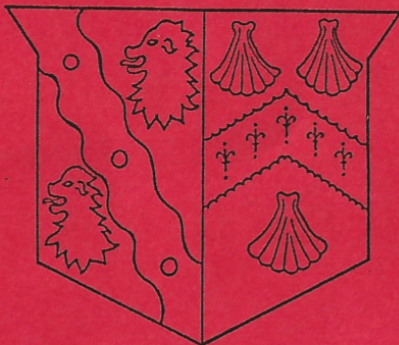
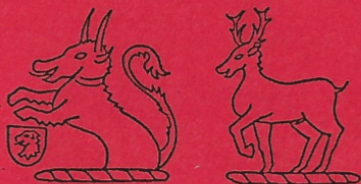




No 10

Winter 1994/95

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RAMSI

Window at Stubbins Vale Mill

John S. Taylor 1994

Richard Millett Porritt married Sarah Jane Townsend
 b. 30. 12. 1840 e. 1870 b. 5. 4. 1844
 d. 25. 9. 1906 age 65 The Cliffs d. 20. 2. 1936 age 91

Their son Austin Townsend Porritt gave the Stubbins Estate to the National Trust

Crest: A red antelope holding a lion's head

Crest: A stag trippant

Arms: Argent a nebuly bend gules with three
patron very red
 pellets of the first between two lion heads
By patience and diligence

Arms: Azure a saur engrailed chevron
blue
 ermine between three escallops argent

Motto: PATIENTIA ET DILIGENTIA

Motto: VERITAS -Truth

Assumed coats-of-arms

Heraldic help from John Crossland

NEWS MAGAZINE

RAMSBOTTOM HERITAGE SOCIETY

THE HERITAGE CENTRE

CARR STREET, RAMSBOTTOM

Telephone: Ramsbottom (0706) 82 1603

Reopening in March 1995

New exhibition: 50 Years of Peace in Ramsbottom

Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays

1.00 pm - 4.30 pm

and Tuesdays

2.00 pm - 4.00 pm

Special arrangements can be made for group visits.

Please contact the Secretary - tel: 0706 82 2620

1995 PROGRAMME

- Jan 18 Mrs EM Craig - *The Knowles Family of Tottington Mill*
Feb 15 Mr Steve Wrightson - *Tales of the Riverbank*
Mar 15 Mr A Rogers - *100 Years of Soapmaking*

All indoor meetings are held in the Civic Hall, Ramsbottom from 7.45 pm

RAMSBOTTOM HERITAGE SOCIETY
THE *HERITAGE CENTRE*
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Telephone: RAMSBOTTOM (0706) 82 1603

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FRONT COVER - The 'assumed coat of arms' of Richard Millett PORRITT, and wife Sarah Jane TOWNSEND, featured in a window at Stubbins Vale Mill. Drawing and commentary by John TAYLOR, with heraldic advice from John CRAWSHAW.

RAMSBOTTOM MISCELLANEA

This is the first of a twice-yearly feature of local heritage news - research projects, new uses for buildings, family history queries - do please write in with similar items for the summer issue. Decorated for the Festive Season - our centre on Carr Street, opposite the library, will be open, and in Yuletide mode, from 1-00 to 4-30pm (Saturdays and Sundays) and from 2-00 to 4-00pm on Tuesdays. There will be hand spinning demonstrations each Sunday up to Christmas, as well as opportunities to buy Ramsbottom Christmas cards and postcards, local interest stocking fillers and steam railway souvenirs. Please note that to give our volunteers a break, our last opening in 1994 will be on Sunday 18th December. We then remain closed for about two months, during which our new exhibition, *50 Years of Peace in Ramsbottom*, will be constructed by our dedicated display team. Watch local press for our reopening date. *Peel Mill*, Prince Street - members will have seen press coverage of the opening of the old *METCALFE/Ableaim* building as *Peel Mill* on Friday 25th November. That first weekend, and particularly the Sunday, saw more visitors in the town than any previous murky autumnal day I can recall. We were concerned at the recurrent use of the phrase 'heritage centre' in press references to this refurbishment, and have had a valuable meeting

2 Ramsbottom Heritage Society News Magazine No 10 Winter 1994

with one of the directors. He has agreed not to use the controversial 'heritage' word in future, understanding our qualms. We hope to have a further meeting, at which we can determine how we can each, as organisations, benefit from our respective presences in the town. If visitors do come to the town in greater numbers as a result of *Peel Mill*, we must find ways of persuading some of them to visit us as well.

National Trust Centenary Ramble, Sunday 15th January 1995 - to commemorate 100 years of the National Trust, Rossendale Groundwork will be leading a five mile circular walk around local Trust property - *The Cliffe*, the Stubbins Estate, and Holcombe Moor. An information sheet will be available. Meet at *The Corner Pin*, Stubbins, at 1-30pm.

Ramsbottom Reminiscences II - our first volume of memories was published exactly two years ago, and we now have the core of a second. Items include memories of St Paul's school in the 1910s, the town's building trade in the '30s, life on Carr Street in the '20s and '30s, some Hazelhurst shops, the 1935 Silver Jubilee, an eclipse, the snow of February 1940, the town's 1930 local radio station, Bye Road, Shuttleworth in the '30s, and 'Luck Duck and Vanish'. It is still not too late to pen something for inclusion with this varied menu, and it does not *need* to describe the Ramsbottom of many decades ago (though such contributions are of course precious and welcome). There have been enough changes since World War II to make even the middle aged great funds of information on a town and district very different to today - think of the disappearance of most industry in the last half century, the great changes in our shopping habits in the last 30 years, the rundown of an extensive railway facility (Ramsbottom was the distribution point for freight coming into the Manchester area from north Lancashire and once employed scores of railwaymen), the switch from horse drawn to petrol powered traffic (only completed in the last few decades), the building of the first new valley road in over 150 years - the Edenfield bypass (1969) and M66 (1980), changes in local government in 1974, the demolition of numerous terraced cottages especially in the town centre (and of more prominent buildings - Peel Brow secondary school), and of course the passing on of so many Ramsbottom people whose occupational and family histories, lifestyles, personalities and foibles could so easily be preserved for all time.

History of Edenfield, volume II - John SIMPSON has been gathering material for a second book on Edenfield's history, to continue the story where *Edenfield - Life in a Lancashire Village, c1500 - c1770* left off. Covering the subsequent two centuries to 1970, it will look at Stubbins, Stubbins Vale, Chatterton, Strongstry, Lumb, Irwell Vale, Ewood Bridge and Turn, as well as Edenfield itself.

John would like to hear of any photographs or ephemera (newscuttings, concert programmes and the like) which might make suitable illustrations or fill gaps in his knowledge. He is also interested in talking to people with memories of village life, not only special events but also what you might remember of everyday events like going to school, being involved in church activities or playing in local teams. Anyone willing to help can contact John at The Cottage, Tor View Farm, Helmshore, Rossendale BB4 4AB.

Ramsbottom Oral History - we are very concerned to record local memories, and desperately need people with a little spare time to speak to Ramsbottom residents about their recollections of

the town, with a cassette recorder on! Anyone interested can leave their name and address at the centre, or contact the secretary, Dorothy MOSS, or the chairman Andrew TODD
 Glass Negatives from Central Studio - last year we were given over a thousand such negatives from Harry LONSDALE'S collection. The hoard had been well trawled before we saw it, and the best have certainly gone - but the studio portraits of hundreds of local people are there. We have no means of storing *any* artifacts, let alone anything so fragile! Resisting suggestions that the best deposit for this lot was the local 'recycling centre' - viz the tip - I have found, through Bury's archivist Kevin MULLEY, *The Documentary Photographic Archive*, care of Greater Manchester Record Office, 56, Marshall Street, New Cross, Manchester M4 5FU where they are now on permanent loan, though we can obtain any print from our collection, at cost. I hope that in the New Year, a group of volunteers can go to the GMRO to identify the subjects of the LONSDALE portraits. Coincidentally, John SIMPSON has just told me of the first reference in the *Ramsbottom Observer* (8th April 1921, page 5, column 5) to Harry LONSDALE'S studio:

THE CENTRAL PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDIO

CENTRAL CHAMBERS

(Over the Maypole), RAMSBOTTOM

Mr. Harry Lonsdale has taken the top floor at the above address and equipped same with all modern appliances for first class photography...

The Central Photographic Studio was in an upper storey above the Ramsbottom Library, prior to the latter's removal to what is now our heritage centre. The library premises are now occupied by *Denise Lighting*. Harry's photographs continue into the '40s and '50s, by which time no doubt he was starting to use celluloid. It would be helpful if readers could come forward with more details about this studio and its operations.

The TURNBULL Family - Mrs Edna EADY of 13, Constance Crescent, Hayes, Bromley, Kent BR2 7QH (tel: 081 462 3696) is seeking genealogical detail on great grandfather Edward TURNBULL, son of William TURNBULL who was, she believes, grandfather of the William TURNBULL who started the firm TURNBULL and STOCKDALE in the 1880s. Her mother, Alice TURNBULL, moved south in the late '20s, and recounted that the family had Perth origins. Can anyone help?

AAT

DELIVERING FOR ANDERTON'S GROCERS FROM THE 1920s TO THE 1950s

Does anyone remember ANDERTON'S Stores, 72 Bridge Street (now the Dental Surgery at the corner of Square Street, opposite the Post Office) - 'The House of Quality' for bacon, hams, butter and cheese? My Grandfather, Richard BARCROFT, was delivery man for several years (with horse and cart) and my father, Ernest BARCROFT, took over from him in the 1920s (by then they had motorised transport) and worked there for 36 years. My brother, Kenneth BARCROFT, often accompanied him during school holidays, and I did sometimes.

The stables (later the garage) were on Smithy Street, now the premises of O'GORMAN, Painters and Decorators. Deliveries were made daily and covered a wide area - Walmersley, Nangreaves, Holcombe, Helm shore, Stubbins, Edenfield, Turn, Greenmount, Hawkshaw, Affetside, Bromley Cross, Edgworth, Summerseat and, of course, Ramsbottom, each day a certain area. Small 'comer' shops filled their shelves with ANDERTON's goods, and PORRITT's canteens at Stubbins and Helmshore used their provisions. I remember, at Stubbins, Dad getting a trolley used for transporting cloth around the works, helping him to load the provisions and going up to the canteen in a rather creaky lift which I was sure would break down.

Many times in Winter Dad had to dig himself out of snowdrifts on the higher roads as he tried to deliver orders to remote farms. One day when I was with him, he parked the lorry where Millers Kitchen now stands and walked up to Affetside with two orders as the road was too treacherous for transport I also remember an extremely wet day when he changed his clothes completely three times, finally having to wear his 'best' overcoat as the others dried off on the maiden and ceiling rack round and above the living room fire. All this for a very small wage. No bonus for defeating the elements!

One year during the War, just before Christmas, goods had not come through from Manchester warehouses owing to disruption because of the bombings, so Dad went for them. A day or so later Ken and I were having an argument about something (can't remember what) when Dad said, 'That will do, there are a lot of children with no home and certainly no presents, some no mums or dads, this Christmas, because of the bombs'. That stopped our petty squabble! I can remember the expression on his face and realised as I got older he must have been deeply shocked by the scenes and obviously he and mum worried about the possibility it could happen to us.

Going back to the 'quality' provisions, as you walked into ANDERTON's shop, the right hand side was the bacon slicer and all the sides of bacon, huge pats of butter, margarine and lard (delivered in tubs) from which the required amount was cut. The left hand side was the main serving counter with shelves of tinned and packet goods behind. Of the two proprietors of the business, Edward WHITTAKER, who lived in Helmshore, worked in the shop as manager. Herbert SHELDON, of Tottington, worked in the office.

At the side of the building outside was a large door on the upper floor, with a hoist which lifted the heavy goods to the storage rooms. The front upper room was used for weighing flour, tea, rice, sage, dried fruits, sugar into various quantities and the tops folded down in a particular way to avoid spillage. My brother and I sometimes 'helped' up there.

Many people still say they remember Dad delivering orders to their homes, how cheerful he always seemed, always clean and neat and how highly polished were his boots.

Joan Barcroft, *Ashton Lodge*, Ramsbottom

In 1990, Mrs A WALKER of Marsh, Huddersfield, visited one of our members, her aunt, Hilda FRENCH, who showed her our magazine. This prompted a number of memories, for

Mrs WALKER, daughter of Lois BAXTER, nee BLUNDELL (a weaver at Joshua HOYLE's mill at Brookshotlom), lived at Old Green, Greenmount. She wrote to the Society, reflecting on her earliest memories in the '40s of visiting her grandmother, Marion BLUNDELL, who lived in Starling Street, in the now vanished village of Nuttall. When I reached the age of 15,' she writes, 'I worked Saturdays for 10s at ANDERTON's Stores on Bridge Street. I remember a rotund Jolly fellow called Dick LOMAS who worked there. '

Does anyone else have recollections of Ramsbottom's shops, its owners and its shopworkers?
[Editor]

THE RAMSBOTTOM CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY STOCKTAKE, 1954

1994 is the 150th anniversary of the opening of the first Co-operative store in Toad Lane, Rochdale. There had been other ventures in other parts of the country but this was the beginning of the Co-op as we know it today. At our September meeting Mr I WILLIAMSON gave an interesting illustrated talk on its development from a small shop opening two evenings a week with the aim of providing cheap unadulterated food for working families to a world wide organisation. He also informed us that the first Co-op in Ramsbottom opened its doors in 1858. Moving the vote of thanks to the speaker, our Chairman, Andrew TODD, pointed out that the Society's archives contain a number of items relating to the Co-op, some of which he had found blowing around on a skip when the Bolton Street premises closed down in 1987 and he expressed regret that when businesses and other organisations cease to exist it is often the case that their records are lost or destroyed when their preservations could often provide information of interest to future generations. Among the rescued documents from the Co-op was a complete audited list of the grocery stocks held in the warehouse and the ten shops still trading in Ramsbottom on 6th March 1954. These were the Rostron Road, Nuttall Lane, Hazlehurst, Holcombe, Holcombe Brook, Bank Lane, Peel Bridge, Bridge Street, Stubbins, and Central branches. Stock in the warehouse was valued at £5,100 5s 0d and included 1,324lbs of butter, 960 lbs of margarine, 168 lbs of lard and 560 lbs of domestic cooking fat. There were also 2,931 lbs of tea, including Indian Prince, no99, Oriental tips, Eastern Rose, Eastern tips, Homimans, No 23, No 11 and 12 lbs of China tea. The 83,400 cigarettes included brands such as Woodbines, Senior Service, Players, Churchman, Dunhill as well as CWS own brands - Navy Cut Juniors, Raydex and Jaycee.

Healthy eating does not seem to have been as high on the agenda in the 1950s as it is today, although the presence of 1 3/4 dozen Energen rolls and 4 1/2 dozen Kellogg's *All Bran* may indicate that some at least were beginning to consider such things! For others perhaps Yeast Vite, Bile Beans and Phyllosan (fortifies die over forties!) sufficed.

Although the National Health Service had been in existence for several years by this time many people obviously still relied on tried and trusted patent remedies - Fennings Fever Mixture, Kraschen Salts, Magnesia Tablets, Harwoods All Fours, Woodward's Gripe Water, Parrish's Chemical Food to name but a few.

In the 1950s housework was much harder than it is today as illustrated by large stocks of

starch (Colmans, Robin, CS, etc), Dolly Blue and Dolly Cream, Cardinal Red, Mansion, Johnson's Wax and CWS Floor polishes, Zebo, Shinio, Brasso and Waddicor's Iron Lustre, Brush heads, flypapers, firewood and firelighters are also listed as are candles and tapers (but so are electric light bulbs!). The 155 dozen tins of salmon and large quantities of tinned fruit recorded remind me of countless Sunday teas and unexpected visitors. In those days people did not have freezers so a stock of tins in the larder for 'emergencies' and a regular baking day were essential. Hen food and chicken grit were stocked at Holcombe and Hazlehurst, and at Hazlehurst they also sold pigeon mixture. It is only 40 years since these stock sheets were completed, all hand written in ink and checked in red pencil. Today we have no Co-op shops at all in Ramsbottom. The changes in domestic conditions and shopping habits over this relatively short period of time are tremendous and yet there must be many people around today who did their shopping at these shops, maybe actually purchased some of the very goods listed on the sheets, or worked in the shops and sold them, possibly even the people who so carefully counted and listed them. If you are one of those people the Society would like to hear from you - perhaps we could produce an article for the next Magazine or an item for the next issue of *Ramsbottom Reminiscences*, or even a whole booklet about people's recollections of shopping in the days before supermarkets and frozen food existed. Perhaps you have even earlier recollections of shopping - during World War II or even before the War? Please share your recollections with us so that they can be preserved for future generations. You can let us have them either in writing (no need to type them unless that is your preference), or on audio tape, and they can be handed in at the Heritage Centre. We would also be interested to see any photographs or documents which could be added to the archives.

Browsing through these accounts was like a trip back in time. What at first appeared to be just a dull list of goods and figures turned out to be a mine of interesting information about the way people lived and shopped 40 years ago. I wonder what people will think of our supermarkets and hypermarkets, or the goods we purchased, in another 40 years? I also wonder how they will be doing their shopping - by computer link maybe?

By the way can anybody tell me - what was Splendo? It must have been very popular - it was listed by almost every branch.

Barbara Park, Bolton Road West, Holcombe Brook

STORIES IN STONE UPDATE

Members will be aware of John TAYLOR's catalogue of the datestones of Ramsbottom and district (actually the old UDC, less Stubbins and Edenfield) *Stories in Stone: Date stones in Ramsbottom*, published in 1991. It is in the nature of such a pursuit that fresh examples are notified, and usually days after an edition has gone to press. John has, on the following three pages, supplied sketches of those which have come to light in the last three years.

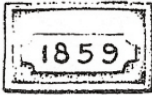
STORIES IN STONE UPDATE

for use with "Stories in Stone. Datestones in Ramsbottom" £2.95

John B. Taylor

- * 1761 Old house, 3, Carr Fold.
 Site near Library From Ramsbottom Observer 28.2.1936
- 1793 W M Plant House, Cross Lane, Holcombe. + 1813, 1816
 W Door lintel at rear.
- W.M
W
1793
- William Woodcock ^{15.5.1787} married Mary Elton
 b. 3.6.1759 b. 27.03.1769
 d. 14.1.1827 d. 26.2.1849
 See Woodcock family tree 1793.
- * 1806 Old row of houses, 130-140, Whalley Road, Shuttleworth.
 See Ramsbottom Observer 28.2.1936 page 5
- 1813 W M Plant House, Cross Lane, Holcombe. + 1793, 1816
 W M Door lintel up steps at rear.
- W
W+M
1813
- William and Mary Woodcock
 See 1793
- 1816 J E Plant House, Cross Lane, Holcombe. + 1793, 1813
 Wall and outbuilding N. side.
- J. E.
1816
- John Elton of Loe, Tottington b. 1765 d. 1847
 His sister Mary married William Woodcock. See 1793
- STANDLEY RAKE
 1823 Brandwood Three Acres Farm, top of Hawkshaw Lane. + 1934
-
- Loose in garden
 From Stand / Standley / Stanley Rake
 300 metres N.W.
 The Brandwood family
 See 1720, 1803, 1807, 1856
- 1846 PARK COTTAGE Park Cottage, 43, Bury New Road.
- PARK COTTAGE
1846
- Former manse of Park Cong. Church

1859 Office, near chimney, Trinity Paper Mills. +1875



1857 J.B. Ingham & Son.
S.B. Ingham & Bros.

1875 R P M From engine house, Trinity Paper Mills. +1859



To be displayed 1995

1872 Ramsbottom Paper Mill Co. Ltd.
Ramsbottom Paper Manufacturing Co. Ltd.
1964 Holcombe Paper Mill Co. Ltd.
1968 Trinity Paper Mills Ltd.

keystone

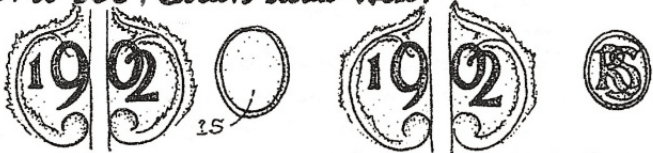
1897 Summerseat Print Works.



1994 Binex Works - printing and finishing

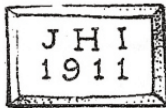
Datestone high on brick building

1902 -- RS Stained glass front doors, **LYNDHURST** and **WESTWOOD**,
301 & 303, Bolton Road West.

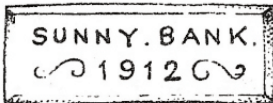


Semi-detached houses built for Richard Shore and his brother

1911 J H I 10, Ada St., off Bolton Road West.

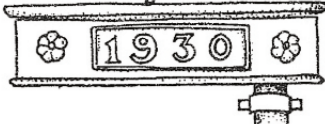


1912 SUNNY BANK 14-16, Ada St., off Bolton Road West.



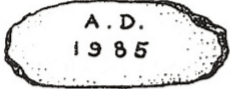
1930

The Cottage, 400, Bass Lane, Summerseat. +1913, 1930



Drainpipe head

1985 *Strome Villa, 325, Manchester Road.*



Slate plaque on brick bungalow near "Red Hall."

1989 T.M.C.P. & C.P. 90, *Summersat Lane, Holcombe Brook.*



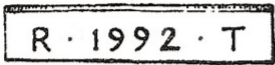
on extension, apiarist or beekeeper
Thomas McCallum Paterson
and Clave Paterson

1991 FREEMAN *Holly House, 60, Summersat Lane, Holcombe Brook.*



By door is - HOLLY HOUSE
The Everman family
David J. and Karen
children Richard and Robert

1992 R T Wall, *Boardman's Farm, Hawkshaw Lane, Hawkshaw.*



+ 1783, 1815, 1989, 1990, 1994
Wall rebuilt by Robert Taylor

1992 ASHTON LODGE *Ashton Lodge, Stubbins Lane.*



North British Housing Association logo
The Ashton family were early industrialists in Ramsbottom.
An undated boundary marker is near the level crossing -
William Green
1850
Wood SNA
Samuel & Thomas Ashton

1994 ^{K J} B *Gypsy's cottage, Boardman's Farm, Hawkshaw Lane.*

K J + 1783, 1815, 1989, 1990, 1992
B Ken and Jan Barnes
1994 Wooden beam inside

There will always be a few datestones lurking in cellars, hidden in gardens or just unnoticed.

John B. Taylor 0706-874119

To prove the point, days after John handed me his artwork, Mike PYWELL of *Peel Mill*, informed me that refurbishment at their former METCALFE premises on Prince Street had just uncovered, on the lintel of a doorway, the motif, in relief:

JOSEPH STRANG ENGINEER RAMSBOTTOM 1882

This enterprise has never, to my knowledge, earned the sort of attention from local historians accorded to other Ramsbottom factories and their owners, perhaps because textile dynasties have, in our area, had a greater allure. Joseph STRANG the elder is documented, and portrayed, in HUME ELLIOT'S *The Country and Church of the Cheeryble Brothers* (Selkirk, 1893) on pages 371-3. One of that extensive colony of Scots who came to Ramsbottom in the wake of the GRANTS, he was recruited through that family's North British network to manage their farming operations. He became an elder of the St Andrew's congregation which was ejected in 1869 when William GRANT decided that the Church of England was preferable as tenant of the family church to the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Joseph senior died in 1877 - it appears to have been his son and namesake who established Prince Foundry - BARRETT's directory of 1883 records him there as a mill wright and ironfounder, his residence being at 116, Albert Street. The business seems to have started around 1880, at the Palatine ironworks, wherever that was, judging from directory evidence.

There is a fine gravestone in St Andrew's churchyard, which commemorates the STRANGs' Scottish origin. In addition to that, and the newly discovered datestone on Prince Street, Joseph STRANG's name features on the dwindling stock of iron lamp standards cast by him at Prince Foundry, and adorning the remoter nooks of the town.

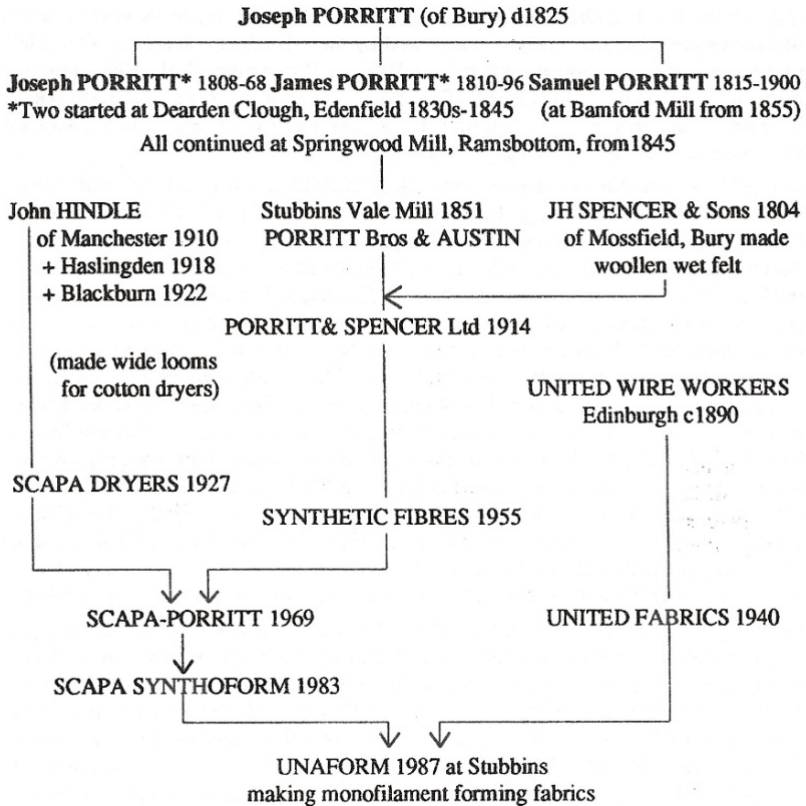
Additional detail on this family and its ironworks would be gratefully received!

Andrew Todd, Bolton Street, Ramsbottom

PROFIT FROM PORRITTS

Having outlined the history of the TURNBULL and STOCKDALE mills in earlier editions of this magazine, I became curious about the role of the PORRITT family in the local industrial revolution. Overleaf is a simplified diagram of changes since the 1830s, and a few cameos of those who left their imprint on the locality, including their houses, churches and other buildings. Only a gatehouse remains on the left of Stubbins Street where Stubbins Vale Mill stood five storeys high with a mighty chimney. It was quarried from stone on its site, and contained a steam engine to drive its line shafts for carding mules and looms. These produced wide woollen cloths for filter fabrics, printing blankets and conveyor cloths and smaller felts for handmade paper and dryer felts. These were stretched on tenter frames in the field above or inside the tenter house when it rained. The final modernisation took place in 1961, before the demolition in 1978. Earlier the gas plant for internal lighting had also piped gas to illuminate Strongstry village. The present Unaform mill is on the right of Stubbins Street.

Space forbids the extensive family tree here, but a few pen portraits may serve to illustrate the impact of the PORRITT family locally. Joseph lived at *Greenmount* (a house between



the present mill and Strongstry) and later at *Irwell Mount* (on Bury New Road) until his death in 1868. He established Sunnybank Mill at Helmshore, and his family were linked with the AITKEN dynasty of Irwell Vale. He worshipped at Park Congregational Church, where his grave lies. Brother James lived at *Stubbins Vale House*, the remnants of which remain above the station car park. With Samuel he opened the congregational church and Sunday school in 1866, followed by the church in 1867 (at a cost of £8,144 11s 4d). It became known as 'the Porritt Church', partly because James PORRITT had paid off the debt of £2,600 by 1868, and one of his 15 children, Mary Hannah, married the first minister, the Rev Thomas CAIN, who retired in 1906 after 42 years there. The graveyard alongside the church since 1868 has held the remains of many of the PORRITT family, although the church was demolished in 1983 and the adjacent school in the early 1990s. New houses, known as *Holcombe View*, have been erected in 1994 on the site. The older stone cottage left there was the caretaker's home built in 1871. James died in 18% after an earlier fall in Stubbins railway subway had caused paralysis. His son, Richard Millett PORRITT

(1840-1906) lived at *Greenmount*, and his widow Sarah Townsend PORRITT had a lifeboat named after her. This was endowed by their daughter, Miss Kate PORRITT (d!943) and was on station at Lytham from 1951-78. It is pictured in the RNLi museum by the windmill. William John PORRITT (1828-96) is reputed to have built many houses in St Anne's and in 1885 closed his mills for the day, hired a train and band and took his employees to St Anne's when the pier was opened. Before I lose myself in the massive roots of the PORRITT family tree, I shall end with the huge local branches remaining. Lt Col Austin T PORRITT (1875-1956) of *The Cliffe*, Stubbins, and later *Yewbarrow Lodge*, Grange over Sands, was the son of Richard, and donated (and opened) Chatterton Memorial Playing Fields to the people of Ramsbottom in 1923. This was the site of the mill where the Chatterton Riot took place in 1826, when six people were shot by the Ramsbottom militia, after the reading of the Riot Act. Also in 1928 the same Colonel donated the 15 acres of Nuttall Park to the townfolk. A recent speaker at Ramsbottom Heritage Society, Frank HALL, recalls singing at the opening as a young boy! The National Trust in 1948 gained the Stubbins Estate (the valley leading up to Holcombe Moor, itself acquired in 1994 by the Trust) in memory of his son Captain Richard PORRITT, MP for Heywood and Radcliffe, (including Ramsbottom) who was killed at Seel in in 1940, serving with 5th Battalion, the Lancashire Fusiliers, during the defence of Dunkirk. [See Ramsbottom Reminiscences, vol 1, 1992, p32.] The Colonel served as Deputy Lieutenant of Lancashire in 1932 and his wife laid the 1926 datestone on St Philips Church, Chatterton. After mills had been built in America and elsewhere in the 1960s, it was Philip PORRITT who led the merger with the Scapa Group in 1969.

In conclusion, the Scapa Group PLC now has sales of c£350 million (80% outside the UK), employing c6,500 people in 15 countries, including c155 in Stubbins now. Unaform here installed a 12.5 metre wide forming machine in December 1992 at a cost of c£1 million, and are likely to extend the mill soon to improve the flow of production. Meanwhile the old square Tenter House, or Blanket House, stands above it like a sentinel, as it has done for about 150 years. The name PORRITT may not be as obvious locally now, but the profits (and prophets) of their past have left solid evidence for the present and the future seems assured.

Sources

Mrs Joyce BARNES, Notes on Stubbins United Reformed Church (1985)

John B TAYLOR, Stories in Stone: Datestones in Ramsbottom (1991)

Barbara PALMER'S PORRITT family tree (in Ramsbottom Heritage Centre)

East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce Magazine (March 1994)

Clyde Tweedale, Acre Close, Edenfield

A NOSTALGIC WALK 'UP THE LANE': MEMORIES OF HAWKSHAW LANE IN THE THIRTIES

If you can remember the Summer of 1989, after all the rough weather of last winter, you may recall that we did have quite a number of hot days during that summer. It was on one of those days that my husband, John and I decided to take our two granddaughters on a

picnic. We packed our lunch and set off 'up the lane' by the side of Hawkshaw Post Office. As we walked memories of my childhood came flooding back to me. Read on and join me on that memory walk up the lane. At the beginning of the lane there used to be an extra cottage on the right. This was demolished to make a wider opening for the present estate. I remembered this end cottage which was once occupied by the WOOLLEY family and before that the WRIGHT family. When I travelled up and down the lane as a child, there were no houses where the estate is now, just hen pens on the right after the bowling green, and fields on the left. As we passed the first opening on the left, I remembered Oliver Well from which we carried all our drinking water when we lived at Bramley Fold Farm. I have often wondered what happened to that well when the new houses were built. The surface of the lane is not in very good condition now [ie 1989] as heavy traffic has taken the place of horses and carts. The lane was always in quite a good state when I travelled up and down to school, with the exception of the part above Higher House Farm. We always called this 'The Narrow Length' and very often a lorry carrying cattle food would get stuck there. We thought it quite exciting as children to have to go into the field to pass by.

We gathered wimberries, as we walked up the lane and our grandchildren thought this was good fun. I remembered the times when, walking home from school feeling hungry, we would gather wimberries and blackberries in season and eat them as we walked along. What a lot of grubs we must have consumed, but what did we care!

It was sad to see that not many of the farms are now farmed for a living. The land is not now in good condition and a lot of fences are down. Quite a lot of the farmhouses had big families living in them in the past and we children all walked down to school and Sunday School together. We all played together in the countryside round about too, making camp fires and bonfires with Guy Fawkes on November 5th. I remember the POTTERS, the HOLTs, the FITTONs, the CHADWICKs and the HOGGARTHs to name just a few families. As we neared Boardmans Farm, where I was born and also my family, I noticed on the right a piece of land fenced off without any hedge. This was the site of a home of 'Old Ellen'. I remembered the house being there when I was a child. It was eventually demolished and the site fenced off. This old lady died before I was born, or perhaps when I was a baby. But my mother and family used to recount many tales of Old Ellen. Whenever anyone knocked at Old Ellen's door or peeped in through the windows, which were more or less boarded up, she would say 'have you brought me anything?' You were not welcome unless you had a present for her, preferably food. If you had, then you could go in. She was always very dirty, and dressed in old clothes with an old sack around her. She had hens in the room with her, and they perched on her bedposts. The bed was covered with old rags and mice ran around the room. I believe she had made a sparse living from selling her eggs, but what other income she had I don't know. People used to give her coppers which she must have stored away, as on her death money was found in a belt around her waist. The boys from the village used to say she was a witch and they would tease her. No doubt she appeared to them a very frightening person. Eventually she became blind and had an accident burning herself badly. She had to go into hospital where

she died. I am told that my grandmother went with her in the ambulance. [There is a photograph of 'Old Ellen on page 4 of Kenneth BEETSON's and Roger SHILTON's Let's Look at Ramsbottom (1977). (Editor)J

Leaving the site of the home of Old Ellen I noticed the well on the right still running with lovely, clear, spring water. This brought back memories of the many times, after walking up the lane on hot summer days, we would kneel down and have a good drink at the well. It was always lovely and clear and ice-cold. No thought about fluoride at that time! On Sunday dinner times, when all the family sat down to dinner, we would bring a bucket of water from the well - it always tasted much better than the water from the tap over the sink. So on to Boardmans Farm, now the home of Ken and Jan BARNES and altered quite considerably since our family lived there. On being invited into the house, I closed my eyes for a moment to remember what it used to be like when I was a child. I can still see the room where I was born and the window from which my sister Irene fell whilst watching the lambs in the meadow. Miraculously she was not injured badly. I also recalled the time when I jumped from a window at the back of the house after being sent upstairs as a punishment! We walked up the yard and had a peep into the building which we children long ago used to use as a little house and which we named 'Cosy Cot'. Our grandchildren thought it would be lovely if they had a little house like that to play in. I also remembered the toilet at the top of the yard with its double wooden seats. I was afraid to go in there alone in the dark. Leaving Boardmans Farm we turned left towards Clough Bottom walking past the stable and the barn and I remembered haymaking time when we used to have to go on the "MOO" (top of the hay in the bam) and shake the hay out. Hot dusty work! We walked on down the rocky road to what was once Clough Bottom Farm and there we decided to stop for our picnic. How lovely and peaceful it was as we sat on the stone ruins of the old farmhouse, hearing only the sound of the birds and the rippling of the brook. I remembered how we used to dam up the stream and make it into a bathing pool. We spent many a happy sunny afternoon down there. How sad it is to think that children of today could not be safely left to play on their own in such a quiet place now. After our picnic we travelled on towards the plantation, but we found progress quite difficult as the well-worn paths I knew as a child no longer existed. We had to climb over one or two fences to reach the path at the side of the stream which leads to Coalpit Lane. Resting under the shady trees for a while we enjoyed the scenery, then we continued on eventually arriving at the "Big Stone" which somehow did not seem quite as big as when I was a child.

THE BIG STONE by John Fawcett SKELTON
(from *Hawkshaw Lane and other poems*)

Tell me, O thou mighty boulder
How it is thou liest here
Startling every keen beholder
Passing by this brooklet clear

Human hands could never lift thee
Fairie fingers were too light
Magic skill, perchance, might shift thee
From some cloud-capt mountain height

As more closely I survey thee My
amazement greater is Thousand
tons would fail to weigh thee Granite rock of mysteries.

Onwards from the Big Stone, we passed by the place where John James used to live. He was employed by Mr Fred HOWELL to lode after his pigs, and his home was a wooden cabin. His real name was John James ENTWISTLE, but everyone knew him as John James or 'John James, Jack o'Belts o'PistoI'. He was a kindly old man who lived in the cabin as long as I knew him. How he ate, cooked, slept and kept warm I do not know, but he always appeared contented. He was in later life taken to Bolton General Hospital, where he died, but his cabin remained there for quite a time afterwards. We continued on down Coalpit Lane, now a little overgrown, to the main road at the *Red Lion*. Tired and hot we were, but how we had enjoyed our afternoon. I hope to walk again up Memory Lane when I have the opportunity.

Edith Coates (1990)

Readers may recall from the last issue that Edith was born at Boardmans. Unfortunately, she died in 1993, leaving a number of items, like this one, with Jan BARNES. Edith's husband, John, has kindly given us permission to publish them, [Editor]

THE HOME GUARD IN RAMSBOTTOM, 1941-4

I joined the home guard in 1941, Ramsbottom formed D company, part of a Lancashire Fusilier battalion based at the Drill Hall in Bury. It had companies in all the surrounding towns: Radcliffe, Tottington and Ramsbottom. The majority of members were First World War veterans, people in reserved occupations and young lads awaiting call up to the forces. I was 17 at the time and I went into the mobile platoon, considered mad by the rest of the company, the reason for this was our officer Captain HEYES of Holcombe was very enthusiastic, he liked to keep us training longer than the usual time on a Sunday morning, we often trained the whole day. We had a weekly parade night, and one guard a week to do usually at the drill hall. Our kit consisted of army battledress, leather belt and gaiters, gas mask, gas cape, and haversack. We were armed with a rifle and bayonet used by the American army in the First World War. These guns were 300 calibre as opposed to British Lee Enfields being 303 calibre so special ammunition had to be manufactured for us. We also had a Browning light machine gun issued one per platoon. When the War started all sorts of new weapons were invented, tilings that could be produced cheaply. The most successful was the sten-gun carried by most NCOs and officers. One of the weapons that found its way to the Home Guard was the Northover Projector - a length of pipe fitted on a tripod that fired a bottle containing phosphorus which

burst into flames on contact. We used to practise with it in the quarry at Shuttleworth. The main problem with the gun was it was supposed to be an anti-tank weapon, but it was so slow to reload, you would have been lucky to get a second shot. We also had hand-grenades which we practised with on the moors. Three sand-bag circles, those waiting to throw their grenade in the first, the second one you moved into to fuse your grenade, the third one you moved into to throw it. In the throwing bay you had an officer or an NCO with you whose job it was to get rid of the grenade should you drop it after you had taken the pin out. It rarely happened, but it was a safety precaution. For rifle practice we went to Holcombe rifle range, I think I fired more rounds with the Home Guard than ever I did during my later army service. We had inter company exercises with other parts of the battalion. On one in particular we were attacking the *Bulls Head* pub at Greenmount which was defended by Tottington company. Some of the locals weren't very pleased with thunderflashes and blank ammunition going off during morning service at Greenmount Church. We used to go over to Entwistle rifle range for battle exercises with live ammunition. Most of the time during the war we had troops stationed in Ramsbottom, mostly at the Cuba Mill in Stubbins. The Queen's Regiment were probably here the longest and they often sent down to the Drill Hall experts in all sorts of army training to give us lectures and demonstrations of various kinds. They had built an assault course in Eden Wood and they invited some of the younger ones to come and have a go at it. We were told to expect live ammunition being fired just over our head while we were going round. It started off crossing the stream on a rope bridge - anyone falling off had to go back again - going through pipes with smoke bombs going off, over high walls helping one another all the time then we ended up wading through a pond nearly shoulder deep all the time in full kit with rifle and bayonet. We were young and reasonably fit but it was hard work. We all got through without injury, we were lucky. It amused some of the troops watching us struggle - they had to do it before breakfast. Although we were figures of fun to most people, you have to remember that in many parts of the country the Home Guard did a good job guarding docks and helping to man anti-aircraft guns, especially those guarding factories and other important bases. The area that was the responsibility of D Company was covering most of the moorlands in the area as well as the town and the surrounding villages. Holcombe Tower, Grants Tower and *Owd Betts* pub were outposts of the Company.

Sometime during 1943 I think it was, we attended a large exercise held in Lyme Park, Disley, with Home Guards from all over Lancashire, Cheshire and Derbyshire taking part. It was one of the largest number of Home Guard seen in the North of England, at one time - several thousand of us.

As the War went on it became more unlikely that we would be invaded and after the landings in France after D-Day, the Home Guard was stood down, a short time later it was disbanded. All members of the Home Guard received a certificate from the King thanking us for all the time we had given to the service. I still have mine somewhere.

Fred Entwistle, Bolton Road West, Ramsbottom

