Bradley and that they were granted rights in the woods at Bradley to take wood for charcoal. Abbey records also show that they operated a forge in the vicinity of Colne Bridge and it is quite feasible that it was sited here at the side of the river and near enough to the highway to facilitate transport of the finished product.

*From the end of the footpath turn left and walk back to your car. Drive back to Colne Bridge Road and turn left and then right into Dalton Bank Road to rejoin the main route of the tour.*

## COLNE BRIDGE (40)

*N. B. As drivers tend to go too fast for the road conditions over Colne Bridge and along Dalton Bank Road it is difficult to drive slowly or stop in this area. Readers, therefore, might prefer to explore Colne Bridge and its environs - carefully - on foot and should be prepared to drive with greater caution than usual to the end of Dalton Bank Road.*

After the bridges over the railway and the canal a third bridge carries Colne Bridge Road over the river. The earliest bridge here was, like Cooper Bridge, erected in the late twelfth century by the monks of Fountains Abbey.

These two bridges, which for the first four centuries of their existence were



flimsy wooden structures, are the earliest recorded in the Huddersfield area. In 1752, a book listing the bridges maintained by the West Riding describes Colne Bridge as 'a very good bridge'. By that time it was stone built and had a humped roadway, thirteen feet wide, supported by a central pier between two arches. The pier had cutwaters on both sides. In 1801, the bridge was doubled in width and it is obvious when viewing it from below that the new work was carried out on the north east (downstream) side as the chamfered voussoirs in the arches are of a later style than the plain voussoirs at the other side. Today, despite carrying much more and much heavier traffic than could have been imagined at the time, Colne Bridge remains much as it was in 1801 when George III was King and the country was at war with Napoleon's France.

## SETTLEMENT AT COLNE BRIDGE (41)

It is likely that some of the first cottages in the Colne Bridge area made their appearance in the seventeenth century, built to house workers at the Colne Bridge iron forge. By the second half of the nineteenth century there were houses on both sides of Dalton Bank Road, many of the occupants of which worked in the nearby textile mills, and the small community, known as Colne Bridge, was served by a public house, a Primitive Methodist Chapel and one or two small shops. A hundred years later, as the textile industry declined and mills closed people moved away and today all the buildings shown in our illustration (p.70) have gone.

Immediately after turning right into Dalton Bank Road notice the trees growing on the rough ground on the right. Here, on the corner of Colne Bridge Road and Dalton Bank Road there was once a small general store - a typical corner shop - and beyond, two short terraces, called The Landings, which were two storeys high on the road side and four storeys high on the river side. The houses facing the road were built 'back to back' with houses facing the river. Access to the latter in each terrace was by means of a through passage onto an iron balcony or landing which ran along the back of the terrace and which accounts for the name of the buildings. Below the balcony the two lower storeys, which were separate dwellings, had their entrances only a few feet above river level and must have been susceptible to flooding. Such 'back to back' and 'over and under' houses made maximum use of a small site at minimal buildings costs. Sandwiched between the two terraces was a Primitive Methodist Chapel, a small four-square building, one storey high at the front and two storeys high at the back. The houses and the chapel were demolished in the late 1960s and all that remains today to remind us that this was once a busy living site are two stone gate posts, probably the entrance to the chapel, and a few footings and stone flags hidden in the undergrowth and nettles.

## THE SPINNERS' ARMS (42)

The Royal and Ancient public house on the left was, until a few years ago, called the Spinners' Arms. It is obviously a building of the 1930s but it replaced an earlier Spinners' Arms on the same elevated site. The car park to the left of the pub and the high retaining wall cover part of the site of the



long row of terrace houses shown in our illustration.

An ugly incident occurred outside the Spinners' Arms on 29th December 1872 when a gang of at least fifteen men swarmed out at closing time, shouting and swearing. They were approached by Police Constable William Preston who suggested they go home quietly as it was Sunday. Immediately the mob turned on the constable, knocked him to the ground and kicked him insensible. His colleague, P.C. Johnson, was also attacked. Later, five men, deemed to be the ringleaders, were arrested and appeared in court on 8th January 1873. The Chairman of the Magistrates told the accused that he considered a fine would be insufficient punishment for such brutal behaviour and sentenced them to three months hard labour. According to an Examiner report of the proceedings the sentences created 'a considerable sensation' among a large number of people in court, presumably the relatives and friends of the guilty men.

#### THE MIDLAND BRANCH LINE (43)

A fifth of a mile beyond the Spinners' Arms, at the top of the rise, the massive brick parapets on both sides of the road are relics of the Midland railway line into Huddersfield. Work on the five mile branch from Mirfield to a terminus at Newtown started at the turn of the century and was completed in 1910. The line, which was the last to be built into the town, was the first to close when it was abandoned in 1937 (see D.O.H.1 i.No.7).

Another relic of the line is the blue brick fifteen arch viaduct which may be seen to the right of the road. It is a peculiarity of viaducts that, although such massive structures might be considered intrusive, many of them have over the years settled into and become an intrinsic part of their environment. Locally, for example, the viaducts at Slaithwaite, Crimble, Lockwood and Derby Dale are affectionately regarded by many people, not all of whom are railway enthusiasts, and in the opinion of the writers this handsome viaduct, even though it is beginning to decay, has a quality that improves rather than spoils the view across the lower Colne Valley.

#### PADANARAM (44)

Soon after the parapets our route passes a small settlement which rejoices in the unusual name of Padanaram. The farmhouse is shown on Jefferys'

map of 1772 as Pading Narvin, an understandable spelling mistake of an unusual name. Twenty years later the property was described in the Whitley Beaumont estate survey as a stone and slate building with two low (downstairs) rooms, two chambers and a good cellar. A detached barn stood nearby.

It was quite a common practice in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to give Biblical names to farms and Padanaram, which means field of Aram, was a country in Mesopotamia. According to the book of Genesis (c.25v.20) Isaac married Rebekah daughter of Bethiel the Syrian of Padanaram and sister to Laban the Syrian. In the fullness of time Isaac sent his son, Jacob, to Padanaram to take a wife from the daughters of Laban, his uncle (c.28v2). Whether the story of Isaac and Rebekah, Leah, Rachel and the handmaidens was of any significance to the builders of the farm it is, of course, impossible to say but it is much more likely that they simply wanted to show their knowledge of the Scriptures and liked the sound of the unusual name.

Behind the buildings on the left hand side of the road a distinct walled lane may be seen climbing the steep hillside. Called Round Hill Lane, this was once an important and direct route between Colne Bridge and Upper Heaton but now its status has declined and it has become one of the area's pleasant 'green roads'.

In 1892, members of the Corporation were much concerned with the choosing of a site for a smallpox hospital. Four possible locations were mooted: Grove Place, Dalton Grange, Mill Hill and Padanaram. After months of sometimes acrimonious discussion among councillors, who, for their own reasons, favoured one site or another, Grove Place and Dalton Grange were dismissed and by October of that year the choice was between Mill Hill and Padanaram. At a meeting held on 9th November much concern was expressed about the suitability of both sites. For example, Councillor Benjamin Broadbent, a leading proponent of Padanaram, said, '...the site, whilst being inconvenient for building upon is not a bad one for smallpox although not good for fever.' He pointed out that it did not matter how exposed a site was for smallpox and told his listeners that when smallpox occurred at sea the best place for the patient was in the rigging! He went on, 'At Sheffield, smallpox spread during fog when the air was stagnant ...it is a redeeming feature about Padanaram that there cannot be any stagnation of the air.'

In reply, Councillor Beaumont asked why if Padanaram was bad for fever should it not be bad for smallpox? He said, '... the river at the bottom of the site has been for years almost a cesspool and the sewage works which would be at its foot would have a depressing effect.' Another councillor mentioned that the sun did not shine at Padanaram until seven o'clock on a summer's evening and stressed that Mill Hill was in a healthier position. Others advocated Mill Hill on economic grounds. At the end of the lengthy meeting the vote was thirty-one in favour of Mill Hill and twenty-three in favour of Padanaram and in the following year a temporary smallpox hospital was constructed at Mill Hill.

### THE SEWAGE WORKS (45)

Whilst travelling along Dalton Bank Road notice the sewage works on the right which occupy the low lying land between the river and canal. The first attempt in Huddersfield to treat and purify its waste commenced at Deighton just over a hundred years ago and since then the works have expanded to include sites at Bradley, Cooper Bridge and Heaton Lodge, the whole stretching some three quarters of a mile down the valley.

Although several ancient civilisations developed elaborate and efficient drainage systems it was not until the nineteenth century that any serious thought was given in this country to the problem of sewage disposal. The first patent for a water closet was taken out in 1755 and by the 1870s they had been installed by many of the more prosperous members of society. Those unable to afford such luxury the vast majority - continued to use earth closets housed in small sheds called privies which were prudently situated a few yards away (downwind if possible) from the houses they served. For example, a description of the Rectory at Kirkheaton, written in 1743, mentions 'a small croft behind the Barn with other conveniences and Easement thereto belonging.' Inside a privy, a wooden bench with a hole - or holes for privies were often communal affairs - was set over an ash pit. Whilst in rural areas it was possible for each family to have its own privy, people living in the teeming and overcrowded streets, yards and alleys of Victorian industrial towns knew no such luxury and it was common for ten to twelve families to share a single privy. Such over use led to the introduction of tub closets which could be emptied manually at regular intervals.

Two old ladies of our acquaintance (sisters aged ninety and eighty-six) remember well the privy of their youth and because such testimony must soon disappear their brief recollections are worth recording here:

'We lived in Moldgreen with our parents and eight brothers and sisters. Our privy which was in the wash-house across the yard was a two seater tub closet. We shared it with eight families, some as big as our own. The smell was atrocious, there were always flies in summer and icy draughts in winter and we were frightened when we had to cross the yard at night. We had no toilet-paper in those days - if there was such a thing our parents couldn't afford it - we used newspaper which, as children, we had to tear into neat squares and thread on a string. Our aunt's family who lived in a 'better street' had a privy to themselves. We thought that was wonderful, how we envied them! Then, in the 1920s, the Corporation installed a water closet and a bath with running water in the washhouse. Although we still had to cross the yard, and share as before, it was marvellous. We were much luckier than some of our friends who were still using old fashioned privies during the war!'

In fact, earth closets continued in use in some country districts until the 1960s.

The unpleasant task of emptying tub closets was undertaken by night soil men - so called because they came under cover of darkness - who tipped the contents of the tubs onto high sided, horse drawn carts. Disposal presented the urban authorities with an enormous problem and although a few of the thousands of tons of excrement collected annually were used to manure fields, gardens and orchards the rest was probably dumped into local watercourses in the forlorn hope that it would be washed away. Not surprisingly, epidemics of cholera and typhoid were common during the nineteenth century.

The disposal of urine was less of a problem as, by its very nature, it would run away and seep into the ground. Everyone has heard of the once widespread habit of emptying chamber pots in the street but it is not, perhaps, as well known that urine, in the northern textile areas, was once a valuable commodity, not to be disposed of so lightly. From earliest days the woollen industry had need of a strong alkaline substance for the finishing process, the only source of which, until the early nineteenth century, was stale urine. This nauseous liquid, known as 'wesh' or 'weeting' was preserved by hand loom weavers for scouring their cloth or collected and stored for sale to the local fulling mills. In the early 1800s the going rate was a penny per bucket

and as an adult produced an average of two to three pints a day a family of eight or ten could, by the sale of their combined output, supplement their income by up to a shilling a week. Then, in 1830, Read Holliday perfected a method of distilling ammonia from the residual ammoniacal liquors of the local gas works and this new, cheap and hygienic scouring agent was welcomed by the textile industry. From that time the bottom fell out of the market for weeting although it continued to be used by one or two of our local mills until the 1930s.

In addition to its commercial use urine was, in the past, valued for its medical and cosmetic properties. For example, it was claimed that chilblains could be easily cured by soaking the feet in a chamber pot of warm urine. In the days before soap was widely available it was believed that regular washing in urine produced a flawless complexion and sparkling eyes and that its frequent use as a shampoo was the best protection against greasy hair. Given the astringent, alkaline and mildly antiseptic properties of urine there is every reason to believe the validity of such claims but whether there was any truth in the belief, held in some rural areas, that a daily drink of fresh urine acted as a tonic we are unable to say and we are certainly unwilling to experiment.

In 1872, a new, improved method of sewage collection, known as the Rochdale System was introduced in Huddersfield whereby tubs and their contents were collected by sanitary department workmen who, at the same time, delivered replacements. To cope with the new system the town was divided into nineteen districts and the vans employed were given a number of tubs to collect daily. So that no street or house was overlooked each workman was checked in and out of the depot by recording clock and his tubs counted. At the depot the tubs were emptied, washed and disinfected before they were returned to the vans, which were similarly cleaned, for redistribution.

By the 1880s the Sanitary Department was dealing with some five hundred and fifty thousand tubs a year and the problem of disposal continued. Although by this time some redundant pits and quarries had been brought into use as dumps it seems likely, given the vast amount of sewage collected, that a great deal of it went into the river. In the summer of 1889, for example, there were frequent complaints about the insanitary condition of the Colne and in July of that year the Medical Officer of Health was authorised to

engage extra men to flush out drains and gulleys and to remove what was described as objectionable matter from the river. At the same time members of the Sanitary Committee were expressing the hope that all artisans' houses would be provided with water closets. However, progress towards that desirable end was slow and the Rochdale System was to continue in use for many years. In 1890 the Sanitary Inspector was authorised to employ additional men to make the extra number of tubs necessary to keep pace with demand and by 1917 the Sanitary Department was dealing with nearly eight hundred thousand tubs a year. However, by this time the sewage works were in operation and the problem of disposal was less acute.

Like earth closets, early water closets were usually situated 'at the bottom of the garden'; it was not until improvements and inventions introduced by sanitary engineers such as Thomas Twyford and Thomas Crapper became widespread that lavatories could be installed indoors. The improvements included porcelain pans, efficient flushing systems and, most important of all, the 'U' bend whereby the trapped water prevented sewer gases from rising. By the 1860s most urban cesspools had been connected by pipes to flushless sewers which emptied into local streams and rivers.

In Huddersfield, by 1888, a main intercepting sewer three miles long was discharging untreated sewage into the river Colne at Deighton. At this time sanitary departments all over the country were at last considering the possibilities of treatment and purification and in 1893 at Deighton a system of chemical purification and sand filtration was put into operation to treat four million gallons of sewage per day. Unfortunately, by 1896 the system had failed and a new scheme had to be considered.

In 1906 the Huddersfield Corporation Act authorised work to begin on sites at Deighton and Cooper Bridge where a new purification system was installed comprising precipitation, effluent and settlement tanks, filter beds and sludge beds. As a result of the Act, local manufacturers were granted the right to discharge their trade waste into the sewers. Provision was made to treat a total daily flow of seven million gallons and it was said at the time that the effluent produced by the new works was of excellent quality.

The 1930s saw a vast increase in the volume of sewage and trade waste and by the end of the decade it was obvious that a considerable amount of additional treatment plant was necessary but owing to the outbreak of war in

1939 plans for extensions had to be shelved. In 1946 the River Board recommended that any new scheme should be capable of expansion, if necessary, to deal with all the waste from the catchment area of the river Colne and its tributaries. Extensions to the works commenced in 1952 and involved the purchase of sites at Bradley and Heaton Lodge for new plant, sludge tanks and percolating beds. In 1958 the flow of waste from the upper Colne Valley was connected to the Corporation sewers. By 1966 twenty million five hundred thousand gallons of sewage per day were being treated in the lower Colne Valley.

Since that time there have been several Acts promoting river improvements as a result of which our local water courses are in much better condition that they were only fifty years ago; today even the Colne sparkles!

#### DALTON BANK (46)

About three hundred and fifty yards (318M) after the sharp bend in the road notice the northern boundary of a plantation of trees growing on the hillside on the left. Established more than a hundred and fifty years ago, and covering an area of twelve acres between the two hundred and fifty and five hundred foot contours, this was the first plantation on Dalton Bank. Interestingly, its eastern and northern margins coincide exactly with the old boundary between Kirkheaton and Dalton so that the whole lay just within the Dalton township. In the past, plantations usually consisted of just two species of trees, often a mixture of a conifer and a broad leaf variety and they were carefully husbanded to provide crops of timber. After management ceased, plantations would be invaded by native trees and this seems to have happened here although it is possible that the plantation has been replanted in recent years. About a hundred and seventy five yards (158M) beyond the northern edge a dilapidated dry-stone wall running down the hillside marks the southern edge of the old plantation. The trees growing beyond the wall are the result of more recent planting.

In the 1970s a partnership was set up between Kirklees Countryside Unit and I.C.I. (now Zeneca), owners of fifty acres of Dalton Bank, to oversee its management and development. A small car-park was laid out to give the public access to the hillside which was designated a nature reserve. An interpretation sign in the car-park gives an insight into past, present and

future projects and explains that new plantations of Corsican pine, birch, beech and sessile oak have been established and that the resulting mixture of grassland, scrub and plantation provides a wide variety of wild life habitats.

Any of our readers who wish to explore the nature reserve will find a network of footpaths criss-crossing Dalton Bank. From the car-park a stepped path leads steeply to the top of the hill where there is a huge worked-out sandstone quarry complete with two decades of (mild) graffiti on the rock face. From the hilltop the view over the valley is panoramic and on a clear day it is possible to pick out, far and near, many interesting features, including several we have mentioned that are not easily seen from road level. Although walking on the hillside is steep and precipitous it is, nevertheless, a rewarding experience and for anyone with the inclination, the will and the wind to tackle the difficulties we will point out the entrance to the car-park when we come to it.

#### WHITE HOUSE FARM (47)

One hundred yards (91M) after leaving the plantation behind look out for a metal gate on the right hand side of the road. Although nothing remains on the site today this was once the entrance to a small farm, originally called Dalton Bank Bottom but which became, in 1902, the White House Farm Smallpox Hospital (see map p.84).

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century local smallpox cases were isolated and treated in a wooden building (pavilion) situated in the grounds of the fever hospital, a former workhouse, at Birkby. During the second half of the nineteenth century vaccination had, of course, done much to reduce the incidence of the disease but vaccination was not, nor has it ever been, compulsory and many people, for one reason or another declined vaccination. Consequently, outbreaks of smallpox occurred regularly but they were, by the 1880s, small and usually effectively contained. Occasionally, however, an outbreak became an epidemic which, whilst it was raging in one part of the country, naturally put the surrounding areas on alert. A local outbreak in 1888, for example, was easily traced to Sheffield where, it was said, the disease was causing havoc. The Medical Officer of Health for Huddersfield in reporting the outbreak said, "The wonder is not that cases of smallpox should have arisen in the town but with smallpox so rampant only



twenty six miles away we, on the direct route from south to north, should have escaped so lightly.'

By 1892 the dilapidated state of both the fever hospital and the smallpox pavilion was causing great concern and the Medical Officer of Health made repeated calls for a new hospital, on a new site, which could be used exclusively for treating smallpox cases. After much discussion and argument as to a suitable site a small temporary building opened at Mill Hill, Dalton, in July 1893. Six years later, a prestigious sanatorium was opened on the same site and once again the M.O.H. was calling for a new isolated smallpox hospital. For almost two years the Health Committee at their monthly meetings deferred discussion of the matter but in 1901 the members received a report that there were severe outbreaks of smallpox in the Iberian Peninsula and in London, Glasgow and Liverpool and that it was likely that cases would soon appear in Huddersfield. At the same time their attention was drawn to a Local Government Board Memorandum which stated that smallpox hospitals were perceived by the majority of medical men to be centres of infection and therefore, 'No smallpox hospital shall be erected so as to have (a) within a quarter mile radius, any hospital, warehouse, asylum or any similar establishment or a population of as many as two hundred persons; or (b) within half a mile radius, a population of as many as six hundred persons whether in one or more institutions or dwelling houses.' As the smallpox pavilion at Mill Hill fitted neither of these criteria and with the threat of outbreak or epidemic looming an urgent search began immediately for suitable premises. White House Farm, situated in an isolated position some three miles from the centre of town, was chosen and in January 1902 it was decided that the Mayor, the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman 'be empowered to arrange for the temporary occupation of the White House Farm buildings for isolating cases of smallpox and to take such steps and do such things as might be necessary to prevent the spread of the disease.' Alterations and extensions at the farm started in February 1902.

Thankfully, smallpox is no longer a threat but readers might be interested to know how an outbreak of the disease was treated in Huddersfield at the beginning of the century.

A month before work began at White House Farm the first cases in the outbreak were reported in Huddersfield. Only three people were affected, a

baker, his mother and his sister who lived together in Somerset Crescent. It was found that the baker had recently returned from London where smallpox was prevalent. The disease was early diagnosed, the precautions taken were successful, the patients recovered and the initial outbreak contained. Between February and December 1902 the town was free from smallpox but on 16th December the disease was discovered in a common lodging house in Kirkgate. Sixteen people were infected from this source. From that time until June 1904 fifty-two more cases were reported. Of the total of seventy one cases treated between January 1902 and June 1904 only three died, a mortality rate of just over four percent, and of the three, two had not previously been vaccinated.

Such a low mortality rate resulted not only from pre-vaccination but also from the prompt action of the Medical Officer of Health and his staff who held themselves in readiness, day and night, to re-vaccinate and deal with cases as they were reported. The isolation of a sick person was carried with the greatest promptitude so that in most cases the patient was admitted to hospital within two hours of information reaching the department. The main method of treatment administered in hospital was to touch each vesicle (pock mark) once a day with pure liquid carbolic acid which, it was said, hastened the period of scabbing thus cutting down the period of convalescence and detention in hospital. Another benefit of the acid was described as 'the wonderful power it has in allaying the stench characteristic of pustulation.'

To prevent the spread of the disease two kinds of contacts, primary and secondary, were recognised. Primary contacts included every person in the premises where the patient was housed and everyone who had any dealings with the patient during the period of infectivity. Secondary contacts included all who had come into close personal relationship with any primary contact.

In dealing with primary contacts it was considered important to offer revaccination at the earliest possible opportunity. Although this was often done at the Sanatorium it was sometimes necessary for the Medical Officer of Health to approach contacts and persuade them to accept vaccination. As Dr. Moore points out in his report on the outbreak: 'It is very frequently a question of now or never. It is much easier to prevail upon one to be vaccinated at the moment that a case is being removed to hospital than it would be, say, twelve or twenty four hours afterwards. The sense of present peril makes

him a willing subject but after an interval, having listened to the silly 'wisdom' of his associates, he wants to argue the point and if he gives way at all it is only by way of a concession or for a consideration.' Those more amenable to persuasion were taken to Mill Hill where they were vaccinated and bathed in disinfectant whilst their clothes were passed through a steam disinfector. Thereafter they were kept under observation or, if vaccination was done more than forty eight hours after exposure to infection, in isolation. With secondary, contacts vaccination and observation were considered sufficient.

In every case of smallpox the most thorough form of disinfection of premises was carried out at the earliest possible opportunity. Before anything was removed the disinfector visited the premises, sealed up all the air vents, exposed bedding, rugs and clothing, opened cupboards and drawers and after fumigating throughout with sulphur dioxide locked all the doors from the outside. After an interval of twelve hours the premises were opened and clothing and bedding removed for steam disinfection. If the walls were papered they were stripped and the paper burned together with what rubbish happened to be found. The premises now consisted of bare walls and such articles of furniture as were capable of being disinfected on the spot. The disinfectant used at this stage was a ten percent alkaline solution of chlorine gas which was sprayed directly on the walls and furniture. The rooms were again fumigated with sulphur dioxide and the premises closed and sealed as before for a further twelve hours. On re-opening, thorough natural ventilation was ensured by opening doors and windows. Whilst disinfection was in progress the occupants were provided with temporary accommodation. It is not difficult to imagine their dismay when they returned and saw the havoc that had been wreaked on their homes.

After the outbreak was over the Health Committee passed several resolutions deploring the shortcomings of the law with regard to the vaccination and isolation of contacts: neither was compulsory. Despite the obvious benefits of vaccination no one could be forced to accept it and tramps and vagrants were, apparently, particularly reluctant to be either vaccinated or isolated although some allowed themselves to be persuaded 'for a consideration'. Of the seventy-one smallpox cases reported between 1902 and 1904 no fewer than forty-eight were vagrants and their control during epidemics was called for. One report pointed out that the tramp '...is very mobile and

his name is as elastic as his habits.' On one occasion, for example, it was necessary to take the names of forty-four contacts twice in one day - once at a common lodging house and once at the disinfecting station and these forty-four men furnished sixty-six different names. Among them was a man who, when asked by the Medical Officer of Health what name he had given, admitted that he had forgotten which particular name he had used on the former occasion. 'What use is there', the report asks, 'in forwarding the names of such contacts to their likely destinations?' The same report is brutally direct in summing up the Health Committee's attitude towards the tramping classes: 'If we could entirely eliminate the influence of the vagrant in Huddersfield, smallpox would be almost entirely unknown. The general feeling of those in the best position to judge is that something must be done with this class of society.'

During the outbreak, one thousand nine hundred and forty-seven persons were known to have been exposed to infection. In each instance re-vaccination was offered but only four hundred and forty-three- less than a quarter -accepted. It is unlikely that all the refusals came from vagrants and we must conclude that it was not their non-acceptance of vaccination that incensed the authorities so much as their erratic way of life.

At the time of its conversion White House Farm was described as a temporary hospital but it was kept in readiness and for many years continued to receive occasional cases. In 1920 it was listed among the Borough hospitals and institutions as having forty beds. Another, more severe, outbreak of smallpox occurred throughout the district in the years 1928 to 1930 during which period two hundred and thirty-eight cases were admitted. Attempts at containment were much the same as in the earlier outbreak and once again vagrants were castigated for their way of life with demands being made for power 'to detain and isolate such persons whether contacts or not.'

Fumigation of premises, goods and clothing and disinfection of the person was carried out, as before, with great diligence often to the indignation of the people involved. In March 1928 the Town Clerk received a letter signed by fifteen contact cases, resident at 37, Denton Lane, Huddersfield, complaining of the treatment they received during disinfection and of damage alleged to have been done to clothing during fumigation. The small damages they claimed were met. Not surprisingly several similar claims followed. In



through on the left have, in recent years, been used for landfill and the course of the railway has thus been obliterated.

Passengers using the Kirkburton line in its early days must surely have enjoyed the passing beauty of the lower Colne Valley. Between the viaduct and Dalton the line ran through pleasant waterside meadows passing only the old farmstead at Dalton Bank Bottom and a small woollen mill at Dalton Lees (see map p.84). The whole area between the river and the road is - or was - called Dalton Lees. 'Leaze' or 'lees' means cultivated land under grass or fine meadowland, an apt description of the valley as it once was. After 1915, however, the prospect was to become less pleasing.

#### I.C.I. (48)

Shortly after the formation of British Dyes Ltd., in 1915, the Company acquired a new site which comprised two hundred and fifty acres fronting on Leeds Road near Woodhouse Mills at Deighton and two hundred adjoining acres, the latter being purchased to protect the Company from any possible claims for damages that might subsequently arise. The whole site stretched a distance of just over a mile from Leeds Road down the valley to Long Lane Bottom at Dalton. Initially, the Company concentrated on producing explosives at the new site but expansion was a major factor in their plans and as early as October 1915 it was forecast that as many as ten thousand workers would eventually be employed. By 1916 the production of dyestuffs and intermediates, then, because of the war, in short supply, had started at the Dalton works and a private railway line had been laid to connect the new works with the original Holliday factory at Tumbridge. This line ran through Bradley Mills (where traces of it remained until the new stadium was built) and joined the Kirkburton branch line at Lees Mills within the new site, thus giving access to main line railways.

In 1919, British Dyes Ltd. became the British Dyestuffs Corporation and seven years later, following the amalgamation of several branches of the chemical industry, the corporation became part of the dyestuffs division of the nationwide conglomerate, Imperial Chemical Industries. Since that time the Huddersfield division, which now trades as Zeneca, has expanded and, as may be seen on the right, plant, laboratories, offices, sheds, warehouses and vehicle stores now fill the once pleasant valley.

At the beginning of the venture in 1915 concern was expressed locally that, whilst the works would improve the commercial status of Huddersfield, many beauty spots and pleasant walks had been closed to the public, that the natural beauty of that part of the town was in jeopardy and that 'lofty chimneys and big brick structures would reduce the picturesque to the utilitarian.' How right such prophecies were.

Despite the name change in 1926 the firm continued to be known locally as British Dyes, or more colloquially, t'Dyes, and as late as the 1950s trolley buses taking employees to work had destination boards bearing the simple legend 'Dyes'. During the Second World War people who lived near the factory believed that it would eventually fall victim to enemy attack from the air. Indeed many locals were convinced that any raiders in the vicinity had set off with the works as their sole target and during alerts air-raid wardens would confidently assert, 'They've come for t'Dyes again.' The factory certainly received early advice of air-raids and put up a concealing smoke screen, the distinctive hissing of which soon came to be recognised as a pre-siren warning. As time went by and no bombs dropped on the works the story went around - and was firmly believed - that the raiders' endeavours were foiled because Castle Hill stood in the way of the bomb run. To most locals the factory was the nearest thing to the front line they were ever going to experience and they were proud of it and its smoke screen. It was a small victory that t'Dyes survived unscathed. The truth is, of course, that the Germans were unlikely to be interested in a small dyestuffs factory and that the enemy overhead was on his way to bomb Sheffield or Manchester - but the truth was only acknowledged years after the apparent danger had passed.

## **NAB HILL (49)**

Shortly after crossing the course of the old railway, notice how the Dalton Bank escarpment culminates in the steep slopes of Nab Hill on the left. 'Nab' from the Old Norse 'nabbi', a hilltop, is frequently found locally as suffix or prefix in names given to such steep scarp slopes (compare West Nab at Meltham, Shooters Nab at Marsden and Nab End at Longwood).

In 1871 a gang of local youths took to assembling on Nab Hill to play pitch and toss. Such a commanding position allowed them for some time to foil the efforts of the police to take them in the act of gambling. Determined

to stamp out the illegal activity and realising the futility of frontal assaults the police, in January 1872, changed their tactics. Unobserved, a number of constables took up positions some four hundred yards away, from where, through telescopes, they kept a close watch on the hill. When next the gamblers assembled, the constables were ready. Stealthily approaching the hill by different routes they came upon three of the youths who immediately raised the cry of 'bobbies'. Those at play made off but the three lookouts were not so lucky. They were, in a word, nabbed. After all that effort one of the lads, Joseph Berry, was fined three shillings and fourpence (17p) and the others were given the benefit of the doubt.

### JAGGER LANE & RAWTHORPE LANE (50)

Just past Nab Hill, where Jagger Lane comes in from the left, Dalton Bank Road becomes Nettleton Road. Until 1915 Jagger Lane crossed Nettleton Road (the junction was called Four Lane Ends) and, with its name changed to Rawthorpe Lane, continued into the valley where, in quick succession, it crossed Dalton Lees Mill goit and Lees Head Beck (see map p.84). From Lees Head Bridge the lane climbed the hillside to Nether Hall where nineteenth century travellers could either turn north over Kilner Bank to Bradley Mills and the Leeds turnpike or continue straight ahead, past the fifteenth century Rawthorpe Hall, to Moldgreen and the turnpike road to Huddersfield. The Jagger Lane - Rawthorpe Lane route is, however, much older than the turnpikes and it is possible that it was what W.B. Crump in his book 'Huddersfield Highways down the Ages', describes as a kirkway, that is a road that developed as early as the thirteenth century towards a church from distant hamlets within a parish. At the top of the hill on the left, Jagger Lane swings south to connect with a path leading directly to the church at Kirkheaton. Until the nineteenth century, Dalton township was part of the parish of Kirkheaton and the old lane might well have been the route taken from earliest times by people living in the west of the township - at Rawthorpe, Dalton Fold, Carr Green, Hill Top, Moldgreen and Bradley Mills - to their parish church.

Another explanation of the route involves the name Jagger Lane. In the past a 'jag' was a saddlebag or pannier and 'to jag' was to transport goods by pack-animal. A 'jagger', then, was a hawker or pedlar who travelled with a



train of pack-horses and Jagger Lanes all over the country recall the days of these itinerant trademen. So, although the name Jagger Lane now applies to only a short section of the route it is just possible that the whole was, in nature if not in name, a pack horse way.

Soon after British Dyes acquired their new site in 1915 the section of the lane between Nettleton Road and Lees Head Beck was closed and by 1930 its line had been obliterated. Beyond the bridge the lane remains - its tree-lined course can be seen climbing the far hillside to Rawthorpe - but for many years there has been no right of access.

Until it was swept away by industrial expansion the Black Horse Inn with its bowling green, situated between mill goit and beck, occupied an ideal position in the peaceful valley (see map p.84). For some forty years, from 1840, the landlord of the inn, which was originally called the Bowling Green, was John Gomersal. In the 1870s, Gomersal also served as assistant overseer of the poor and poor rate collector for the township of Dalton. When he retired in 1879 he was succeeded as landlord by his son, Albert. The old inn closed its doors to the public in the early years of the present century when, not long after White House Farm became a smallpox hospital, the licence was transferred to a new Black Horse Inn built a quarter of a mile away in Briggate. The bowling green, however, continued to be used until British Dyes bought the land in 1915.

## NETTLETON ROAD (51)

Soon after passing the houses at Nettleton, on the left, the road begins a long curve to the right to approach the bridge over Lees Head Beck at Dalton. Although the township of Dalton encompasses a good deal of comparatively high ground the name Dalton, which dates from Anglo-Saxon times, means settlement in the valley. It is likely, then, that the first settlers hereabouts came to this low lying area near the stream.

The Domesday Book of 1086, which gives an insight into the condition and value of several local manors or townships before and after the Norman Conquest, tells us that in the time of Edward the Confessor (1042 - 1066) Ulric held Dalton, two ploughs were working there and it was worth twenty shillings. By 1086, Dalton, like several other local manors, had become part of the huge Honour of Pontefract which was held by Ilbert de Laci, a

compatriot and supporter of William the Conqueror. At that time, Suuen held Dalton as tenant of Ilbert, there was one plough worked by two villeins and the land was worth ten shillings. Thus the manor still had some value and so differed from its near neighbours, Huddersfield, Almondbury, Kirkheaton, Lepton and Bradley, all of which, in the time of Edward the Confessor, were worth the same as or more than Dalton but which by 1086 were described as waste and worth nothing.

## BRIGGATE (52)

Half a mile beyond Jagger Lane, just past Crossley Lane on the left, Nettleton Road becomes Briggate. The Black Horse public house, on the right hand side of Briggate was built soon after the turn of the century to replace the old Black Horse at Lees Head.

Briggate means a gate (lane) leading to a bridge and just beyond the Black Horse our route crosses Briggate Bridge. If, as we believe, we are following a route mentioned by Ogilby in 1675 then it follows that there has been a bridge here for more than three hundred years; but it is important to remember that Ogilby's routes were probably old when he surveyed them. We have already suggested that this road was an important outlet from Almondbury to the north-east. Briggate Bridge is the only river crossing en-route from Almondbury to Colne Bridge and it is not unreasonable to believe that a rudimentary bridge appeared here around the same time as the bridges over the Colne and the Calder. Of course, over the centuries this bridge, like all bridges, will have been repaired, altered and rebuilt several times. Today, Briggate Bridge is modern, level and uncomplicated but before it was rebuilt in 1990 it was a narrow, slightly humped stone structure of considerable age.

Beyond the bridge, Briggate meets Long Lane which connects Moldgreen with Kirkheaton via Crossley Lane. The bridge on the left hand side of the junction is modern having been built about forty years ago to carry a completely new stretch of Long Lane over Lees Head Beck. Before this short extension was constructed, Long Lane ended here and traffic approaching Kirkheaton turned left into Briggate to join Crossley Lane opposite the Black Horse public house.

## MILL HILL (53)

Soon after entering Dalton Green Lane notice, on the left, a Community Health Centre, with the old Borough Coat of Arms prominently displayed at the right hand side, and nearby, a large housing estate. These modern buildings occupy the area long known as Mill Hill.

In the early nineteenth century James Tolson built a house at Mill Hill and started to manufacture fancy cloth. The business prospered and in 1840 he employed many handloom weavers living nearby. Ten years later, the firm was in the hands of his sons, George, Robert and Joseph Tolson, who employed some seven hundred hands, five hundred and sixty of whom were described as 'outdoor weavers' i.e. they worked in their own homes. The rest, the 'indoor workers' worked in the Tolsons' factory. At that time only Robert Tolson was living at the family home, Mill Hill House. His two brothers lived in some style, George at Greenhead, a large house off Wakefield Road, Joseph at Grove Place, Long Lane.

In 1868 the Tolson brothers were described as manufacturers of shawls, fancy cloakings, dresses, coating and trousering. By this time Robert had built Oaklands, a prestigious house in Greenhead Lane where he lived with his wife, Eliza, and his sons, Whiteley and Legh. Four years later, George had either died or moved away and the other two had retired. Joseph who died in 1888 and Robert who died three years later are buried in the graveyard at Kirkheaton Church.

In 1888, Alfred Sykes of the firm Joseph Sykes and Co. bought the Mill Hill site for £2,000. What was not known at the time was that Mr. Sykes was acting for the Corporation who saw Mill Hill as a possible site for a fever hospital. After the sale was completed he handed the property over to the Corporation without demanding any additional costs. This stratagem was deemed necessary as it was believed that had the Corporation's interest in the site been known the asking price would have doubled. That the belief was well founded was proved shortly afterwards when a syndicate of Dalton men, horrified at the thought of a fever hospital in their neighbourhood, approached Councillor Beaumont, a member of the Health Committee, with a substantial offer for the site. They were, Councillor Beaumont said, 'willing to give almost anything to get it back.'

In April 1889, the then Mayor, Joseph Brook J.P., moved a resolution in

Council that a complete plan for the erection of a permanent hospital on the pavilion system be prepared for the site at Mill Hill. So began a seven year battle, fought in the council chambers, in which vituperation, innuendo, sarcasm, bitterness, passion and local jealousy knew no bounds. To reproduce this war of words is beyond our scope but we feel it is worth summarising a few of the many arguments put forward by the proponents and opponents of the scheme.

At that first meeting the Mayor pointed out the need for a new infectious diseases hospital to replace the old one at Birkby where the meagre resources were often over-taxed. Birkby had only fifty-four beds and in a recent scarlet fever epidemic new cases had to be put in beds with one or two other patients. His supporters spoke of the dilapidated state of the hospital at Birkby and pointed out that if it was extended it would become a standing danger to the health and lives of the people living in the surrounding houses. Objectors to the scheme remarked that the cost of a new building at Mill Hill, which might be as high as £50,000 and the cost of employing an extra doctor - even a young one at £150 per annum. - would be an added burden to ratepayers. Birkby, they said, could be improved and extended much more cheaply and there was no proof that disease would be transmitted from the hospital to local residents. Several councillors felt that Mill Hill was so far from the town centre that it would be a great hardship for the poor people of the borough to visit patients there. Others did not, it seems, mind where the hospital was built as long as it was not in their own wards. Eventually, after a long debate, the meeting closed with no decision having been taken. Subsequently, a special committee was appointed to determine a suitable site.

Battle was joined again in October 1891 when Councillor Broadbent moved a resolution that as the special committee had not attempted to deal with the matter, the Health Committee should take up the suitability or otherwise of the Birkby site. He pointed out that although the Borough had been free from epidemics for four years it was certain they would get one soon. Typhoid, scarlet fever, diphtheria and smallpox all required separate wards for their treatment and as a ward could be used for nothing else, figures given as to vacant hospital accommodation at Birkby were delusive. It was time to provide patients with proper accommodation and not a miserable doghole like that at Birkby. Supporting him, Councillor Beaumont remarked

that the erection at Birkby was rotting. He hoped never again to see what he had recently seen there: three patients to a bed, the nurses room turned into a mortuary, a wooden hut put up and already rotting to pieces, patients carted to the workhouse at Crosland Moor and others put in tramway sheds because there was no room for them at Birkby. Other councillors voiced their support for the resolution but the Mayor, Godfrey Sykes J.P., suggested that the subject had been raised at an inconvenient time and as there had been no real complaint about the accommodation at Birkby, he did not see why they should go to the expense of a new hospital. After further discussion the matter was adjourned *sine die*.

Just over a year later, in November 1892, the council met to discuss an allied matter, the building of a new smallpox hospital. There was general agreement that smallpox cases should be removed from Birkby but much heated discussion about a site, some members favouring Mill Hill and others, Padanaram. As already stated (No.44) the vote at the end of the meeting was in favour of Mill Hill. Two months later, Councillor Jessop, Chairman of the Health Committee, rose to ask the Council to accept a tender of £888. 10s. 0d. for the erection of a temporary wooden smallpox hospital at Mill Hill. He pointed out that the matter was urgent as there was grave danger of an imminent smallpox epidemic. There were already fifteen cases of smallpox at Birkby and five others in isolation and he hoped they would put all petty considerations aside and settle the question of the hospital immediately. Despite the obvious urgency of the matter Councillor Broadbent, who must have feared that a smallpox hospital at Mill Hill would hinder his cherished scheme for a sanatorium there, said it was still a question of whether the hospital should be erected at Mill Hill or Padanaram. Uproar followed and the Councillor was told he was wasting time and behaving like a child. Eventually, the minutes were confirmed and in July 1893 a temporary smallpox hospital opened at Mill Hill. Shortly afterwards, at the request of the Fartown and Deighton sub-committee the old smallpox pavilion at Birkby was destroyed by fire.

At the time the smallpox hospital was erected all the old industrial and residential buildings remained at Mill Hill but, at the suggestion of the Medical Officer of Health, Mill Hill House was demolished to provide more air and space for the new pavilion.

The fight for a permanent fever hospital started again in earnest early in 1894. The arguments were much as before with some councillors deploring the condition of the hospital at Birkby - tumble-down, rotten, patched up, neglected, overcrowded, unhygienic and others objecting to building at Mill Hill - distance, expense, close proximity to the smallpox hospital (thus confirming Councillor Broadbent's fears). Councillor Broadbent was eloquent in his plea for a new hospital befitting the Borough, whilst his opponents swore that people were perfectly happy with their treatment at Birkby. Nevertheless, at the end of February 1894 some sort of consensus was reached whereby the members of the Health Committee were instructed to obtain, by competition, plans for a permanent hospital for infectious diseases. The battle rumbled on for many months until in August 1896 it was announced that out of a hundred and sixty entries, the architect, Edward Thomas, had been awarded first prize for his design for a Sanatorium at Mill Hill. Work began later that year and the main building was completed by September 1898.

Huddersfield Corporation, in the nineteenth century, had a reputation for being far sighted, efficient and innovative in matters of public health. They had, for example, in 1876, been the first local authority in the country to institute compulsory notification of infectious diseases, a procedure that was later followed by every other local authority in the country. On reflection then, it is surprising that they argued and dallied so long over the provision of a new fever hospital. However, all ill feeling was set aside and self congratulation was in the air as the day of the Opening drew near.

The Corporation undoubtedly had just cause to be proud of their latest enterprise. The long awaited, hundred bed hospital stood in thirteen acres of grounds, newly planted with trees, shrubs and flowers. A large administration block of offices, reception and examination rooms and accommodation for staff was connected by covered walkways to three light, airy wards. There were day rooms and convalescence rooms, modern kitchens, bathrooms and indoor flushing lavatories. The latest medical equipment was provided and no expense was spared on furnishings and linen. Two schemes were devised for the convenience of those people who lived at some distance from the hospital: firstly, direct communication by telephone was set up between Mill Hill and all local police stations so that anyone, anywhere in the Borough,

could enquire about the condition of a relative or friend without having to visit the hospital; secondly, every patient was given a number and local newspapers regularly published the numbers of those who were dangerously ill and seriously ill and those who were improving. If visitors did come, although they were not allowed on the wards, provision was made for them to converse with patients through the windows of the pavilions. It truly was, in modern parlance, a state-of-the-art institution that awaited the Grand Opening Ceremony on Saturday 22nd October 1898.

The new sanatorium was officially opened by Sir William Henry Broadbent M.D., F.R.S. brother of Councillor Benjamin Broadbent who, by this time, was Chairman of the Health Committee. Two special trains were laid on to carry many local dignitaries from Huddersfield along the Kirkburton Branch line to the station at Kirkheaton which was only three hundred yards from the hospital. Unfortunately, the day was wet and windy and the guests made their way speedily into a large marquee whilst, as a report of the proceedings puts it, 'Lindley Band, out in the rain and wind, tried to enliven them by playing selections of music.'

The ceremony commenced with the choir of St. Paul's church singing Gounod's anthem 'Come unto Him' after which the Mayor's chaplain offered dedicatory prayers. During the devotions the wind tore open the canvas roof of the tent just above the heads of the choir, several of whom caught hold of the torn section and attempted, not very successfully, to hold it in place. As the rain poured in the Town Clerk started to read apologies for absence but as he could hardly be heard above the wind the Mayor, Alderman Jessop, intervened and suggested that the company adjourn to number two pavilion for the rest of the ceremony.

Once inside, Councillor Broadbent welcomed the guests and remarked that the interruption of the proceedings by the weather might be regarded as appropriate to an enterprise that had had a stormy course throughout its career. He went on at length praising the Corporation for their successful endeavours and concluded by asking the Mayor to present his dear brother, Sir William Henry Broadbent, with the golden key which would admit him to the innermost secrets of that fairy palace, the new hospital.

Sir William, an eminent London physician who had been born and educated in Huddersfield, accepted the key and after congratulating the

Corporation on the foremost position they had always taken in matters of public health went on to say that the new hospital was, in every way, worthy of Huddersfield and would be of enormous service to every man, woman and child in the town. After further lengthy speeches the company adjourned to another ward where they took afternoon tea before returning to Huddersfield. In the evening the guests attended a celebratory banquet held at the Town Hall.

The following week the sanatorium was opened for public inspection in the hope of breaking down some of the prejudices that existed among the public against the removal of patients to hospital. Before patients could be admitted, there were several jobs to be completed including the demolition of the old mill and constructing a boundary wall from the salvaged stone and building a shelter for the ambulance along with stabling for the horses required to pull it. When all was completed the total cost of £34,302. 1s. 9d. was approved. The first patients, thirty-nine with scarlet fever and two with typhoid, were admitted in April 1899.

Some of our older readers will, like us, remember being brought to Mill Hill in the brown fever ambulance and being incarcerated there out of reach of all physical contact with their parents. In his speech at the opening, Sir William Broadbent remarked that when children came into an isolation hospital he knew from experience that the kindness and attention they received meant that they were sorry to go home. Some forty years after 1898, when we were in Mill Hill, that certainly was not so.

Perhaps Councillor Broadbent would have been surprised and pleased had he known that his cherished Sanatorium would become redundant as an isolation hospital after only sixty years. The attitude of the public towards immunisation and vaccination improved during the present century bringing about a decline in the number of diphtheria cases and the eradication of smallpox whilst modern drugs helped to deal with scarlet fever and typhoid. In its later years the Sanatorium was used as a geriatric hospital, a day centre, and an administrative centre.

The buildings were demolished in 1996/97 and today all that is left of the great enterprise is the coat-of-arms rescued from the administration building and the boundary wall built of stone salvaged from the Tolson's period of occupation.

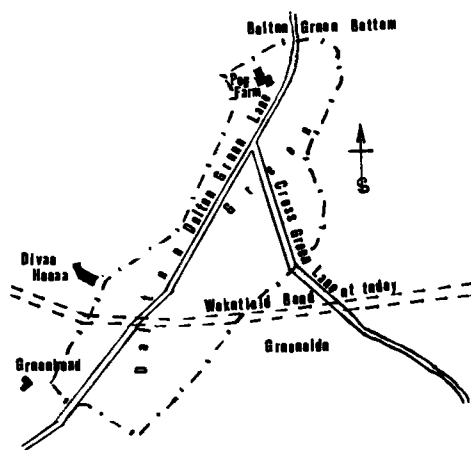


## DALTON GREEN LANE (54)

Until comparatively recently Dalton Green Lane was a quiet lane running across the south eastern end of a large tract of agricultural land. To the north and west of the lane small green fields stretched away beyond Long Lane and Rawthorpe Lane to the edge of the high ground above the river Colne. Development of this rural area started in earnest in the 1920s and since then, every decade has contributed its own streets, avenues and crescents, its own style of architecture, until today of all those thousands of acres only a very few remain green. Despite its antiquity, Dalton Green Lane now differs very little in appearance from the modern roads in this densely populated area.

## DALTON GREEN (55)

On its east side, Dalton Green Lane skirts the edge of the former Dalton Green from which, of course, it takes its name. A green was common or waste land usually to be found at the edge of a village, beyond the arable land, on poorer soils that did not repay cultivation. Most greens and commons date back to feudal times and, with arable, they were an integral part of the manorial system which was the basis of medieval husbandry. Although a green might belong to the lord of the manor, villagers had certain traditional rights there including the right to graze livestock. Over the centuries, many greens were reduced in size by encroachment and, as agricultural techniques improved, by enclosure and cultivation.



Dalton Green, a long narrow piece of land (half a mile long by three hundred yards wide) was enclosed in 1811. Encroachment started in 1820 when a new section of the Wakefield to Austerlands turnpike (see No.60 ) was constructed across the southern end of the green. Soon afterwards, several dwellings were erected on the green, at the side of the road. Twentieth century development further fragmented the green and it is difficult now to picture it as the rural entity it once was. However, because a number of 'green' names survive has been possible to plot its approximate area on a map (see p.96).

It is interesting that the eastern edge of the green was bounded by a stream which flowed south east from a spring (see map) to enter Round Wood Beck just beyond Dalton Green Bottom (the stream which as far as we can tell was unnamed, was diverted and culverted many years ago). Given the lie of the land and the propensity of streams in this area to flood it is possible that the green would be boggy and therefore likely in medieval times to be designated waste. There is a possible confirmation of this in the name of the farm (now gone) at Dalton Green Bottom; pog is identical in meaning to bog.

Because Dalton Green has such a long history it is pleasing that a very small section of it is still green. This remnant, surrounded by houses, may be seen by walking a few yards along the path between bungalows eight and ten. In 1965 the Commons Registration Act defined a green, in part, as 'land subject to a customary right of playing lawful sports and pastimes...' In view of this it is rather ironic that the Council forbids the playing of ball games on this small relic of Dalton Green.

Half a mile beyond Mill Hill the old route to Almondbury is crossed by the Wakefield to Austerlands turnpike of 1820 (Wakefield Road). From the other side of Wakefield Road our route, now called Greenhead Lane, continues straight ahead up the hillside.

## GREENHEAD LANE (56)

About one tenth of a mile after entering Greenhead Lane, notice Greenhead Avenue on the right. This leads to a large house called Greenhead which, in the mid-nineteenth century, was the home of George Tolson the oldest of the three Tolson brothers of Mill Hill and later of his youngest brother, Joseph.

Oaklands, the handsome house on the left hand side of Greenhead Lane, was built in the 1850s by the other brother, Robert Henry Tolson, and was the birthplace of his youngest son, Legh. Built of local stone, in the style of a miniature castle, the house has a well proportioned front elevation with an imitation castellated parapet and finials in the form of corner turrets. The impressive entrance with its moulded stone jambs and lintel has an elegant oriel window at first floor level. In its heyday Oaklands stood in three acres of landscaped gardens with a sizeable tree lined pond at the back. The latter, incidentally, accounts for the culverting of the stream that once flowed along the edge of Dalton Green. Today, a small estate of modern houses occupies the former gardens and the house is presently used as a resource centre. The pond, however, has survived. On the lower side of the house, Tolson Grange, a modern sheltered housing complex, commemorates the Tolson connection.

A little higher up the hill, on the right hand side, a row of early nineteenth century houses, called Greenhead Cottages, stands just beyond the southernmost limit of Dalton Green. For a time, during the nineteenth century, the section of road in front of and below the cottages was called Lockwood Lane.

Continuing up the hill notice, at the junction with Forest Road on the right, the name change from Greenhead Lane to Bank End Lane.

### **BANK END LANE (57)**

The bank in question is Almondbury Bank, the high ground ahead and to the right which stretches from Forest Road to the section of Ogilby's London Road now itself called Almondbury Bank. Like Bank End Lane, Forest Road leads to Almondbury Bank (the road) but whilst the former climbs the steep gradient ahead, the latter follows a contour round the hill and thus provides an casier route. Because a 'lane' is usually older than a 'road' and because it was quite common for early highways to pay no heed to steep gradients and not uncommon for later ones to find casier routes it would be easy to conclude that Bank End Lane is older than Forest Road. However it is not quite so simple, as the name Forest Road only dates back to the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Before that, Forest Road was called Bank End Lane and the two identically named sections were obviously regarded as one road. Which of the two sections was Ogilby's way to the London Road is difficult

to decide as his map is not detailed enough to make a positive identification. Consequently, we include both sections in the fairly certain knowledge that one of them must be right (see No.59).

One tenth of a mile beyond Forest Road, stop just beyond an old farm house on the left to look back at the splendid view over Dalton. From this altitude it is possible to pick out several places and buildings we have passed on the tour including Whitacre Street, Leeds Road, Hollidays, Bradley Church, the sewage works, the Midland Railway viaduct, Dalton Bank and Nab Hill, Dalton Bank Road, Zeneca, Jagger Lane, Rawthorpe Lane and Long Lane, the site of Mill Hill and Dalton Green Lane with the remnant of the green on the right. The view extends to Deighton and Bradley and, beyond, to Odsal Top near Bradford and Hartshead Moor where, on a clear day, the busy M62 and the motorway service station can be made out. There is more to see, of course, but we leave the rest to you.

Before leaving the view notice the footpath on the left. For about four hundred and fifty yards (409M) this follows exactly the line of the old boundary between Dalton and Almondbury which ran from here down the hillside towards the Fenay Beck. On the other side of the road the boundary came off the high ground along the line of the gated path.

In some parts of England, boundaries shown on nineteenth century O.S. maps have been proved to correspond exactly with perambulations described in Anglo Saxon charters. Although we cannot prove such antiquity for this boundary, it is likely to date back at least to Norman times for, according to the countryside expert Oliver Rackham, by the end of the twelfth century boundaries everywhere were frozen and remained unaltered until the great territorial changes of the nineteenth century. Where possible, early boundaries took the obvious course and followed streams, hedges, ditches, woods, footpaths, highways and hill tops. In the absence of such linear features, ditches were dug, banks were piled up and ponds, boulders, tumuli, standing stones and even single trees were used as boundary markers.

At first, boundaries were preserved by word of mouth passed down from generation to generation and this oral tradition was reinforced by frequent perambulations of the bounds which always followed a clockwise direction and included many traditional stops for Bible readings and prayers. Eventually, the routes of perambulations were written down and where they survive

such descriptions are of great interest.

A recitation of the bounds of Almondbury survives from 1584 and begins: 'They say that the ring and uttermost boundaries of the said manor and lordship of Almondbury are as followeth first from the Ravensknoll Hill as one hedge divideth to John North house and so eastward upon the height to the Smithy Dyke ...' (Smithy Dike is the present day Fenay Beck). Here, in Bank End Lane, we are about three hundred yards (273M) from the edge of Ravensnowle Hill on the right and at the point where the boundary turned 'eastwards upon the height' to run down to the Fenay Valley. From there, following streams and ditches for the most part, it continued, dividing Almondbury from the adjacent manors of Lepton, Woodsome, Honley, North Crosland, South Crosland and Huddersfield. Shortly, we shall meet the line of the old boundary again as it returns towards its starting point.

Two hundred yards (182M) beyond the boundary, just after a sharp bend in the road, the houses on the left hand side stand on the site of a row of nineteenth century cottages called Ready Money Row. Whether this unusual name describes a condition governing the purchase of the cottages is a matter of conjecture.

Fifty yards (45M) further along, Bank End Lane meets Almondbury Bank.

## ALMONDBURY BANK (58)

In 1675, John Ogilby published a series of road maps showing the country's principal routes, one of which led from London in the south to Richmond in the north. Locally, this highway, or, more correctly, series of highways, passed through Kirkburton, Almondbury, Huddersfield, Fartown, Cowcliffe and Fixby and, for the most part, the routes Ogilby used have survived to become part of the modern road system (see D.O.H.1.i.). Almondbury Bank was part of this long distance highway and it is likely that it was here, at this junction, that Ogilby's road to Colne Bridge branched out of the main route. However, the other end of Bank End Lane (now called Forest Road) also joins Almondbury Bank and it is just possible that Ogilby took the lower route. Consequently, we have incorporated that route into the tour and we leave you, the reader, to decide which of the two is most likely.

To reach the lower route, turn right into Almondbury Bank and continue

down the hill for about five hundred yards (450M) towards the junction with Forest Road. Just above Forest Road, the old boundary crossed Almondbury Bank on its way back to the starting point. Although here it is obviously not following a stream or a ditch, nevertheless its line is marked by the footpath on the left and, more unusually, by the angled gable-end of a house on the right. Beyond the house the boundary ran straight up to the high ground above Forest Road to finish, according to the 1584 recitation of the bounds, at 'the north end of one close called North Royd parcell of the inheritance of William Beaumont gentleman now in the tenure of John Boothroyd being the said Ravens Knoll hill where the said boundary first began'.

### FOREST ROAD (59)

Today, Forest Road with its modern houses has no great feeling of age but until the late nineteenth century it was a quiet lane, empty of buildings of any kind, running round the flank of Ravensknowle Hill to provide a level route from Greenhead Lane to Almondbury Bank.

About a hundred yards (90M) along Forest Road it is worth a short stop to look over the wall on the left at the view which extends over Moldgreen and Huddersfield to Sheepridge, Fartown, Cowcliffe, Fixby, Lindley, Outlane, Golcar and Scapegoat Hill.

A little further along, notice the trees on the hillside above the houses on the right. In the mid-nineteenth century this narrow strip of woodland rejoiced in the name of Radical Forest and it could be that when a new name was sought for this section of Bank End Lane it was this 'forest' that sprang to mind. Just before the road bends to the right it is possible, through gaps in the houses on the left, to catch a glimpse of Ravensknowle Park, about a hundred feet below.

Once back at Greenhead Lane turn left to the bottom of the hill and left again at the traffic lights into the main road.

### WAKEFIELD ROAD (60)

An Act of Parliament passed in 1758 gave Huddersfield its first turnpike road. Known as the Wakefield to Austerlands turnpike, locally it passed through Lepton, Almondbury, Huddersfield, Crosland Moor and Marsden (see D.O.H.2.ü.). Early Turnpike Acts required trustees to repair, widen and

improve the surface of already existing roads but only rarely to construct new ones. This first turnpike, therefore, followed indirect hilly routes and paid little attention to ease of passage. By the beginning of the nineteenth century the volume of wheeled traffic using the turnpikes had increased dramatically and there was a growing demand for road improvements in general and, in particular, for the elimination of steep gradients. Consequently, about sixty years after the first Act, the trustees obtained authorisation to construct new roads to replace the most difficult sections of the earlier route. Dating from 1820 Wakefield Road was one such road built to bypass the steep slopes between Almondbury and Lepton. The new road left the old at the bottom of Almondbury Bank (part of 1758 turnpike as well as the London Road) and ran through Moldgreen and Greenside to Lepton where the two routes rejoined at the top of Rowley Lane.

Soon after turning into Wakefield Road notice (if traffic conditions allow) a metalled path at the end of the row of shops on the right. This was once the entrance road to Dives House, an old farmstead which was demolished in 1957. The house and its ancient barn can be traced back to the sixteenth century and it seems likely that it stood on the site of a medieval building as the name is thought to originate with Thomas Dives who was living in Dalton in the fourteenth century. As with most old houses there were several legends attached to Dives House including ghostly apparitions, unexplained noises and the murder there of a Catholic priest. It was also firmly believed that Cromwell's soldiers used the barn as an overnight billet.

After passing through the hands of several local families, Dives House was purchased by Sir John William Ramsden in 1878 and it became the property of the local authority when the Corporation bought the Ramsden estate in 1921. Thereafter, the house was partitioned into three dwellings, the lands were sold to developers and by the end of the 1930s Dives House was surrounded on all sides by modern houses. In 1950 the barn became an offshoot of the Tolson Museum when it was used to display old agricultural equipment.

Four years later, as a result of storm damage, the barn became unsafe and was closed to the public. At that time there was little local interest in conserving historic buildings and when, in November 1955, the Council met to consider the future of the barn the consensus was for demolition; only

six of the sixty members present voted for retention and repairs. A reprieve was offered by the Halifax Museum Services when they sought and received permission to carefully dismantle the barn and re-site it at Shibden Hall Park. Unfortunately, soon after it was re-erected it was destroyed by fire.

The house itself, despite its age, received no special consideration and it was demolished at the same time as the barn. Today, the site of Dives House is a rough, open space occupied by some thirty garages in various states of repair and the only small reminder that this was once an occupation-site are two short sections of the old boundary wall, a few worked stones used as copings on the wall and, inevitably, an abundance of nettles. If a dispossessed ghost roams the site we have never seen it.

### THE ROEBUCK MEMORIAL HOMES (61)

On the right hand side of Wakefield Road look out for four pairs of houses standing in pleasant gardens. The houses were given to the town by Harry Roebuck who was born at Little Carr Green, Dalton in 1857. At the age of twenty-one he founded a cabinet making business, known as the Steam Cabinet Works, at Storthes, Moldgreen and in 1903 he opened a large furniture shop and workrooms at Aspley. Over the next few years the firm grew steadily until there were fifteen Roebuck branch shops in West Yorkshire and Lancashire. When he retired in 1922 his sons Gilbert and Clement took over the management of the firm which thrived for another forty years. In the 1960s, as they approached retirement, the brothers gradually disposed of the branch shops and the firm finally closed down in 1967 when the premises at Aspley were sold.

Ten years after he retired, Harry Roebuck built the eight houses in Wakefield Road as a Memorial to his wife, Jane, and his son, Leonard, an officer in the Royal Flying Corps who was fatally injured in a flying accident in 1918. In January 1933 Mr. Roebuck presented the houses, which he endowed free of rents, rates, lighting and heating, to the Corporation to use as 'eventide homes' for elderly, impoverished couples.

The houses with their connecting loggias, central summerhouse and attractive gardens were much admired at the time of their construction and were described by a local newspaper as an 'architectural gem' and 'a source of envy to visitors from a distance'.



Harry Roebuck died in November 1938. Just over thirty years later, his son Clement, inspired no doubt by his father's example, built, endowed and presented four cottage homes to the village of Kettlewell in the Yorkshire Dales.

## RAVENSKNOWLE (62)

About a quarter of a mile past the Memorial Homes our route passes the park and museum at Ravensknowle on the left. Both are worth a visit so, if time and inclination allow, turn in at the main entrance, drive slowly up the path and park in front of the museum.

Legh Tolson in his essay, 'History of Ravensknowle', says that the earliest mention of Ravensknowle is found in 1446 when William Dyghton of Ravensknowle was witness to a land transaction in Dalton. In 1481 the estate was sold to the Saviles and afterwards it was successively owned by the Wheatleys, the Hirsts and the Lister-Kayes. When the estate was sold by auction in 1827 part of it was bought by Thomas Wilson of Birkby who afterwards built the lodge at the Ravensknowle Road entrance. In 1850, Thomas Wilson sold his estate to his nephew, John Beaumont.

Born in Dalton, in 1808, John Beaumont was a successful businessman who, in the 1850s, employed more than seven hundred and fifty workers in his fancy-cloth manufacturing business. A decade after he bought the estate he built Ravensknowle Hall (the present-day museum) and afterwards lived there in retirement with his wife Amelia and their only child Sarah Martha. The mansion, which was designed by Richard Tress, was built at a reputed cost of £20,000 in the Italianate style. Inside, the many decorative features included carved stone, rich plasterwork, inlaid and tile floors, elaborate ceilings and a handsome staircase. The impressive stable block to the right of the mansion was built at the same time and housed the outdoor staff as well as the horses.

After John Beaumont's death in 1889, the house passed to his daughter who, after her marriage rather late in life, moved away from Huddersfield. She leased the mansion to Robert Holliday, youngest son of Read Holliday, and after his death in 1901 sold it to her cousin, Legh Tolson, for £6,000. At that time Tolson was living at Elm Lea, a house in Ravensknowle Road, which had previously been occupied by his brother Whiteley. Tolson altered

and extended the south west end of the house and converted the whole into two separate dwellings, Ravensknowle and Ravenshill. For some years the two sections were occupied by tenants but in 1914, two years after the death of his first wife, Charlotte, Tolson moved into Ravenshill with his second wife, Dorothy.

Legh Tolson, who was born at Oaklands in 1856, maintained a lifelong interest in local history, archeology and heraldry. In 1890, he paid for the Kirkheaton Parish Registers, which were in a sorry state, to be repaired and rebound at the Public Record Office in London and afterwards provided a safe for their storage. He was an active member of the Yorkshire Archeological Society and a founder and lifelong member of the Yorkshire Tykes Club. In 1929 he published privately a history of the church and parish of Kirkheaton which he illustrated with his own drawings.

When he decided to retire to the Lake District in 1919, Legh Tolson offered Ravensknowle to the corporation as a Memorial to his nephews, Robert and James, sons of his older brother Whiteley, who lost their lives in the First World War. He suggested that the mansion should become a municipal museum and the grounds a public park. His generous offer was accepted in Council on 16th July 1919 and five months later, at a meeting of the General Purposes Committee, a Standing Committee, consisting of the Mayor, two members of the Finance Committee, three representatives of the Moldgreen Ward, three members of the Public Library Committee, three members of the Parks Committee and three Technical College Governors, was appointed to manage the estate and supervise the preparatory work for the museum. The Deed of Gift was completed on 31st December 1919 and at the same time it was announced that Leeds University was prepared to hand over to the new museum the collection of Roman remains found at Slack, Outlane, which was at that time preserved at the University. Other exhibits came from a museum which had been developed at the Technical College by Dr. T.W. Woodhead, head of the biology department.

Legh Tolson had previously invited Dr. Woodhead to prepare a scheme for the development of a municipal museum. This was accepted by the Council and Dr. Woodhead was appointed Director of the museum.

The park at Ravensknowle was opened to the public without ceremony on Whit-Saturday, 14th May 1921. Just over a year later on Saturday 27th

May 1922 the Tolson Memorial Museum was officially opened by Legh Tolson with a golden key presented to him by the Mayor, Alderman Wilfred Dawson. In his speech the Mayor paid tribute to Mr. Tolson and thanked him for a very wonderful gift made in the most graceful manner he (the Mayor) had ever known a gift to be made. In reply, Mr. Tolson thanked Dr. Woodhead, Seth Mosley the curator and others who had helped to arrange the exhibits and said he hoped the museum would be a source of interest to many and the park a source of pleasure to both young and old. He concluded by requesting his audience to give some thought not only to his two nephews but also to 'the great host of brave young men who died that the people of this country might have freedom and victory'.

After the official party had toured the museum, the tennis courts (at that time in front of the museum) were officially opened by Mrs. Legh Tolson who was presented with an inscribed tennis racquet. Afterwards, Mrs. Tolson played in the first match, a mixed doubles. During the afternoon and evening of that gloriously sunny day, Moldgreen Brass Band entertained the crowds from a newly erected bandstand.

In the ten years of life he had left, Legh Tolson saw his hopes for Ravenknowle fulfilled. Both park and museum became - and remain a source of interest and pleasure. He died on 17th January 1932 at Barton House near Penrith and was buried at Barton Church. He is also commemorated with his mother, father and first wife on a gravestone at Kirkheaton.

On 1st July 1923, Huddersfield's first municipal bowling green was opened in the park when an inaugural match was played between Councillor Robson and Alderman Halstead. On the same day, a newly completed aviary was to be presented by Councillor Hirst to the Mayor; unfortunately, the latter could not be present and the birds took up occupation without any official ceremony. Sadly, the aviary is long gone but some of our readers will remember it and will recall, like us, the fascinating contrast between its lively, noisy occupants and the sombre, silent stuffed birds in the museum.

In November 1926, Mr. J. Roebuck of Honley presented a handloom to the museum to be displayed in a new Industrial Room. Other items in the room included a pair of cropping shears, one of the cropping machines so detested by the Luddites and a hammer used by them in their machine

breaking activities. These exhibits, which are of special local interest, are still on display. In more recent years the museum has been extended and its exhibits have benefited from modern ideas about interpretation and display. It is no exaggeration to describe it as a treasure house for anyone interested in local and natural history and we commend it to any of our readers who do not know it.

Outside the museum, a number of historical items are preserved in the park the most obvious of which is the shelter, erected in 1931, which stands to the east of the museum. Most of the material used in the construction of the shelter was salvaged from the Huddersfield Cloth Hall (demolished in 1930) including the hand made bricks, ten massive pillars from the central hall of the old building and the cuppola with the clock and bell that for more than a century regulated the start and finish of business on market days. Also preserved on the shelter are two plaques commemorating the building and later restoration of the Cloth Hall. Another remnant of the Cloth Hall, the western entrance, was re-erected in April 1932 to form a gateway to the park from Ravensknowle Road.

Other interesting items in the park include the remains of a Roman hypocaust from Slack, an old boundary stone, a stone tablet commemorating the erection of the prison in Bull and Mouth Street, Huddersfield, the granite pedestal of Sir Robert Peel's statue that once stood in St. George's Square and, grouped together near the coach house, the remains of an ancient doorway, an old bake-oven and a trough.

Before leaving, be sure to notice the steep Ravenknowle Hill behind the park which, as a knoll is a hill, must be the origin of the name. The interpretation of place names is fraught with difficulties but it is possible that this name can be interpreted literally from the Old English words *hraefn* (raven) and *cnoll* (hill, mound), as the hill inhabited by ravens. Another possibility is that the first element is from the Old Norse personal name *Hrafn* which would give a meaning of the hill belonging to *Hrafn*. Looking up at the hill from the park it is easy to see why, hundreds of years ago, this most prominent landmark was considered to be a suitable place to begin and end the perambulation of the bounds of Almondbury.

Whilst driving out of the park, notice the lodge on the left. This was pulled down and rebuilt exactly as before when Wakefield Road was widened

in 1923.

### **MOLDGREEN (63)**

The road beyond the Junction traffic lights at Moldgreen, which dates from 1989, bypasses the 1820 route between the Junction and Almondbury Bank. The older route survives and has been designated Old Wakefield Road, but, as may be seen on the right, it is now merely a by way. As a result of the new work a good deal of property in this area was demolished including the Junction Inn which was the terminus of the Moldgreen tramway. Because road alignments in this area have changed since 1989 it is impossible to pinpoint the position of the inn, the site of which now lies somewhere under the modern road, but it stood on the left hand side of the old road opposite the Ivy Green public house.

The tram service to Moldgreen was inaugurated on 9th May 1885. At first, operating difficulties precluded the use of steam trams on the line and for three years horse traction was used. The journey to Moldgreen from St. George's Square took twelve minutes and two double decker tramcars, each drawn by three horses, provided a half-hourly service. The reversible cars had sixteen cushioned seats inside and eighteen seats outside, on top. Brakes to all four wheels helped the horses to negotiate the difficult bend and gradient at Green Cross Corner.

On the inaugural journey, the tramway superintendent and several town Councillors were allowed to travel gratis to Moldgreen and back. The receipts for the first day amounted to the satisfactory sum of £6.10s.3d. although on one journey - probably the first - the takings were as low as 8d. Shortly after the line opened it was reported that the horses had 'a stiff job ascending the hills' and, despite an officially expressed assurance that with use the tramlines would become smoother, the animals' hard labour was to continue until April 1888 when they were replaced by steam engines. In September 1890 the tramway was extended along Wakefield Road to Waterloo and in May 1902 the line was electrified.

### **THE MILESTONE (64)**

Immediately after the traffic lights, an old triangular milestone on the left, records the distance to and from Huddersfield as one mile. The stone

was removed from its original position on the old turnpike and accurately placed here in 1989. The plaque at the side of the milestone commemorates the opening of the Wakefield Road improvements by Barry Sheerman M.P. on 11th September 1989.

### **THE REGAL (65)**

On the right hand side of the road, the Moldgreen United Reform Church stands partly on the site of its 1865 predecessor and partly on the site of the Regal Cinema both of which were demolished to make way for the new road. The Regal, which was a converted private residence, opened without ceremony on 6th April 1936. For some twenty years the cinema presented two different programmes every week to full and enthusiastic houses. Later, as more and more people acquired television sets, audiences dwindled and the Regal, like many local cinemas, closed in the 1960s. Afterwards the building was used for many years as a retail carpet outlet.

### **ASPLEY (66)**

Just beyond the traffic lights at the bottom of Almondbury Bank the new road rejoins the 1820 route. As we have travelled and described this route before (D.O.H.1.i. Nos.53 to 60) we only need to mention that Harry Roebuck's furniture shop stood near the river on a site now covered by a supermarket car-park. And a little further on, whilst waiting at the traffic lights at Aspley, you might like to reflect that it was here, on 10th January 1931, that Alderman Dawson switched on the first 'traffic robots' in the town. The new lights which, in the parlance of the time, flashed directions to any passing motorists, worked from eight a.m. to eleven p.m. and did away with the necessity of a point constable.

### **BRIERLEYS (67)**

Whilst approaching the traffic roundabout at Shore Head notice, over on the right, Turnbridge Mills (a large building easily identified by its blue fire-escape).

The building, which dates back to 1846, is the property of Messrs. John L. Brierley and was bought by them in 1895 two years after they started their yarn spinning business in Firth Street.

Shortly after 'Discovering Old Huddersfield' part one was published we were gently rebuked by Mr. John Brierley for not mentioning the mill which has a long history in the town. More importantly, he pointed out, the Company provides employment for the area and therefore represents the future which is so much more important than the past. Briefly then, at the end of this tour, we repair our omission.

Surviving a fire of 1918, the General Strike of 1926 and the depression of the 1930s, the firm was virtually bankrupt in 1938. The outbreak of war in 1939 however brought increased orders and Brierleys held on. In 1941, on Government orders, most of the mill was taken over by David Brown Engineering Ltd. for making and storing essential engineering parts for the war effort. After the war, Brierleys returned to full production. Since then the Company has survived many vicissitudes of trade mainly through their policy of investing in modern machinery and ploughing back profits in the mill. Today, the directors are understandably proud that this family firm is still in production more than a century after it was founded.

Shortly after Shore Head we reach the bottom of Kirkgate and the end of the tour. The parish church of St. Peter's in Kirkgate, an early Victorian structure standing on a site that dates back to Norman times, will, with luck, be the starting point of our Millennium project: 'Discovering Old Huddersfield' part four.

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COUNTY BOROUGH OF HUDDERSFIELD COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS 1880 - 1910

ENDOWED CHARITIES, WEST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE

HUDDERSFIELD ESTATE MAPS 1716, 1778, 1797, 1825

ORDNANCE SURVEY MAPS FROM 1854

*Books by the same authors:*

DISCOVERING OLD LEPTON (revised and reprinted 1993)	1983
DISCOVERING OLD HUDDERSFIELD, part one.	1994
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ON THE TRAIL OF THE HOLMFIRTH FLOOD.	1996



