

The Cestrefeld

# Journal



**CHESTERFIELD & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

**ISSUE N° 4 – SEPTEMBER 2015**

Dear Members

Welcome to the latest issue of *The Cestrefeld Journal*. We celebrated our first twenty-five years last September and I wonder if we will manage another twenty-five years?

Our year did not get off to a very good start as we lost our recently retired chairman, Anne Hodson. Maeve and myself regularly visited Anne and had a good natter. She always had plenty to say and it was good to visit her. We will miss her, particularly at the Committee meetings (which are few and far between) as she always made these meetings fun. Thanks to Audrey and John for assisting Anne to the meetings. Unfortunately as you know Anne had to give up the Chairman's job as she was no longer able to get to the meetings but she was always very interested to know what was happening. She had celebrated her 90th birthday the previous October.

In September 2014 the Chesterfield and District Family History Society celebrated their own 25th anniversary by hosting an Open Day to which they invited several local societies. Ours was invited but due to other commitments Maeve and Peter were unable to attend and I myself had several other commitments and couldn't stay at the Open Day. However, Janet Murphy stepped in and "manned" the stall for our Society, I believe she was quite busy and sold quite a few books for us, thank you Janet.

We have moved our meetings into the new room at Rose Hill, and very nice it is too. We seem to be holding our own in numbers attending but of course we could always do with more members! Marion very kindly takes care of the refreshments and Peter is now "in charge". The book box goes every time and the books are regularly changed so please don't forget to take a look. Any money made helps towards the rent of the room and cost of speakers.

Maeve has provided us with some really interesting speakers but she always likes to hear from anyone with suggestions and ideas.

Membership renewal was due in January and if you haven't already taken care of this Brian Dick would love to hear from you soon.

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## **The Cestrefeld Journal - Reprint information**

This journal was originally published in September 2015. It has been scanned and made available electronically via the society's website <http://www.cadlhs.org.uk/> from March 2023.

We apologise that some of the illustrations may be of poor quality. This is due to limitations with the original copy and in the scanning process.

## **Chesterfield bowling green article - page 5**

It should be noted that the date of 1294 given on page 5 (Chesterfield's Ancient Bowling Green article) is not correct. This date has not been substantiated. The green (or 'bowling alley') appears to have been first mentioned in a Chesterfield Corporation order book of 1651 (Chesterfield Corporation Order Book – Derbyshire Record Office, D1504, 24 June 1651). This is, however, still an early date for a bowling green/alley.

## **Chesterfield Local History on the internet – page 22**

Please be aware that not all the links in this article are current. The society is not responsible for any missing or misdirected links or the content of any external websites.

## **Chesterfield Museum and Art Gallery Exhibitions and Society Publications – pages 23 to 24.**

These two articles are not reproduced in this on-line version as they are out of date.

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March 2023.

*The Cestrefeld Journal* is published by the Chesterfield & District Local History Society.

Volume Four, 2015.

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Comments on articles should be addressed to the Secretary/Editor. The comments expressed herein are those of the individual contributors. They are not necessarily those of the Chesterfield & District Local History Society. We welcome contributions to this publication, which should be with us before the end of December in each year. For details contact the Secretary/Editor.

Finally, I have recently come into possession of the Robinsons of Chesterfield Centenary book and some old copies of *The Link* magazine (published for the company employees) dated 1939. I am including some articles taken from these as I don't think we have covered Robinsons in the past few years.

Hope you enjoy the *Journal*. If you think you could contribute anything next year please let us know.

Jo Gott

Editor/Secretary

## ROBINSONS OF CHESTERFIELD

*Jo Gott*

### THE LINK – JUNE 1939

There is an article in the magazine about planning your holiday, here is a short excerpt:

*If you are not yet married why not save up to go abroad? France and Belgium are specially cheap this year and there are hundreds of walking holidays which are strenuous but great fun. You can go to the Alps, to Paris or the old Belgian cities, or along the Rhine.*

I wonder if many people took up the opportunity?

Another article is headed – This Freedom

*Our England is a garden and such gardens are not made,*

*By singing "Oh how beautiful and sitting in the shade,  
Then seek your job with thankfulness and work till further orders,*

*If it's only netting strawberries or killing slugs on borders.*

*Rudyard Kipling*

*Kipling has been described as an Imperialist. As a most intense patriot. Yet his insight was great. Have you, reader, read his Stalky & Co? You could do a great deal worse. You will find that even Kipling does not fail to brand a certain type of patriot as "A jelly bellied flag flapper" – the type that encourages others to do as I say, not as I do. It is said that the patriot who declares that he will die in the last ditch for his country takes care that he doesn't get anywhere near the first. Patriotism is neither confined to platform speaking or marching to the strains of a military band, excellent though each is in its way. There is a type of person in the world today to whom the boom of a big gun is far sweeter music than the singing of a lark. The rat-tat of machine guns gives them more satisfaction than the rattle of a mowing machine. Yet which is greater in service to the human race? During the Great War house building practically ceased. Men and materials*

*were wanted in the work of destruction. We have never recovered from that set back. Thousands of houses are yet needed. Because the people of the world have allowed themselves to be deluded, preparations for war go ahead. The cost of materials for housing and all other social amenities of Peace are soaring ever upwards. Truly where the carcass is the vultures will gather. Most of our young men are looking forward to their military training. That the instilling of discipline and training in physical exercises are excellent is agreed. When you, reader, pick up a newspaper and read of a brutal murder do you do other than experience a feeling of revulsion, horror and indignation? Do you feel that you would acclaim the murderer? Load him with honours and cheer him to the echo? You don't. Then why do it? War is murder on a vast scale.*

The article went on at some length but I wonder how the reader felt at the end of it!

### THE LINK – SEPTEMBER 1939

Interestingly, the Editor had obviously visited Germany recently and here is an excerpt from his article entitled "Impressions of Germany":

*One of the impressions gained during a short visit to Germany was that the authorities had apparently banished all "touting". This was specially noticed during one long morning spent idly wandering through the streets of a large German port watching the crowds. They were in the main very similar to English crowds – businessmen hurrying along with small attaché cases, women doing their morning shopping, family parties shop-window gazing which was apparently as popular as in England. As a whole, however, they didn't seem as well dressed as one would see in a large English city. Neither did they seem to be particularly happy – there were few smiling faces – and they had a rather greasy, forlorn appearance, but the hot weather and the fact that make-up is "taboo" in Germany may have been partially responsible for this. One had to look a long*



time before finding a vermillion-lip or even a plucked-eyebrow. Footwear generally was far from smart and high heels were certainly not the fashion. But after all, these were only minor points of difference, between the German scene and our own. The most amazing thing noticed was that during the whole of the morning we were never asked to buy anything! The same thing was noticed on a visit to a fashionable resort on the Baltic.....It was just the same on the wide promenade – a few large houses and hotels scattered about all very ostensibly displaying their Swastika flags. There were no shops or motor coaches and scarcely a motor car in sight. One conclusion seemed certain – the German people are not encouraged to waste their money on frivolities while on holiday!

### September 1939

September 1939 has been beset with great upheaval and many unusual happenings, but it is worthy of being placed on record that on Sunday, the third day of the month (a day which is now historic) the whole of the men and youths employed in our Cotton Department turned out for the purpose of digging trenches and filling sandbags. Ninety-seven trenches in all were required and by the end of the day many of them were in a fair way towards completion so far as rough digging was concerned. It was rough, heavy work of a type to which few of them were accustomed and blistered hands and sore fingers were the order of the day, but they stuck grimly to their task, the tragic news which came through at eleven o'clock being an additional source of determination to them in their work. The calls on our Surgical Dressing Departments during this critical period have been colossal. Big demands for dressings have only to be expected during wartime but never before have we experienced such an influx of orders and enquiries during the last few months. The last war taxed our resources to the uttermost but the coming of A.R.P. which aims at a certain measure of protection for everyone, has opened up a far wider field for the services and supply of surgical dressings. All this calls for best efforts on the part of our staff and in this connection a special appeal has been addressed by the Firm to each of our Surgical Dressing workers at Wheatbridge Mills and Walton:

### TO ALL WORKERS IN THE SURGICAL DRESSINGS DEPARTMENT

In the anxious and critical times though which we are now passing, we wish to appeal to all Workers in every Department to put forth their best efforts to secure the maximum output of all the Dressings which are now so urgently required by our Navy, Army and Air Forces, as well as to provide for A.R.P. to cover the possible needs of those whose work and duty keeps them at their

ordinary tasks. The Government are requiring very large supplies and to obtain them in time have relaxed some of the provisions of the Factory Acts, by permitting longer working hours per week for Women and Young Persons (shift work without ballot, working on Saturday afternoons) and in other directions, all with the object of ensuring that the materials required for the needs of the men who are fighting for our cause and the civilian population, shall be ready when required.....

**Remember – Every piece of Lint, Cotton Wool and Gauze, every Bandage or First Aid Dressing, may save the life of an injured friend.**

### THE CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

On 14th July 1939 Robinsons and Sons Ltd., celebrated their centenary. To mark the occasion the Board of Directors decided to take the company to London – all eight special trainloads of them! The eight trains drawn by decorated L.M.S. engines left Chesterfield, the first leaving at 4:42am. In addition to those actually in the employ of the Company, wives were invited to accompany their husbands and some of the Company's pensioners were also invited. With Friday and Saturday as holidays with full pay, some 3,700 merry-makers set out for London for a 24 hour programme. Breakfast on the train was first class and they all arrived at St. Pancras for the beginning of a fun-filled day. Such was the magnitude of the occasion that press photographers met the trains and a streamer bearing the words "The L.M.S. welcome you to London" was hung across the main entrance to the station. As each train arrived they were conducted by Mr. P. M. Robinson to the waiting fleet of private buses and they toured the sights of London. There were eighty buses in all. After the sight-seeing tour they were taken to four well-known Lyons' Corner Houses for lunch. They



Some of the specially prepared locomotives at Grimesthorpe Engine Sheds, Sheffield. From Robinson & Sons Ltd., Chesterfield, 1839-1989 published by CDLHS

then embarked on a further sight-seeing tour followed by tea at the various Corner Houses. Then they had some free time before the gathering at the Albert Hall. They all assembled for the all-star variety programme, which included Tommy Trinder and during the interval a number of congratulatory telegrams were read out including one from Buckingham Palace. It was the first time that the Albert Hall had been

used for a staff entertainment and the first time that so many of the employees were assembled under one roof. Over 5,000 employees, guests and customers of the firm were present. At last the trains duly left St. Pancras and as dawn broke at Chesterfield on 15th July 3,700 tired but happy folk were seen making for their homes and beds. All in all they had had a wonderful day.

## CHESTERFIELD'S ANCIENT BOWLING GREEN

*David Howes*

**N**obody ever speaks about the history of bowls without referring to Sir Francis Drake playing on Plymouth Hoe at the time of the Armada; but a lesser known historical fact is that behind a high wall in the centre of Chesterfield is an historic bowling green, where the game of bowls is said to have been played since 1294.



Chesterfield Bowling Green is on an open plot of land which originally ran from what is now Beetwell Street, down to the river Hipper. During the early days when the game of bowls was introduced into the country, the game was played with bowls made of stone: it wasn't until the 15th century that bowls were made of wood, usually yew, ash, oak, holly or box. Lignum-Vitae was not used in the United Kingdom until the 16th and 17th centuries. The first clear set of rules was drawn up by none other than King Charles II in 1670. Lawn mowers were not invented until 1830 so you can imagine bowls made of stone were ideal to play the game on uneven rough grassland.

In the early 13th and 14th century King Edward III banned the playing of bowls along with other sports. Why? Because he wanted the Archers of Britain to get practice without other sporting distractions, this was because of the wars in Europe at the time. King Edward was afraid that the practice of archery was being neglected. In 1511, Henry VIII, himself a bowler, banned the sport among the lower classes and levied a fee of £100 on any private bowling greens to ensure that only the wealthy could play. Despite these bans the game was still privately indulged in wherever an enclosed or private garden was

available. This is still predominant at "Ye old Chesterfield Bowling Green" today. Because the green is surrounded by high walls, many local people don't know that the Bowling Green exists and they are quite surprised when they learn about the green's existence!

The walls that surround the green are some measure of proof to its age. The green has never been laid out as a Bowling Green; it has just evolved out of a rough piece of land. The green slopes by over a metre from one end to the other and measures 40 yards by 30 yards. It is neither a flat nor a crown green. It is complicated, absorbing and highly entertaining to play on. In the 16th century a Guild Hall was built adjoining the top end of the green. This was used as a council chamber and a court house. When the council or magistrates had finished the day's proceedings they indulged in a game of bowls before retiring to the old Angel on Packers Row to dine and partake of some liquid refreshment.

The council's need for a new Town Hall in Chesterfield resulted in the Guild Hall being demolished and a new hall built, adjoining the Bowling Green, called The Municipal Hall which was used as a council chamber and courthouse until the new Town Hall Buildings were erected at the corner of High Street and Glumangate.



LEFT: The Municipal Hall, which was used as a clubroom by members of the bowling club for many years. It was demolished in 1973 to allow for the widening of Beetwell Street. PHOTO: David Howes' collection.

Rooms in the basement of the Municipal Building were used by the bowlers as a club room and a locker room.

The fact that the green is still in existence is probably due to the foresight of one Charles Markham, as recorded by the *Derbyshire Courier* 29th October 1910:

***Dog Kennels doomed – Mayor's magnificent gift to Chesterfield. Bowling Green and Municipal Hall to be moved***

*The Mayor, Councillor C. P. Markham has purchased the slum, which for so long has borne the title and it is proposed to make a street through, thus demolishing the worst property in the town.*

*Going into the scheme of opening out the Dog Kennels, the Mayor said he wanted the street 'to go through to the corner of Queen's Park Road and out by the slaughter house'. "By doing this", he added, "we should be doing away with a lot of filth at the bottom end of the town". Hasland was now to be included in the borough and that meant a demand for more tramways. Hasland people had every right to trams. But it was a very knotty problem. "There is that piece of sacred land in Chesterfield called the Bowling Green", he added with a smile. "It is like treading on holy ground even to mention the name; it is the holy of holies. The Bowling Green must go or the Municipal Hall must come down, either a street is to be driven through the Municipal Hall or the Bowling Green and for my part I would like to see it go through the Municipal Hall".*

The new road called Markham Road was cut 40 metres below the bottom end of the Bowling Green, thus the Green and the Municipal Hall were reprieved.

The longest serving member of the club was John Turner, a Chesterfield draper. His shop was at the corner of Vicar Lane and Packers Row which he opened in 1856, a window in the gable end of what remains of his shop bears his name to this day. He joined the Bowling Club in 1857 and remained a member until his death in 1913, a total of 56 years served. His Grace the Duke of Devonshire was Mayor of Chesterfield in 1911. It is the custom for the Mayor to attend the annual dinner of the club. In his speech to the members he referred to John Turner's long service, saying: "I see amongst us tonight a gentleman, Mr. John Turner, who was a member 54 years ago and who has known all the presidents personally since that time. I do not know whether the vitality of the Bowling Green is due to such members, or whether their vitality is due to the Bowling Green. I do not suppose Mr. Turner will be here for the next 54 years but I hope he will be a member of the Green for a great number".

In 1973 the Municipal Hall was finally demolished to widen Beetwell Street. After the removal of the Hall, the Bowling Club had to build a new clubhouse to meet the needs of the members. The Club today still adheres to the ancient rules and customs handed down over hundreds of years. Sportsmanship, friendship and fellowship are the mainstay of the Club. Today, although no games are played against other clubs in a league or otherwise, the Club organises five





ABOVE: Mr John Turner (5th from the left), President in 1900.

PHOTO: David Howes' Collection

competitions which take place throughout the season; the finals of these competitions are presided over by the President at the end of the season. On the first Wednesday of every month from May to October, a competition with 36 players split into twelve teams of three, play four games over six ends. The teams are alternated after every game and the player with the highest aggregate score is the winner. After the competition, the members retire to the clubhouse where they sit down to a supper, after which the President presents the competition winner with a bowls trophy and a bottle of whisky. The runner-up receives a bottle of wine. During the season the Club provides the members with eight free suppers.

Subscription and opening day takes place on the

first Wednesday of April at 3.00pm prompt, the President rolls the golden jack and follows with the first wood. Then the Mayor of Chesterfield also bowls a wood after which the President declares the green open for the season. At 5.00pm the members adjourn to the Market Hall Assembly Rooms for tea provided by the Club. Minute books dating back to 1852 are in the Club's possession. The President for that year was Lieut. John Roberts R.N., who

*The subscribers to the Bowling green in this town held their first annual dinner on Thursday last at Mr. Pinder's King and Miller. The evening was spent in toast and song with all the hilarity which was to be expected from the lovers of the good old English games of bowls.*

Membership of the Bowling Club is limited to 100 and there are few vacancies available. Bowling takes place at the club on Monday morning and evenings and Wednesday and Friday evenings. Members are also able to play on the green at any time which suits them.



ABOVE: Members, along with the Mayor of Chesterfield, Councillor Alexis Diouf, line up for a picture to mark the start of the 2015 season. PHOTO: Courtesy of Dave Wharmby, LRPS, CPAGB.

## WHERE DID WILLIAM OLIVER (1829-1908) RECEIVE HIS EDUCATION ?

*Peter Hawkins*

**R**ecently I bought a book "*Derbyshire Village Schools in the Nineteenth century*" by Marion Johnson, published by David & Charles in 1970. It was yet another find in Barrett's second-hand book shop at Wirksworth – I might add this is a very good shop and well worth a visit, with a small but excellent and well-arranged stock. We never come out empty-handed.

The book turned out to be very interesting and full of information about the various kinds of school that were available at that time. But it did make me think about William Oliver who in the mid-1800s formed Oliver & Company in Chesterfield. This was the company which was acquired by Charles Paxton Markham in 1889 to become Markham & Co. William's father was a blacksmith and had his own business, and his step-grandfather was a framesmith, so that would help a lot with the learning of the technical side of things. I suspect his step-grandfather was not poor as he was also in business with a Mr Short in Lordsmill Street. There were other self-taught engineers of that period in Chesterfield too. How to use the tools and machines of the day would be learnt from the craftsmen, but to start a business such as William did at the Victoria foundry was another thing. First of all he would have obviously needed to read and write. An excellent knowledge of arithmetic would be essential to be able to calculate for pricing and costing. He would need to make accurate sketches with the sizes and work out the weights of forgings and shrinkage of castings – a lot to learn.

In the 1841 census William, aged 12 years, is listed as a "smith" almost certainly working at his father John's blacksmith's business. His schooling then had not lasted very many years.

What schools were there in Chesterfield in the 1830s where a boy might gain a suitable education?

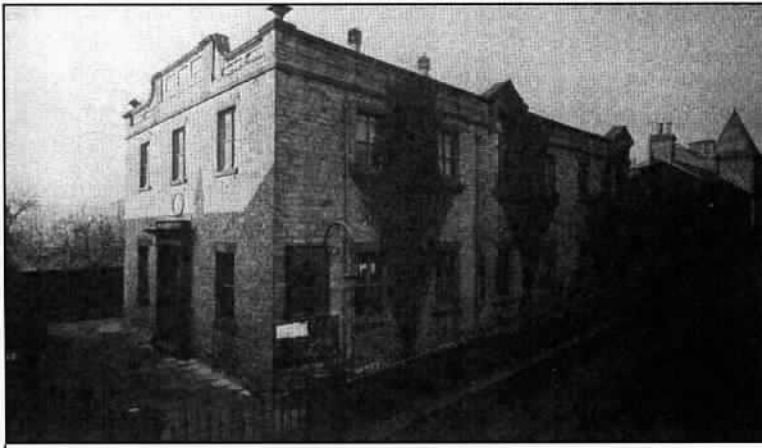
The oldest school was the Grammar School founded in 1594 and which was at one time, in the late 1700s, one of the largest schools in the north of England. However by the 1820s it had only five pupils and was in financial difficulties.

Its Master, the Rev Thomas Field, gave little time to the teaching of boys and, following his death in 1832, it closed and didn't reopen until 1846. The Grammar School was thought to be for the 'well-healed' amongst the population of Chesterfield so, even if it was affordable for William to have attended at the time, it wasn't an option. The National School in Soresby Street was opened in 1815 under the auspices of the Church of England. *Pigot's Directory* for 1835 tells us a Henry Mason was the Master and Mary Rice was the Mistress. Although built for 400 pupils, by the 1830s it had much lower numbers attending. The National Schools were built with funds raised by public subscription, like most public schools of the day. In this case the 6th Duke of Devonshire and the Dowager Lady Sitwell were its patrons. After the building of the Victoria National School in 1845, the Soresby Street School was linked with Trinity Church. The Ordnance Survey map of 1875 names the school Holy Trinity. There was one other school in Soresby Street listed in the 1835 Directory, a private school run by William Pickard. However a search of the *Derby Mercury* online showed that he died in June 1834 at the age of 30. In the announcement of his death in the edition of the 11th June 1834 it was said that he had attained considerable efficiency in painting.

A further school not listed, but known to have been built in 1831, was that attached to the Independents' Chapel now the United Reformed Church.

There was also a National School at Brampton Moor. The National Schools had quite a narrow curriculum – the 3Rs (at times only the 2Rs as arithmetic would not always be taught), the Catechism and good manners and behaviour. The Nonconformists set up the British Schools which had a much wider curriculum. However it was only in 1843 that Chesterfield's British School in Hollis Lane was opened having been started by a committee of Nonconformists led by William Bingham. There was also an infant school in Holywell Street which opened in 1829 at Nankwell's Croft, now the site of the former Primitive Methodist Church at Holywell Cross. William's father John had his blacksmith's





An undated photograph of The Independent/Congregational Chapel in Soresby Street. Holy Trinity School buildings can be seen at the far right. PHOTO: Peter Hawkins' Collection

business just round the corner in Blacksmith's Yard.

As a matter of interest the first infant school was started by Robert Owen in the model mill village of New Lanark in Scotland under the teaching of James Buchanan. In 1818 Buchanan was invited to London to set up an infant school there, this being the first public infant school as the New Lanark school was opened only for the village mill workers. The London school, the Westminster Free Day Infant Asylum, was financed by Mr Henry Brougham. James, with the help of his wife and daughter who both taught in the school, was very successful. The

school was visited by William IV and Princess (later Queen) Victoria who were most impressed. Children could attend from a very early age to about six years so that their parents would then be able to work.

The *Pigot's Directory* for Chesterfield of 1835 lists a total of eight private schools. No specialities are mentioned but it is possible that at least one offered art which would include drawing to scale. There were also Sunday schools where the children of poorer people were taught to read and write, and adults could also join the classes there as well.

There were nine Sunday schools in the town which may have included those in New Brampton.

Of course one had to pay for education in the early years, but there were free places at some schools financed by endowments. These were usually given by those with a social conscience and the funds to do so. It was usual to stipulate that places be given to the 'well-deserving poor' of the town or village. The Grammar School usually had some free places too. But when times were hard families would prefer to have the 6d a child could earn rather than pay the 3d or so for

BELOW: 1918 OS Map showing Holy Trinity School and the Congregational Chapel



the child to go school.

The Mechanics Institute was started c1830 probably by Ebenezer Smith of the Griffin Ironworks in New Brampton who had formed a Mechanics Institute at New Brampton in 1827. At first it was for Mechanics and Artisans but later it was opened to all. William could have attended there in the evenings. There was a library, and lectures were held on technical subjects. But books on divinity or party politics were not allowed to be kept in the Library. Subscriptions were 2s 6d and 1s 6d for members under 21 years of age.

So, with the schools at the time in Chesterfield, William may have started at the infant school at Holywell Cross and then perhaps moved to the National School in Soresby Street. The family was associated with the Parish Church where his father was Captain of the Bell Ringers. Perhaps William then went to a private school in the daytime or evening to learn the art of technical drawing and, when he was older, the Mechanics

Institute was available to him to gain further knowledge.

He was sufficiently skilful and knowledgeable so that by 1854 he could start his own business in Knifemithgate which grew to a major concern by the 1870s. A slump throughout the country from that time caused serious financial problems. However the company survived although, for its last few years, it was forced to go into receivership. As the economic tide turned for the country in the late 1880s it was purchased by Charles Paxton Markham.

#### Sources:

*History of Chesterfield Vol II Part 2 and Vol III by J M Bestall edited by D V Fowkes.*

*Pigot's Directory of Chesterfield 1835.*

*The British School Hollis Lane Chesterfield L Garlic History Paper No 4 Chesterfield Local History Society (Copies available).*

*James Buchanan Pioneer of Infant Schools – R Lines*

## HOLIDAYS AT HOME 1944.

*Janet Murphy*

*Much of the information for this article comes from the Derbyshire Times 11th August 1944.*

In 1943 councils ran Holidays at Home schemes during which entertainments were provided with the intention of persuading people to stay at home. This was successful and the scheme was repeated in 1944. In Chesterfield events were held during the period between the beginning of July and the first weekend in September. There was a packed programme: band concerts in Queen's, Brearley and Eastwood Parks as well as Somersall Playing Fields and Stand Road Recreation Ground; a wide variety of concert parties; concerts by the Co-operative Mixed Voice Choir and the New London Symphony Orchestra (at the Regal); a large number of dances were arranged; the Caledonian Players performed Noel Coward's *Hay Fever* and the Teachers' Drama Group performed *Twelfth Night*; the Photographic Society mounted an exhibition; and cycle and walking tours were arranged. On the sporting front there were bowls and cricket competitions and 'star' cricket matches, athletics

competitions, including the popular Municipal Sports, and swimming galas at Markham Road and Stand Road baths. And, for the children, there were donkey rides and amusements in Queen's Park and the Butlin's Amusement Park at Whittington Moor (Stand Road).



Queen's Park was also the location for an unique experiment. It was claimed that there was more ozone in Queen's Park than on Blackpool beach thanks to the iodine diffusers hanging in the

trees. These were the brainchild of Dr Goodfellow, who was anxious to reduce the incidence of goitre (caused by an iodine deficiency) or Derbyshire neck.

However the highlight of the whole season was undoubtedly the Country Day and Gymkhana in Queen's Park and the Cattle Market on Bank Holiday Saturday when it was estimated that 45,000 people attended. There were 15 events in the cricket enclosure between 1pm and 8.15pm. There was a display by the pipes and drums of the Number 1 Army selection centre and an 'excellent training display' was given by the instructors of an airborne training division. Another new feature was Cumberland and Westmorland style wrestling.

There was a riding ring in Queen's Park where a gymkhana attracted a great deal of interest with open jumping classes and events for children including a relay race; musical chairs and pig sticking. The shire horses and cattle were judged in the Cattle Market before the grand parade around the cricket ground in which they were joined by farmer's and tradesmen's turnouts.



The pony club of the Barlow Hunt lined up in the yard behind the Police Station in preparation for the gymkhana in August 1942.

L. to R. Miss Barbara Chambers, instructor, John Rooth, Susan Shentall, Verna Haslam, Robert Robinson, Jane Robinson, Pamela Mansell, Margaret Smith (standing), Cathrine Wilcockson, Peggy Swallow, —, Mrs Knight, —, Ann Jackson.

PHOTO: Courtesy Mrs Margeson

Elsewhere there was a horticultural show with high quality vegetables on show. There were also classes for flowers and, in the women and children's classes, prizes for a wartime cake; bottled fruit and for both white and coloured eggs. The rabbit show was said to be one of the biggest and best held in Chesterfield; with 430 entries, an increase of more than 100 over the previous year, and exhibits came from all over the country. And there was a baby show.

The final events of the evening were the works fire brigade competitions with Messrs Robinson and Sons winning the light trailer competition and BTH the motor trailer pump competition.

*Despite the size of the crowd catering arrangements were said to have coped quite well. What a stampede there was at the gymkhana when Mr Milner announced that there were 7,500 third-pint bottles of milk for the children. They were sold at three-halfpence a bottle, which ran out much cheaper than lemonade. Those who were able to enjoy the milk probably did not realize that the little bottles themselves cost nine-pence, and large numbers were not returned. This was hardly playing the game.*

*One always expects some lost children in a crowd of nearly 50,000 but they really were a pest to the officials on Saturday. The Chief Constable (Mr. L. Milner) told me that they had 83 in the course of the day, and looking after them presented quite a problem. They were all sorted out and returned to their parents. Quite a lot of children were also fished out of the park lake, and they were wrapped up in blankets at the ambulance station whilst their clothes dried.*

Sunday was comparatively quiet. Creswell Colliery Band gave afternoon and evening performances at Queen's Park open air theatre.

Early on Monday morning there was a remarkable trek out of Chesterfield. The roads to the Peak District and Sherwood Forest were thronged with young people on cycles. Buses leaving Chesterfield were packed to the doors. Later in the day family parties were to be seen tramping out of Chesterfield taking their meals with them.

The park was again packed when some 10,000 people watched the cricket match between G. H. Pope's XI and the Mayor's XI; the latter forcing a victory a few minutes before stumps were drawn. Captain of Pope's XI was Herbert Sutcliffe: Derbyshire supporters will recognise several names; Eric Marsh; Harold and Eric Pope (playing on opposing sides), Cliff Gladwin, Bill Copson; and Alan Revill.

The evening ended with a concert by the Northern Celebrities Concert party.

Despite the number of visitors to the town the food position was said to be quite satisfactory. There were good vegetables for sale but tomatoes were a mystery and the few available sold out early in the morning.

Cinemas were sold out for all performances.



There was a big run on beer and some houses were shut on Monday but the shortage was not as acute as it was a year ago. (Matlock had almost run out of beer by the Friday evening and further supplies were not received until the following Tuesday!) There were practically no spirits in the town over the holiday weekend.

However not everyone was happy. Travel by train was not easy as the people who tried to travel during the bank holiday weekend discovered.

*At the stations people stood in long queues for tickets. Trains to the West Coast and Manchester were packed. Likewise trains on the Midland line were packed to suffocation as people from the south visited their evacuee relations in Chesterfield and people from Chesterfield visited relatives in various parts of the country. The reduced train service meant that some people were left standing on the platforms because no more could be packed into the trains. For some people their holiday was ruined. To quote a railway official, travelling by train was a definite ordeal.*

Throughout the summer ever-growing numbers of people travelling out to the beauty spots of the Peak made getting a seat on a bus something of a problem. This was particularly so on the Matlock route and it was aggravated by people from South Yorkshire people travelling to the Matlocks via Chesterfield. Although the East Midland Bus Company had applied to increase the frequency of the service the Traffic Commissioners would not allow them to do so. Unfortunately few of the passengers who travelled to Matlock during the day wanted to return home before tea time. The last authorised journeys from Matlock were 7.25pm and 8.25pm and people were being stranded for the night because there was no room on the buses.

During the summer the Bus Company restricted the number of people getting on at the termini in order to give priority to the large number of people living along the route who relied on the bus service for business and shopping purposes. Such people needed to be provided for before holiday makers. The buses therefore, were filled first with season ticket holders, essential

workpeople, school children going to and from school, passengers on special Government service holding warrants, members of H.M. Forces going on and returning from leave, and passengers attending hospital.

To add to the problems, the very severe gradients between Stubbing Court Lane and Matlock, meant that no standing passengers were allowed on that section of the route. From Chesterfield therefore, after a vehicle had been loaded with 26 passengers for Matlock, only local passengers between Chesterfield and Stubbing Court Lane could be taken on board until the vehicle had its full complement of seated and standing passengers so that when it reached Stubbing Court Lane it had 26 passengers. (By comparison the modern X17 can carry 90 passengers.)

No wonder people were encouraged to stay at home.

**FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

**THIS SATURDAY,**  
**AUGUST 5th.**

**EVERYBODY IS GOING TO**  
**CHESTERFIELD SHOW,**  
**COUNTRY DAY, GYMKHANA, AGRICULTURAL**  
**SHOW.**

**TIMES OF STARTING:**

Gates open at the CATTLE MARKET SHOW	10.30 a.m.
Pay at the Gates: Adults, 1/-; Children, 3d.	
Gates open at QUEEN'S PARK	12.0 noon.
Events commence at	1.0 p.m.

Admission by Turnstiles and Tickets bought beforehand from Police Office's and at Headquarters, Chesterfield.  
Adults, 1/-; Children, 3d.; Catalogues, 1/-

**FIRST EVENT IN THE PARK at 1.0 p.m. is the**  
**11 Stones Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling**  
**Competition.**  
**DON'T MISS SEEING THIS.**

**A tremendous Number of Entries for all Events, Horses, etc., up to**  
**Royal Show Standard.**

**MAKE A DAY OF IT. REFRESHMENTS.**  
**YOU CAN GET HOME AFTER.**

**"HOLIDAYS AT HOME" — CHESTERFIELD.**


**NEXT WEEK'S EVENTS.**

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 6th.—CYCLE TOUR (Competition Run). Meet**  
**Market Place Station, 10.30 a.m. Baslow, Bakewell (lunch), Lath-**  
**kill Dale, Alport (Tea). Return via Chatsworth Park.**  
**CRESWELL COLLIERY BAND. Queen's Park. 3 p.m. & 6.30 p.m.**

**MONDAY, AUGUST 7th.—Bank Holiday. CYCLE TOUR to Lady-**  
**bower Reservoir, via Castleton. Meet Market Place Station, 9.30**  
**a.m. to 9.45 a.m.**  
**STAR CRICKET MATCH, Queen's Park. Commence 12 noon.**  
**NORTHERN CELEBRITIES CONCERT PARTY. Open-air**  
**Theatre, Queen's Park. 7 p.m.**

# WILLIAM SWIFT, GENEALOGIST

*Rodney Ward*

 n visits to Sheffield Cathedral I had noticed a plaque to someone with Chesterfield connections, noted as a genealogist. When Janet Ridler, Heritage Learning Officer, at the Cathedral, spoke at a meeting of the History Society, about the Cathedral and its connections, she invited us to contact her with any queries we might have. I took the opportunity to write to her about the plaque.

*Dear Janet,*

*I am writing following your talk at Chesterfield and District Local History Society. To the best of my memory there is a plaque on a pillar towards the Chancel end to someone from Chesterfield who was a genealogist. I wondered if you could check this for me and if anything is known about this person.*

*Best wishes,*

*Rodney Ward*

I received an immediate reply:

*Hello Rodney,*

*The memorial plaque to William Swift 'much respected local genealogist' is located on the north wall of St Katharine's Chapel, to the left of the Sanctuary. It states he was born in Chesterfield on 13 December 1818 and died on 10 December 1874. The memorial was erected by his friend Richard Fawkes 'for service in the stamp office of this town.'*

*I have also found out the following from a publication called 'Sheffield's Life Stories' which may be of interest:*

*1874. William Swift.—Mr. William Swift, one of Sheffield's early antiquarians, was fifty-five years old when he died in December, 1874. He came to Sheffield from Chesterfield when eighteen years old, going to the office of Mr. J. Brown the solicitor, but very soon he found a more congenial home in the Stamp Office, where he remained to the end. His investigations throughout South Yorkshire covered his life-time, and he and Mr. John Holland placed*

*the results before Sheffield Societies repeatedly. He died at Ash Cottage, Staveley, when fifty-five years of age, having been for twenty-seven years chief clerk in the Stamp Office. It was said that no one knew as much of the Hundred of Scarsdale or of South Yorkshire as he. He revealed a marvellous industry as genealogical and topographical collector, was fond of poring over old MSS., old registers, and so on, and was the "Old Mortality" of Sheffield. He mastered Latin and Norman French to enable him to deal with medieval documents, and was the oracle to which all local questions were addressed, but he had not the gift of writing. Of him, Dr. Gatty wrote a very eloquent tribute at the time of his death in his preface to the new edition of Hunter's Hallamshire.*

*All our archives are kept at the Sheffield Archives so if you wish to research him further you will need to get in touch with them. They are located on Shoreham Street near to Sheffield station.*

*Hope this helps,*

*Best wishes,*

*Janet*

*Janet Ridler*

*Heritage Learning Officer, The Cathedral Church of St Peter & St Paul*

Looking up the Sheffield City Archives on the internet I discovered that papers relating to William Swift are held in the Jackson Collection. Of William Swift's papers it says, "Volumes, notebooks, containing historical notes on Beighton, Castleton, Chesterfield, Eckington, Norton, Renishaw, Ridgeway and the Hundred of Scarsdale; church deeds and notes for the Deaneries of Chesterfield and the High Peak, Yorkshire and Derbyshire in general, and Alfretton, Ashover and Dethick; 18 boxes of draft deeds and legal documents, cuttings, etc." There are also many volumes containing pedigrees and genealogical notes.

**DID YOU KNOW:** Francis Frith (7<sup>th</sup> October 1822 – 25<sup>th</sup> February 1898), the famous English photographer of the Middle East and many towns in the United Kingdom was born in Chesterfield, Derbyshire, attending Quaker schools at Ackworth and Quaker Camp Hill in Birmingham (ca. 1828–1838), before he started in the cutlery business, leaving in 1850 to start a photographic studio in Liverpool, known as Frith & Hayward.

## THE 'PIT TALK EAST MIDLANDS' PROJECT

*Claire Ashmore*

**T**he British Academy funded 'Pit Talk East Midlands' project, headed by Natalie Braber at Nottingham Trent University, is looking to find coal miners from Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire to interview. We're interested in the distinctive language used by miners in the region and hope to capture this before it disappears. We'd like to talk with anyone happy to share their experiences of working at coal mines in the East Midlands, whether above or below ground. If you have any questions, or wish to contribute, please contact us by email at [pittalkeastmidlands@gmail.com](mailto:pittalkeastmidlands@gmail.com) or telephone 0115 848 3011 to speak with Natalie Braber.



## IN BYGONE DAYS

*David Howes*

### CHESTERFIELD OCTOGENARIAN'S REMINISCENCES

#### WHEN BRAMPTON WAS A COUNTRY PLACE

*(taken from The Derbyshire Times 16th May 1931)*

On Tuesday Mrs. Ford, 3 Walton Walk, Brampton, celebrated the 87th anniversary of her birthday. Mrs. Ford has a wonderful memory and to a Derbyshire Times representative who called on her on Tuesday she gave some of her reminiscences of Chesterfield as it was during her early life.

Her father was Mr. Gifford, a horse breaker at Wingerworth Hall and said Mrs. Ford "he sometimes used to tell me that he was born in the saddle room at Wingerworth". Mrs. Ford's family did not reside long at Wingerworth and came to Chesterfield where her father was a bareback rider in Pablo's Circus. "They did not make us go to school in those days" said Mrs. Ford "and I only learnt to read and write during the last few years and I greatly appreciated The Derbyshire Times. Chesterfield has changed so much since my young days that I can hardly find my way about in some places" added Mrs. Ford. "I can remember the old Market Hall and the

new one being built. The cattle market was held in New Square and at the May Fair the servants used to come to Chesterfield and exchange situations. There were very few houses along West Bars and Brampton was all country. On the Moor was a plantation and the road to Old Brampton was country lane. Chesterfield was quite a little place in those days."

Mrs. Ford was married at Barlow in 1866, her husband, Mr. James Ford a member of a family well known in Brampton today being a clogger. Later he was employed at Plowright Bros. Ltd., where that firm compared with its present size was quite small. "At that time too, Messrs. Robinsons Works were not by any means so large as they are today".

"Irishmen who worked in Chesterfield used to cause a lot of trouble", went on Mrs. Ford. "They used to throw bricks through the windows and I can remember riots in Chesterfield when shop windows were smashed and carriages overturned".

Mrs. Ford considers that the weather is not so severe as it was. On one occasion when she was living in Spa Lane a fall of snow buried the houses up to the bedroom windows and it was possible to walk on top of the snow.



## A CUTTING FROM AN OLD SCRAPBOOK - DATE UNKNOWN

**LOW PAVEMENT** – On Low Pavement a Mr. Towndrow once carried on the business of a grocer. He was also manager to the Gas and Water Company and was succeeded by Joseph Bunting. A little further on are the premises formerly the draper's shop of Everard and Short. This part of the town was for generations the resort of the ladies of Chesterfield. Before Everard and Short, there was Collier and Wilcockson. Before them Dutton and Parker and before them W. E. Dutton. Near to James Lingard, in partnership with Robert Wright, the Quaker, kept a grocer's shop. Lingard was the descendant of James Lingard, one of the benefactors of Chesterfield Grammar School. Next was Claughton and Company's druggist shop and then Cooper's hymn book and Bible Society shop. Cooper was parish clerk. The Three Tuns, long demolished was at one time kept by Matthew Dobbs, publican and auctioneer. Dobbs was a son of Dobbs who was a hatter in Mansfield. In his youth he went to London and enlisted in the Life Guards, but because of his huge stature was discharged as it was difficult to find a horse which could comfortably carry him. At the bottom of the Market Place was Frith's Ropery Walk then there was an ironmonger's shop kept by Wordsworth and Woodhead and Hall also had a shop here, as also Mr. T. Pike of Derby who used to publish the "Chesterfield Reporter" here. The Castle Inn – now closed as a public house – was formerly kept by William Hanstock and was then the headquarters of the Chesterfield Cricket Club.

**TOBACCO INDUSTRY** – Nearby was George Mason's tobacco shop, long before he built Spital Mills. His works were in Wheeldon Lane and his motive power for grinding was obtained by a horse going round and round a central pivot which turned the wheels inside the building. Near to were places where the tobacco was steamed and cut and made into cigars, the waste being made into thick twist, etc. George Mason lived at Eastwood House, where Dr. Jeffreys and Dr. Shea later resided. That part of the building used as a surgery was formerly the Borough Police Court and from a yard in Wheeldon Lane a flight of stone steps led the public into the sacred precincts of justice. The then town clerk (Mr. William Waller) made a nominal charge of £10 per annum for this room and spent the money in giving the Corporation an annual

dinner. This was why for many years the Chesterfield County Justices were charged £10 for the use of the Municipal Hall.

## THE SITE OF THE MARKET HALL

The Crown and Cushion had many notable landlords. One of the most popular was Thomas Worsley, who was put in here by Mr. Maynard when he gave up his harriers and no longer required the service of a ship. Opposite the Crown and Cushion on a site now occupied by the Market Hall was the Cross Daggers public house. On the west of this there were no buildings but on the north was a stable and over it, approached by stone steps and a wood balcony, a corn chamber. At the stable door and in front of the Cross Daggers parlour was a receptacle for stable manure formed by stone flags placed on end. On the other side of the inn was Gregory's wool store and cheese store above it and at the north-east corner was Wilcockson's pawnshop. People complain of the Market Hall today as an ugly building spoiling a fine square but it must be remembered the square was never entirely empty and that the Market Hall when erected was a great advance on the buildings which had preceded it – the barber's shop, pawnshop, public house, common bakehouse, stable midden – offensive alike to sight and smell. Below Wilcockson's was the barber's shop with its red and white pole. Barber's poles today have lost their real significance. They were originally the sign that inside blood letting could be performed – the barbers being surgeons. If one had a headache or simple ailment, one naturally went to the barber to have a little blood let out. He took his pole and placed one end on the floor, making the patient hold it at arm's length. He then unbound the red tapes and wound these tightly round the arm at the point of attack. Having placed a bowl to catch the blood he made the incision, checking the flow of the blood with another tape wound round below the wound. When enough blood had flowed to give relief, he tied up the wound and usually suggested "A little of the best brandy sir. My boy will fetch it you sir. Will I join you sir? Well, as you're so kind, certainly, sir, John fetch two best brandies and look sharp."



# UP THE FILTHY RIVER ROTHER

*Janet Murphy*

In 1989 the proposal to privatise the water companies brought concerns that there would be less pressure on the privatised companies to tackle river pollution at a time when water pollution incidents were increasing. People who watched the Clean River Campaign video, *Cry Me A River*, shown in Chesterfield in 1988, learned that two of the three most polluted rivers in Britain were to be found in north Derbyshire – the Rother and the Doe Lea. Greenpeace, in their report *Poison in the System*, went further and referred to the Rother as one of the most polluted rivers in Europe.

At the time the Doe Lea (13 miles in length) received effluent from more than 40 outlets of which Coalite was the biggest and the worst offender. North of Staveley, the Doe Lea enters the Rother which in turn received discharges from 120 outlets along its 36-mile length (from Pilsley to the River Don) and for much of its length was classified Grade 4 by the Yorkshire Water Authority; the lowest grade, which means '*grossly polluted and likely to cause nuisance*'.

Pollution of the River Rother has a long history. In this area during the earlier part of the nineteenth century, the pollution came mainly from the River Hipper and its tributaries as potteries and textiles, together with some coal and ironstone mining, developed along their banks. A rapidly expanding population brought an increasing amount of domestic waste which drained untreated into the river.

Although the Corporation of Chesterfield attempted to improve matters by laying sewers by 1859 which led to three settling tanks where the town sewage was filtered through animal charcoal before it entered the rivers, it was recognised that little could be done to improve the overall situation when the surrounding townships did nothing, and the problem was compounded by the numerous outfalls directly into the rivers. Local residents reported '*foul odours and miasmatic vapours*' arising from the rivers in the moist warm evenings of summer. A Local Board of Health and Urban Sanitary Authority was established for Chesterfield in 1874.

From the 1870s, the water quality of the Rother

deteriorated rapidly with the development of coal mining on several of its tributaries. Mine-water discharged into the river contained large volumes of solids, which were deposited on the river bed, smothering the vegetation and turning the water black. Like Brampton, villages which grew up around the mines often had little or no sewage treatment facilities, and hence untreated sewage found its way into the river. In addition industries like Markhams, Chesterfield Cylinders and Chesterfield Tube Works developed to take advantage of the plentiful supply of coal and these discharged effluent straight into the rivers. As a result the colour of the river could change several times a day.



The River Rother as it flows past the old Markham Works. Peter Hawkins says that when he worked there the colour of the water sometimes changed several times a day. PHOTO: Janet Murphy

By 1880 a system of sewers developed which led to a sewage farm at Stonegravels. Initially this was rather inefficient partly because of the amount of clay in the soil at the works made disposal of the water hard to achieve, and partly because of the sheer volume of effluent being received from the outer townships, particularly Brampton. Chesterfield was justifiably annoyed when the urban system of Brampton and Walton was connected to Chesterfield's sewers in 1878, as the Brampton and Walton Local Board contributed nothing towards the cost of either the sewers or sewage disposal. The question of public health was a major factor when Chesterfield Corporation sought to extend the borough to include parts of Brampton and Walton in 1876.



This little flotilla of ducks lives around Clayton Street. PHOTO: Janet Murphy

This application was unsuccessful but a second application in 1892 was successful and as a result Chesterfield expanded from 322 acres to 1,219 acres by taking in parts of Brampton, Walton, Hasland and Newbold. The expansion of the borough brought an increased revenue from the rates which in turn made it easier to obtain loans in order to carry out improvements. The first capital project was the extension of the sewerage system throughout the borough – a major undertaking as the area absorbed from Brampton alone was greater than the size of the original borough.

By 1989 the major polluters discharging directly into the Rother, or indirectly into one of the tributaries, were the coking plants at Wingerworth and Bolsover, together with the Staveley Iron and Chemical Works, and the sewage works at Chesterfield. Bad as those these were it was the British Steel plant at Orgreave in South Yorkshire which discharged greatest amount of, and the most polluted, industrial discharge into the river.

Coalite was established to manufacture smokeless fuels in April 1937. It was particularly notorious for the manufacture of dioxins a defoliant used in the Vietnam War. The huge NCB Avenue Carbonisation and Chemical Plant, producing smokeless fuels opened in 1956 as the result of the Clean Air Campaign of the 1950s. The downside was the tarry discharge of ammonia, nitrates, phenols, permanganates, suspended solids, oil and grease into the river. Clean air came at the expense of increased river pollution.

At Staveley the emphasis changed from the iron

and coal production to the manufacture of chemicals after the First World War. Discharges from Staveley included mercury which is toxic to fish in even small amounts. In the late 1980s the works was discharging around 51 pounds per year into the river.

The sewage disposal works at Whittington were erected by the Newbold and Whittington Local Boards in 1914 (before they became part of the Borough of Chesterfield) and, in 1925, the Chesterfield main sewer was extended from Stonegravels to Whittington. The works were extended twice in the 1930s. There was an increasing amount of domestic waste due not only to the increasing population but also due to the rolling programme of replacing privies in older houses with water closets. The works became the responsibility of the Yorkshire Water Authority and were upgraded in 1986 at a cost of £3 million, but they were still seriously overloaded.

The problems were highlighted in both the local and the national press. Writing in the *Telegraph Weekend Magazine* in 1989 Graham Coster described his journey from the source of the Rother at Pilsley to its junction with the River Don.

*Out of the pipe from the Old Whittington sewage works came a brown bubbling flow that curled away downstream in white flecks, an olive-green stain just under the surface. A large pipe next to the main sewage works outflow pipe discharged untreated sewage into the river at times of heavy rainfall.*

Today it is all very different. In 1986 effluent from Avenue coking plant was diverted to Whittington and the site was closed in 1992. The addition of a nitrification plant at the sewage works in 1993 to remove ammonia from the effluent resulted in a dramatic improvement in water quality. Coalite was closed in 2004. Most of the works at Staveley closed in 2007 and, at the remnant operated by Rhône-Poulenc Chemicals, a mercury recovery plant was fitted to prevent the discharge of mercury, before the site was closed in 2012. Closure of the mines reduced the amount of solids entering the river; a new sewage treatment plant at Staveley reduced the amount of domestic sewage entering the river, but it was the closure of the heavy industry and the coking plants that brought the greatest improvement in water quality.

Rother Valley Country Park was opened in 1983. At the time the Rother was so polluted that water

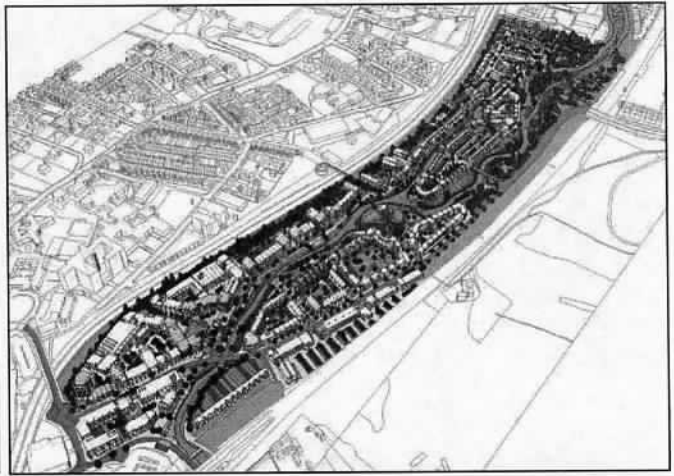


to fill the lakes had to be diverted there from the nearby Moss valley. Part of the Avenue site is a wildlife reserve operated by the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust.

The Future? The Chesterfield Waterside site runs from north to south either side of the River Rother/Chesterfield Canal and alongside the A61 – a scheme which would have been unthinkable in 1989.

#### THE PROPOSED CHESTERFIELD WATERSIDE DEVELOPMENT

IMAGE: <http://legacy.chesterfield.gov.uk/>



## TOM SAYERS AND THE CIRCUS

**DERBYSHIRE COURIER – SATURDAY DECEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup> 1860**

**David Howes**

**A**n equestrian company belonging to Messrs. Howes and Cushing, the Americans, visited Chesterfield on Tuesday last and pitched their tent in the Recreation Ground. The great attraction was the visit of Tom Sayers, the English representative of the late undecided international prize fight with Heenan, the Benicia Boy. (This was the first international prize fight which took place at Farnborough, on April 17th 1860. The 42 rounds of ferocious fighting lasted 2 hours and 20 minutes, during which Sayers had his right arm immobilised but still managed to close the eyes of his much bigger and heavier opponent. The ten stones Sayers was being throttled on the ropes when someone cut a rope and prevented Sayers from almost certain death. The fight was declared a "No Contest" although the Englishmen considered it a mighty moral victory for the local boy).

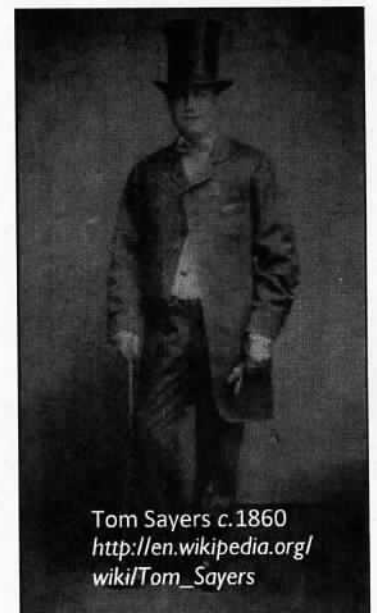
The weather, which at this time of the year is very unfavourable for tenting, had been so wet and the roads so dirty that it was with difficulty the tent could be erected at all. The company performed at Derby on Monday evening and consequently they had to travel twenty four miles to Chesterfield. This rendered them so late that the afternoon performance was dispensed with. The entrance to the ground was so flooded with water that planks had to be used to enable people to get into the field. The ground was ankle-deep in mud but notwithstanding this and a continued fall of rain, the interest to see Tom Sayers was so great that people waded through the mud with less grumbling than might have been anticipated.

The equestrianism was very meagre, but when Sayers appeared he was heartily welcomed by the applause of the audience. He first appeared in private clothes, and displayed upon a table a belt, cups etc., which he had received as presents for his gallantry. Afterwards he came into the ring in fighting costume and to use an English term he "set to" with Brown of Yarmouth who is engaged to travel with the circus.

The circus was filled to overflowing, and numbers were unable to obtain admission in the lower-priced seats. Few people but the go-a-head Americans would have ventured on such an experiment at the engagement of Sayers.

We learn on good authority, that the salary of Tom Sayers is £55 per week, in addition to his travelling expenses, horse-keep and attendance. So great is the competition amongst the inn-keepers to entertain the renowned Tom that it is a rule wherever he resides that the hotel-keepers find him lodging and provision free.

Sayers' quarters in Chesterfield were at Mr. Dobbs, the Three Tuns (on Low Pavement, where the site today is partially covered by McDonalds).



Tom Sayers c.1860  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom\\_Sayers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom_Sayers)

# WALTON HALL

*Janet Murphy*

The original Walton Hall was an important mansion standing in a deer park on the south western edge of Chesterfield. The Hall passed into the hands of the wealthy Foljambe family about 1392. It remained in their hands until 1633 when Sir Francis Foljambe sold it to Sir Arthur Ingram, who sold it to Paul Fletcher three years later; he bequeathed it to his nephew Richard Jenkinson. Richard's son Paul was created baronet in 1685; he died in 1741. His heiress was his daughter who bestowed Walton Hall to her widowed mother Catherine. She re-married and her second husband was William Woodyeare of Crookhill Hall, Conisborough. They had a son John. All that remained of the original Walton Hall, home of the Foljambe family, was presumably demolished by John Woodyeare who built the present Walton Hall about 1795.

The *Derby Mercury* of 9th April 1801 carried this advertisement (opposite) for the sale of the Manor of Walton. What happened next is unclear as there is no record of a sale and, in September, property advertised for sale did not include Walton Hall.

In November 1812 'the Manor of Walton comprising 3000 Acres of Land well stocked with game' and the Walton Hall estate, containing upwards of 700 acres, was offered for sale.

Most of the estate was purchased by Sir Thomas Windsor Hunloke of Wingerworth, who was anxious to acquire the land south of

## VALUABLE FREEHOLD MANOR AND ESTATES

*Cotton-Mill, Water Corn-Mills, Colliery, &c.*

Advantageously situated in the town and vicinity

At Chesterfield, in the County of Derby.

Shortly will be offered to the Public,

FOR SALE BY AUCTION,

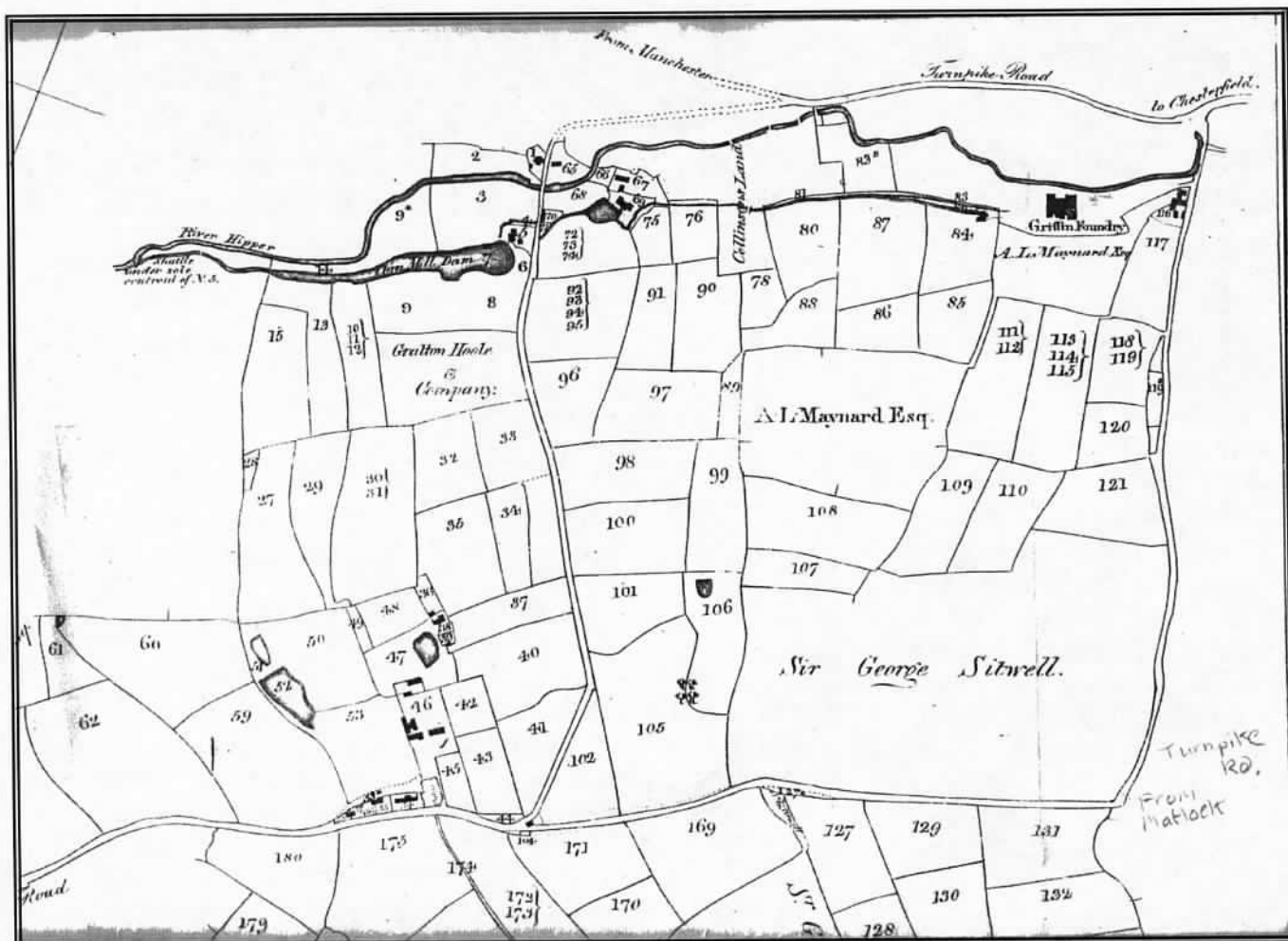
In a great Variety of Lots,

The valuable FREEHOLD MANOR OF WALTON, in the Parish of Chesterfield, with the woods, Mines, Minerals, Rights, Royalties, and Appurtenances thereunto belonging; together with a substantial well built Stone DWELLING HOUSE, with Suitable Outbuildings called WALTON-HALL, and FARM therewith occupied. Also, sundry other valuable FARMS, a COTTON-MILL, CORN-MILLS, LANDS and PREMISES within the said MANOR, containing upwards of 1000 acres. Also several other Valuable Freehold FARMS, HOUSES and Lands in Chesterfield aforesaid, and the neighbouring Parishes or Hamlets of Calow, Tapton, Brampton, Spital, Boythorpe, Hasland, and Ashover, in the said County, containing upwards of 200 Acres, as the whole are now in Occupation of Tenants at low Rents, capable of very considerable Improvement. Together with the TIMBER growing on the said Farms, and sundry PEWS and SEATS in the Parish Church of Chesterfield aforesaid.

Great Part of the above Estate contains two Beds of very Valuable COAL. Also IRONSTONE in large Quantities and an extensive COLLIERY and IRONSTONE PITS are now in full Work. Many Parts of the Property are therefore peculiarly adapted for the Erection of Iron-Furnaces, Cotton-Mills, and other Works where Coal and Ironstone on the Spot are desirable. The whole is well situated for a regular and easy Communication with the towns of Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Derby, &c. on good, Turnpike roads; and also has the benefit of a Water communication with the ports of London and Hull, on very reasonable Terms, by means of the Chesterfield Canal, to the River Trent, near Gainsborough.

Descriptive Particulars of each lot, the Time and Place of Sale, &c will be shortly advertised in this and other Newspapers; and in the mean time, further particulars may be known on Application to Messrs SLATER and THOMAS, Attornies in Chesterfield; or Messrs MANLEY, and J. and W. LOWE, Temple, London.

Chesterfield, April 4, 1801.



This is a map of the northern part of the original estate offered for sale in 1812. The road down the centre of the map was Walton Lane (now Walton Road). Walton Hall is on plot 46.

Matlock Road and to the east (right) of Walton Road. He offered the estate for sale again in 1813, retaining the land that he had wanted. The Walton Hall farm does not appear to have been sold nor was it sold when it was offered for sale in 1814, after the sitting tenant Joseph Hoole had given up the tenancy.

Sir Thomas Windsor Hunloke died in Paris in 1816, leaving behind a four-year-old son, Henry. There was a dispute in Chancery about his will between the trustees of the young Sir Henry as plaintiff and the defendants, who included Thomas's widow, Ann. As a result of the case, the Walton Hall estate and about 170 acres had to be offered for sale in 1821.

This time the property was in three distinct sections (i) Walton Hall (plots 27-59 and half of plot 60), (ii) Brampton (plots 66-88), much of which later belonged to Robinsons, and (iii) a farm in the corner south of where the River Hipper crosses Boythorpe Road, together with fields to the south, (plots 109-121) possibly the area now occupied by the Post Office.

The map accompanying the sale particulars

shows that at some stage land to the east of Walton Road (plots 90-97 on the original 1812 map) had been bought by Samuel Lancaster; and plots 72-74 by Oldfield and Co. who were potters. Plots 2-9 and 14 (the land round the dam and the corn mill) were acquired by William Elliott, miller; plots 10-15 by Joseph Mellor, who had a wood-yard, and plots 32-33 by Mr Wright.

The Walton Hall estate was purchased by the Revd Richard Burrow Turbutt, rector of Morton. His grandfather Richard Turbutt (born 1689) had a son William and a daughter Frances. Frances married the John Woodyeare, who had sold the estate to Thomas Hunloke. The son William (born 1738) married Elizabeth Burrow. They had two sons William (born 1768), who married Ann Gladwin, daughter of General Gladwin of Stubbin Court and Richard Burrow (born 1770). It was this Richard who bought Walton Hall from Sir Thomas Hunloke, thus acquiring the property that his uncle-by-marriage had sold.

General Gladwin, who was prominent in the war in America in the 1760s, had ten children. His eldest daughter Frances married Francis



Goodwin of Hinchley Wood House near Ashbourne. Their son, Revd Henry John Goodwin, married Frances Turbutt (daughter of the Richard who had bought Walton Hall) and so he acquired the Walton Hall estate on the death of Frances's father, as she was his heiress. The Goodwins had a son Richard and a daughter Frances. Richard inherited the Walton Hall estate and he also inherited the Gladwin estates presumably through General Gladwin's eldest daughter Frances, who had married Francis Goodwin, or Ann who had married William Turbutt. Richard's sister Frances married John Errington and their son inherited the estates. This is where the name Errington Road came from.

The family owned Walton Hall until at least 1946, when the plot of land remaining after houses had been built on Foljambe Avenue, Walton Road and Errington Road was offered for sale. If it was sold the land was not built on and it was sold again in September 1962. According to T. P. Woods Almanac:-

*The highest price ever paid for land in the northern part of the county – over £4,000 per acre – was produced at a public auction in Chesterfield. The plot of building land at Errington Road, Walton, with an area of 4.07 acres, realised £16000. The land was bought by a London company, which intends to build 38 moderately-priced houses on it. An additional two houses will be built on Errington Road itself, which was part of the sale. It was planned to carry out development immediately.*

Presumably the Goodwin / Errington family owned the Walton Hall farm until it was sold in 1954, by which time the land attached had dwindled to a mere 40 acres.

The Hall was described as being a *well arranged FARM HOUSE built of stone with a grey slate roof*. On the ground floor was an entrance hall, two sitting rooms, one of which had a wash kitchen off it, a dining room, a kitchen and a pantry with excellent cellars beneath. A flight of steps led to a half landing with a toilet, bathroom and two bedrooms. A further flight of steps led to the main landing with a coloured leaded-light window, two bedrooms and a secondary staircase from the kitchen. More stairs led to two bedrooms and a boxroom. The farm buildings had two crew yards with accommodation for cows, pigs and horses.

It is unlikely that the owners of Walton Hall ever lived there and the property was occupied by tenants.

In September 1827, the *Derby Mercury* reported

that:

*two young men, Wm. Parsons and George Hopkinson, were brought before the Chesterfield Magistrates charged with stealing a quantity of apples from the orchard of Mr. Oldfield, of Walton Hall. They were permitted by the leniency of Mr Oldfield and the Magistrates, to back themselves out of a prosecution, by paying expenses and begging public pardon.*

Clearly Mr Oldfield was tenant of the property, but there is no indication whether it was Thomas or his son John. Probably it was John, with his father living at Walton Grove until his death in 1838. By the time of the tithe valuation of 1849, Oldfield and Co. were tenants or owners of a substantial amount of property.

At that time all the property owned by the Revd Goodwin was leased by Oldfield and Co. as were the two fields at the top of Whitecotes Lane leased from the Hunloke family. The company owned Walton Grove, where John Oldfield lived, and also the land originally owned by Joseph Mellor.

The *Derbyshire Courier* of September 20th 1852 carried an advertisement for the sale of the livestock owned by Mr John Oldfield at Walton Hall as Mr Oldfield had 'declined' farming. The stock was said to be of high quality and included horses, cattle, pigs and sheep. Presumably he gave up the tenancy of the Hall at the same time. Had he also removed the accessible clay deposits from the property? It may well be at this stage that he bought the land between the Hipper and Walton Grove (plot 68) from the Revd John Beveridge Jebb.

By the time of the 1851 census Walton Hall was occupied by the well-respected John Gratton, farmer, land agent, valuer, and Poor Law Guardian, who lived there until his death in 1882. He was followed by James Riggott and then in 1889, William Wright, veterinary surgeon, who lived there for four years. The next tenant, William Thomas Buxton, lived there for 50 years. He was well known locally as he sold milk throughout the borough. After he retired in 1943, Owen Needham became the tenant.

The days of Walton Hall farm were numbered as land was sold off for building. Today only the mansion / farm house remains; the barns have been converted to dwellings and the original parkland is covered with houses.

Note: The sale particulars for the September 1901, 1812, 1813, 1946 and 1954 sales are available at Chesterfield Local Studies Library.

## CHESTERFIELD'S LOCAL HISTORY ON THE INTERNET

**T**he **British Newspaper Archive** provides online access to local and regional newspapers from across Britain and Ireland. Material is being added constantly and some of the files are not yet complete. It is fully searchable, and the searches can be refined by date and place. However to view the articles you need subscribe or if they are in local papers then they can be viewed at the Local Studies on microfilm.

If you are a member of a public library then the same information you can be viewed for free view the article for free at home or on the library's computers. However it is easier to search and refine results on the British Newspaper Archive site:

<http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/search>

or if you have a library card:

<http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/libraries/>

Click on online information, then on Infotrac; you need your library card to access the date base, then select British Newspapers 1600-1950

**Picture the past:** The libraries and museums of Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire have in their collections, hundreds of thousands of historic photographs, slides, glass plates, postcards and engravings recalling the history of the local communities over the last hundred years and more. Images are being added to the website which is fully searchable:

<http://www.picturethepast.org.uk/>

The web page for **Chesterfield and District Local History Society** is at :

<http://www.ichesterfield.co.uk/chesterfield-district-local-history-society/>

Includes details of meetings. History Papers are being added.

The web page for the **North East Derbyshire Industrial Archaeological Society** with details of meetings and for members the Newsletter can be downloaded.

<http://nedias.co.uk/>

**Chesterfield Forum:** A place for local discussion. You do not have to be a registered user to view items on it and the History Board includes topics as diverse from the history of Queen's Park to the potteries and from Chesterfield Races to Walton.

<http://chesterfieldforum.net/>

A developing site is **Chesterfield Stories** – the place for expressing the thoughts and recording the memories of people who live in Chesterfield and the surrounding area

<http://www.chesterfieldstories.co.uk/>

A history website devoted to the **Dog Kennels** slum area of Chesterfield, specialising in photographs and articles about the demise of this notorious area.

<http://www.thedogkennels.co.uk/>

**Old Chesterfield Pics:** Informal discussion group for people interested in old photographs of Chesterfield. You need to be on Facebook to use this site.

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/oldchesterfieldpics/>

**Neil's Local History & Mining Site.** The old miner site is well known for its information on collieries, but now local history material is also being added

<http://www.oldminer.co.uk/>

At the time of writing, work is in progress on this site:

<http://www.blackandwhitebuildingsofchesterfield.co.uk/>