



# RAMSBOTTOM HERITAGE SOCIETY

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NEWS MAGAZINE

RAMSBOTTOM HERITAGE SOCIETY  
*THE HERITAGE CENTRE*  
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The objects of the Society shall be:-

- a) To advance education of the public, by creating an awareness of and interest in the study of the history and heritage of Ramsbottom (as defined by the boundaries of the pre-1974 Ramsbottom Urban District Council).
  - b) To locate relevant documents, records and artefacts. To retain, catalogue and/or copy them where possible, and to operate as an information centre.
  - c) To seek to protect the heritage of Ramsbottom.
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## PROGRAMME

### 2002

- 5<sup>th</sup> Oct Ramsbottom Heritage Society's 'At Home' at the Civic Hall  
16<sup>th</sup> Oct Mr KF Bowden & Mr K Simpson, *Oddities from Bacup Nats*  
20<sup>th</sup> Nov Mr D Hartley, Members' Night - *Ramsbottom between 1964 and 1987* (illustrated)  
11<sup>th</sup> Dec Mystery Guest Speaker

### 2003

- 15<sup>th</sup> Jan Mrs D North, *Violet's Story - the Sequel* (illustrated)  
19<sup>th</sup> Feb Mrs C Barlow, *Papers from a Secret Drawer*  
19<sup>th</sup> March Photographic Competition - judge Mr J Ali  
Mr J Ali, *The Boys - Hawkshaw's War Memorials* (illustrated)  
16<sup>th</sup> April Mrs C Giles, *Working Class Housing Conditions in 1930s Ramsbottom* (illustrated)  
21<sup>st</sup> May Annual General Meeting and Members' Night

**Please note that all indoor meetings are held  
on the third Wednesday of the month in the Civic Hall, Market Place,  
Ramsbottom, at 7.30 for 7.45pm**

## CONTENTS

Page

1.	Ramsbottom Miscellanea	Andrew Todd
2.	The 150 <sup>th</sup> Birthday of Peel Tower, 9 <sup>th</sup> September 2002	John Ireland
5	A Wartime Return to Bye Road and Peel Brow School	Freda Molyneux (nee Liptrott)
11	Two Surviving Buildings from Ramsbottom's 'Old Ground'	Andrew Todd
11	George Goodrick, the <i>Grant Arms</i> and the Truck System	Andrew Todd

*FRONT COVER* - The *Grant Arms* and Market Place in 1984. Drawn by Andrew Todd

## RAMSBOTTOM MISCELLANEA

**Crow Lane** - a group of members is about to launch a project to amass as much historical information as they can on Crow Lane, one of the objects being to involve inhabitants, and raise the Society's profile. The majority of the houses seem to date from the 1860s-1880s, but there are some intriguingly earlier ones. The property flyer for no 40, Crow Lane at WEALE & HITCHEN, the Bridge Street Estate Agents, said 'mid-18th Century cottage, the end row of only three similar dwellings believed to be the oldest in Ramsbottom'. Personally, I would put it at around 1800, judging from the window details, and that would tie in neatly with the construction of Ramsbottom Mill nearby. If anyone has information on any house in Crow Lane, access to deeds, or recollections, however recent, of any of the inhabitants, please contact the Heritage Centre. Perhaps we will get a clearer date for no 40 in the process! John TAYLOR is in the process of sketching the houses on the lane as part of the project.

**Allen and Todd's, Aladdin's Cave, 10-12, Square Street and 1, Smithy Street** - this morning, I foolishly volunteered to perform what is a regular summer task for us - bleaching away the guano deposited on the pavement by the small colony of house martins which returns annually to nest under our eaves. It is not a pastime conducive to appreciation of how privileged we actually are to be one of the few buildings in the town to have eaves which extend sufficiently well out to attract these sprightly little fellows. Yet scraping away this morning, it occurred to me that generations of these martins, almost certainly belonging to the same core family, must have nested here. In fact, their ancestors may have been here just after the building was erected, some time between October 1849 and February 1850, judging from the deeds. Families of rooks have similarly long associations with particular clumps of trees - our last issue mentioned Hume ELLIOT'S famous account of the displacement of the rooks of 'the crow trees' when St Paul's Church was erected, to the vicinity of the cricket ground, and then on to Barwoodlea.



But human, not avian history is the purpose of this item. Irene's shop has an unusual history, having had many uses over its century and a half of existence other than as a martin roost. Until the 1930s, it comprised six back-to-back houses, and two workshops; one chap who saw me painting window frames in August 1999 told me that he had been attached in the War to the Air Training Corps, based on the ground floor, whilst upstairs there was a small bar and two full sized snooker tables. Another local reckoned that the building had once been occupied by the Co-op Funeral Service, and horses were stabled here. Until 1999, Chris O'GORMAN used the Smithy Street workshop as a painter and decorator's store. I am hoping at some stage to research the building's history, and would be very grateful for any snippets of information that anyone can provide. You can phone me on 01706 824511.

**The 'Spring' issue of the magazine!** - yes, I know, it is a little late, and this has been entirely my fault. It is also indicative of the fact that I'm having to cease to be the editor, and pass this job on to a team, who will I'm sure be introducing themselves to you soon. Many thanks to all the many members who have sent in contributions over the years, from the Ramsbottom Diaspora, which is now spread very wide indeed. I do hope to be contributing the occasional item myself in the future, but it will of course be up to the new editorial team as to whether it gets published!

Andrew Todd

### **THE 150TH BIRTHDAY OF PEEL TOWER, 9<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2002**

The whole event started as a result of a chance meeting late on the afternoon of St George's Day on Holcombe Hill. Returning home from the direction of Pilgrims Cross, I noticed the flag of St George flying on the Tower. When I got there, Ramsbottom Councillor Barry THECKSTON and Brian FARLOW were locking up and as we made our way down the hill, Barry explained that as a member of The Society of St George he felt that Peel Tower was the ideal location for flying the flag, as it was the most prominent feature for miles around. Sadly, he said, most people took it for granted and were totally unaware that it would be 150 years old on 9<sup>th</sup> September or of who built it and why, and wouldn't it be a good idea to celebrate the up and coming anniversary and thereby raise people's awareness of the tower and its history. Some weeks later, as Secretary of the Holcombe Society, I received a note from the Conservation Officer at Bury Council asking whether we intended organising an event to mark the anniversary, such as a bonfire and fireworks display. Remembering the Millennium new year celebrations and the Herculean efforts required then to transport the wood and build a suitably sized fire on top of Holcombe Hill, we said definitely not. But we did agree to think about it, which we did. We then responded with three options, each requiring differing degrees of effort

1 Dress the Tower overall like a ship, with bunting running diagonally at each corner from top to bottom and drape a large banner down its front, as they did on 9<sup>th</sup> September 1852, and open it on the anniversary weekend free of charge with display boards depicting the life and times of Sir Robert PEEL.

2. Do the above and re-enact the opening ceremony in costume accompanied, as on the actual day, by a brass band and a Punch and Judy show, thereby giving the whole thing a Victorian air.

3. Do both one and two, and extend an invitation to Sir Robert PEEL'S descendants to attend the celebrations should they be still around, and to other VIPs.

Bury Council, or rather the Ramsbottom and Tottington Area Board, went for all three options, nominating Phil PARKINSON, the Board Co-ordinator, to work with us in organising it. This was an arrangement that proved invaluable as time went on, albeit we didn't have much to start with - a mere three or four weeks to set up the whole event.

The bunting was ordered from a specialist maritime company in Liverpool. The only bunting available locally was too small and lightweight to be rigged up on the Tower and withstand the weather conditions that can prevail up there even in late summer, or to be seen from any distance.

The gentlemen of The Summerseat Players very kindly agreed to re-enact the opening ceremony in costume on the understanding that the Society would provide the ladies and costumes to accompany them. I have had worse jobs than procuring three ladies, and in no time at all had found three most suitable and handsome ones for the parts on offer. Historically accurate costumes were hired for the re-enactment from the Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester.

Helmshore and Haslingden Brass Band agreed to play on the afternoon. They volunteered to do their own research to ensure the authenticity of the pieces that would have been played in 1852, in addition to 'Rule Britannia' which we know from contemporary accounts was played on the day.

We agreed to the Punch and Judy man's suggestion that he perform the early Victorian version even though the gallows scene may not have been strictly politically correct for 2002. Greater Manchester Police provided 'Peelers' to grace the occasion. They dressed in uniforms worn originally by the 'Peelers', the early police forces created by Sir Robert PEEL as Home Secretary some few years before.

We traced Sir Robert's descendant, Earl Peel of Masham, near Ripon, Yorkshire. He was delighted with the idea of the re-enactment and agreed to attend depending on his prior commitments. Unfortunately the weekend we chose happened to be the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday of his mother-in-law Lady Soames (Winston CHURCHILL'S youngest daughter). The only alternative date was the weekend when the Countryside Alliance were holding their national demonstration in London and he was to be one of the main speakers. However he did drop us a most sincere letter of apology which we decided to read out on the day.

We wanted to make the whole thing as accurate and authentic as possible, so having got all the main players lined up, we redoubled our detailed research from contemporary- reports as to what actually happened on the day.

Our researchers used the resources of Bury Archives and Ramsbottom, Bury, Bolton, Blackburn and Manchester Reference Libraries. We soon discovered that the unveiling of Sir Robert PEEL's statue in Bury on 8<sup>th</sup> September, the day before the tower was opened, was covered extensively in *The Times* and *Manchester Guardian*. Both reports ran to four or five columns of closely typed print, but their coverage of the Tower's opening ran only to a few inches.

The specially hired train from the East Lancashire Railway Company which left Salford carrying a large party of VIPs arrived in Ramsbottom over an hour late, and we concluded that it must also have been carrying the reporters, who discovered on getting up to the Tower that the ceremony was over. So their reports were limited to descriptions of the weather on the day being 'sunny but very boisterous', and the crowd:-

**several thousands and in a state of great animation. It was quite a holiday throughout the neighbourhood, the factories and print works having ceased to work so that work people could attend the occasion.**

The music played by one of three bands in attendance was 'Rule Britannia'.

The reports named the speakers (Joshua KNOWLES of Stornier Hill; Frederick PEEL, recently elected MP for Bury; and John Robinson KAY of Bass Lane House, Summerseat) specified the order in which they spoke, but said little on the content, unlike the previous day in Bury when every word of these speakers was faithfully printed in the national press.

At two o'clock Joshua KNOWLES opened the proceeding, introducing Frederick PEEL second son of the deceased statesman in whose honour the Tower had been built. He in turn addressed the crowd, extolling the achievements of his father's parliamentary career, with particular emphasis on his Free Trade principles, pointing out that although the repeal of the Com Laws, which the Tower had been built to commemorate, had in fact lost him favour with his party and forced his resignation, he had been amply compensated for by the gratitude of the working people enjoying for the first time plentiful supplies of good food at cheap rates. He then 'eulogised the site which had been selected for the column intended to commemorate the passing of the Act'.

John Robinson KAY proposed three cheers for Frederick PEEL 'as the son of the deceased statesman who had saved his country'.

A footnote that appeared only in the *Salford Chronicle* reported that the crowd's response to the call for three cheers 'was rather thin and patchy the majority remaining silent'. PEEL had been elected as a 'Liberal Conservative' in that summer's general election. Perhaps the audience were Radicals ... or farmers who had opposed the Com Laws' repeal! All the reports closed with:-

**The proceedings having terminated, many persons ascended the column and others walked in different directions over the heath.**

Which is exactly what happened on the afternoon of the re-enactment. This turned out to be a great success, the weather being fine with enough breeze to make the flags and bunting on the Tower flutter. The banner hanging down its front proclaimed: '150 years, Happy Birthday Peel Tower' and featured half way down a head and shoulders portrait of Sir Robert.

The Brass Band and Punch and Judy took it in turns to entertain the ever growing crowd until 2 o'clock when the main ceremony commenced. The Summerseat Players and ladies in all their finery cut an impressive sight on the brightly decorated stage erected immediately in front of the Tower. Following a brief introduction and synopsis on the life, times and achievements of Sir Robert by our Master of Ceremonies they commenced the re-enactment using a script written by Louise FITZWALTER and Margaret CARRUTHERS, based, in the absence of any details of the original speeches, on what had been said by the same individuals at the unveiling of PEEL's statue in Bury the day before.

The re-enactment ceremony closed with three hearty cheers for Sir Robert PEEL, general and hearty applause and a rousing chorus of 'Rule Britannia' being sung by all present. The Helmshore and Rossendale Brass Band and Punch and Judy played on and the Tower was open to all comers. And a good day was had by all!

John Ireland

## **Notes**

**Joshua KNOWLES** of Stornier Hill, Tottington built the Tottington calico printing works in 1821-3, after serving his apprenticeship and rising to the rank of manager with Messrs GRANT at their Ramsbottom printworks, the Old Ground. They had taken a kindly interest in him as friends of his father. Active in St Anne's Church Tottington, he was a chapel warden in 1824. His brother-in-law was John TURNER, builder of Nabbs House, Tottington. He died on 20<sup>th</sup> September 1855. There was also a well known sister, 'the Lady Bountiful of Bury', Mrs Alice Eliza DAVIES of Rhiwlas.

**Frederick PEEL** was born on 28<sup>th</sup> October **1823**, second son of Sir Robert PEEL and brother of first Viscount PEEL (Speaker of the House). He was elected MP for Bury on 10<sup>th</sup> July 1852, defeated in 1857, re-elected in 1859 and sitting until 1865. Knighted in 1869 he was made a member of the Privy Council and finally Chief Railway Commissioner. He died on 6<sup>h</sup> June 1906.

**John Robinson KAY** of Larkhill, Bury, and later Bass Lane House, Summerseat, was born in Burnley son of Thomas KAY, cotton manufacturer of Longholme (Rawtenstall) and Brooksbottom (Summerseat). An active member of the Wesleyan Methodist Church and a friend of good causes, he was appointed a JP in 1849 and was one of the earliest presidents of the Bury Athenaeum.

## **A WARTIME RETURN TO BYE ROAD AND PEEL BROW SCHOOL**

*Freda MOLYNEUX (nee LIPROTT) contributed her first autobiographical article on Shuttleworth's Bye Road in issue No 19 (Autumn 1999). Here, she takes up the story again. Editor*

A few years ago I wrote an article for the magazine about my childhood at 19, Bye Road, which ended in 1938 when I left with my parents (Charlie and Annie LIPTROTT) for Southampton. A job had been found there for my father, who had been on the dole for three years. However, life is full of unexpected twists and turns.

Dad worked on Southampton Docks, and Mum was a caretaker for a firm of solicitors, so we lived in the basement of the house where they had their offices. By the late summer of 1940 the daylight bombing of Southampton was intensifying and very frightening. We only felt safe at home in the basement. One day the bombers pounded the docks. Dad and his workmates always sheltered under a huge cold store, at that time filled with margarine, but when the siren sounded he couldn't reach it before the bombs started to fall so he took shelter elsewhere. After the 'all clear' he ran to join his mates, but the cold store had received a direct hit. They were all dead, buried underneath the rubble. He helped to dig their bodies out and then came home, smothered in grease and shaking violently. He was nearing 60 then, and although he lived into his 70s he never stopped shaking.

Dad was unemployed again, as a result of the bombing, so Mum decided that he would be better off back in Shuttleworth. His sister, Lucy LAMB, who lived at 38, Bye Road, found us a house, no 10, to rent for 8s 3d per week. We left Southampton just before the nightly blitzes started, and the following month our former home was destroyed, all five storeys collapsing into the basement where we had felt so safe!

The journey back to Shuttleworth was long and tortuous. We left in the morning and had to keep changing trains, at the stations whose names had all been removed to confuse the German spies who we knew would be dressed as nuns to confuse us (heaven help the genuine nuns!). When the trains did arrive they were packed with service personnel so it was often impossible to find a seat. It was night when we reached Manchester's London Road Station. We groped our way through the blackout across the city to Victoria Station, but arrived too late to catch the last train to Ramsbottom, so we were stranded until morning.

We stayed with Aunty Lucy until our furniture arrived. Her house, at the top of a steep flight of steps, has long since fallen victim to the quarry. We were so relieved to be back - no wailing sirens, no dog fights in the sky, no bombs, nothing to fear. It seemed at first that nothing had changed. But we soon discovered that all the young men had been called up to service in the Forces, and the children no longer played in the street at night because of the blackout. 10, Bye Road was huge after no 19, our original home. It had an enormous bedroom over two front rooms, and we wondered whether one of these rooms was originally used as a shop, in common with other Bye Road houses of the past. Dad's condition improved and he got a job at Ramsbottom Gasworks. His mates there teased him about his 'shakes', but he warned them that their turn would come. They thought it highly unlikely that bombers would come so far north, but several lived in Manchester and Salford so their complacency was short-lived. They never teased him again.



In Southampton, the War had badly affected our schooling which, for a while, was half-time only. Nevertheless I managed to pass the scholarship and that Autumn I should have taken my place at Grammar School, but Dad would not permit it. It may be difficult to understand now, but he left school at the age of 11 and it wasn't long before he had left home and was taking responsibility for his own life. Oh, how I wish I had asked him more questions about his younger days. He maintained that we all had our station in life and no good would come of it if we tried to change things, so I was destined to leave school at 14 and earn my keep. In truth, I suspect he was afraid of what he did not understand.

As a scholarship girl, I arrived at Peel Brow School feeling rather superior but I was soon 'cut down to size'. I was completely taken aback by the extremely high standard of education in Ramsbottom and the wide variety of subjects taught, many entirely new to me. Among them were French, science, swimming (at Haslingden Baths), cooking (at Stubbins), geometry for boys, home accounts for girls, and we did country dancing too - remember Sir Roger de Coverley? We also had school 'houses', of which we were very proud. I was in Rembrandt and wore a red badge; the others were Degas (blue), Goya (yellow) and Hogarth (green). It was a clever way of introducing us to these great artists.

We had a motley collection of teachers. They were nearly all ancient (to us) as the young and fit had been conscripted. The Headmaster was Mr BOOTH. I think his Christian name was Vincent but as he was very tiny we never called him anything but Dinkie (behind his back, of course). We were all terrified of him. He demanded absolute attention at all times. Unfortunately, I had developed a nervous habit and kept convulsively jerking my head. It was very tiring but I couldn't stop it despite being dosed up with Parish's Chemical Food which was supposed to cure everything! I was probably completely run down. So I sat in Dinkie's class, jerking away, and he accused me of doing it deliberately. I was being insolent. I thought I was being funny. Funny?! But even the cane didn't stop me. The most popular boy in the school was Charlie CRYER. He too had a problem - he stammered and Dinkie couldn't stop that either. Charlie's aim in life seemed to be to commit a punishable offence every day, and he was good at this. It seemed to us that every day he was called to Dinkie's office, a partitioned corner of the main hall, to receive his punishment - usually the cane. It was rumoured that Charlie had secret methods of dealing with it, and one involved breaking it with a horse's hair on the palm of his hand. Whether this was true or not, it's a fact that one day the cane came whizzing over the partition wall before our delighted eyes.

I can't remember all the teachers but some stand out in my memory. There was Miss FODEN, the only one who was young, and she taught art. She always seemed to be cross with me because she thought I didn't concentrate. She was right. Miss HARDMAN taught history and geography. She was a merry, plump little lady and she wore her hair in a bun. I recall one history lesson when we were asked to imagine that we were invading warriors (Vikings?) charging into a village on our horses and striking terror with our ferocious chant, which went: 'Ratty bommel, ratty bommel, ratty bom bom bom.' (My spelling could, of course, be faulty.) We all enjoyed this, especially when she jogged up and down with us, her hair fell out

of its bun. It's always fun when your teacher is discomfited. Mr MAXWELL (I think I've got the name right) taught maths and science. There was also a tall, dark and handsome teacher - I can't remember his name although I fancied him. And then there was Miss JAMES. She took us for English, French and swimming. I quite liked her but she blotted her copy book not long after I arrived by telling my fellow pupils that they should try to copy my speech. At that time, our rich heritage of regional accents and dialects was in danger of being wiped out. My father and his generation in Bye Road spoke very broad dialect - I never heard him say 'you', it was always 'thee', 'thou' or 'thy'. (I wonder if that's why I prefer the King James version of the Bible?). Teachers were encouraged to promote the King's English and the BBC only used announcers with public school accents.

Eventually, they did respond to criticism and employed Yorkshire-born Wilfred PICKLES to read the news. There was an outcry from the purists but most of us thought it was about time, too. But Miss JAMES was not English, she was Welsh, and what she failed to notice was that I did not speak perfect English at all.

When I first arrived in Southampton, I didn't fit in and was lonely. I really struggled to speak Sotonian which is very sparing with its consonants, for example 'as a



matter of fact' becomes 'asama' o' fac', and I thought I'd done really well but now here I was in the place I thought of as home, derided by my classmates for being too posh! So I became a 'foreigner' straight away, and that hurt. It was also Miss JAMES who told me that there was no such river as the Ganges, which featured in one of my compositions. I thought, 'Well, Miss JAMES, we do have an atlas at home.' But you didn't argue with your teachers.

*Paddling in the brook 'up the Croft', the mid-1930s. Left to right: Teddy WHITTLES, Veronica MORGAN, Freda LIPTROTT (the writer) and Edna LEACH*

She also pointed out that the daffodils and chrysanthemums, referred to in another composition, could not have been growing at the same time in my imaginary garden. I had to concede that she was probably right, but we had never had a garden.

My end-of-term reports were evidence of the difficulties I was experiencing with my schoolwork. In the beginning the teachers were all kindly 'looking forward to better results next time', but gradually their opinions of my capabilities hardened. My PT (Physical training) remained 'disappointing' (and what did they expect, forcing me to expose my navy blue knickers in front of boys?). I lurked at the bottom in history, they 'had hoped for a better result', but they might have been pleased to know that it is now one of my great interests. However, I did shine in English composition and literature, coming top with 'excellent, a most original style'. So perhaps I wasn't a complete duffer?

Do any readers remember the Ramsbottom Musical Festival of 1940 or '41? We were each asked to go to the front of the class and sing a few notes. If we could reach the high notes we were told we would sing descant in the choir, which was to be an honour, and I was one of these. From then onward we practised like mad. The Festival took place in one of the cinemas (I think it was *The Empire*) and among the choir's offerings were 'Jerusalem' and 'Linden Lea'. In those days we were still singing the lovely old-fashioned songs at school, such as 'North Country Maid', 'Who Is Sylvia?', and 'All Through The Night'. We were told that the Festival was recorded for English evacuees across the seas, to remind them of home. I wondered afterwards how they were all going to be gathered together for this treat, given that they were scattered around the globe.

In February 1941 my Southampton grandmother died. It was all very mysterious. Few people had phones, so the telegraph service was widely used in emergencies, and telegrams were dreaded because they only seemed to bring bad news. As every word cost the sender money they were always brief, but always seemed to carry the same message: 'So and so dead. Letter follows.' When the Telegraph Boy in his navy blue uniform, complete with pill box hat, and riding his red bicycle, arrived at our house there was panic. The telegram was from my Aunty: 'Mother dead. Letter follows.' Mum was in her black mourning clothes and making plans to travel to the funeral before the letter arrived. It wasn't until the 1990s that I discovered the truth, unearthed by a cousin. Granny had hanged herself in her cellar, and no-one ever knew why she did it. The decision was taken that the children must not be told, so we weren't. My mother must have been shattered, because she was deeply religious, and in those days suicide was regarded as a sin and a criminal offence. If you failed you were sent to prison. If you succeeded you were buried in unconsecrated ground, along with babies who had died before they were christened. It was completely inhuman.

Then a message came over the wireless - all men who had experience of working in Dockyards should report for duty. We didn't know why then, but in the light of events to follow it was probably to prepare troop ships for the North African offensive. Well, Dad might be 'getting on' (for those days), very shaky, and with

poor sight (the onset of glaucoma, although we didn't know it yet), but his country needed him. He went to Woolworth's in Bury to buy a pair of spectacles (sixpence) which, with a magnifying glass, enabled him to read the newspapers. He then disappeared to Ramsbottom one day and came back sans teeth! He was a heavy pipe smoker, and his teeth were in need of attention, but this seemed a trifle drastic. However, they were all gone, and although he acquired dentures he never wore them; in fact, he could eat an apple better than my mother who wore a full set! And off he went to Southampton. We weren't allowed to go with him because of the bombing. He must have been terrified after his previous experience.

Our lives at home settled into a comfortable pattern. When the blackout curtains were drawn at night, Mum and I either read or listened to the wireless. We were both members of Ramsbottom Library and I loved books about boarding school, wallowing in pillow fights and midnight feasts in the dorm. My mother owned many Victorian novels, and we read them again and again. Several had messages written on the flyleaf. *Daisy*, by E WETHERELL, was a school prize for 'General Progress and Good Conduct' in 1906. That year Mum was 14, and left school to become a live-in maid-of-all-work (a hard and lonely job from which she ran home, only to be sent back again). *Little Women* and *Good Wives*, *The Wide Wide World* and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* were all Christmas gifts from one of her employers, Madame RIECHELMANN.

These gifts ceased abruptly in 1914 because Madame RIECHELMANN was German and when the First World War commenced she was interned. All the books were highly moral and only the good died young. We tried to be good but there seemed little point if we were to be cut off in our prime! I still have these books and treasure them. There were some enjoyable programmes on the wireless too, for lighter relief. Remember 'The Gang Show', 'It's That Man Again', and Rob WILTON's 'The Day War Broke Out'? There were also famous dance bands - Henry HALL, Ambrose, GERALDO. And do you remember the singers - Ann SHELTON, Dorothy CARLESS and Betty DRIVER? Yes, Betty from the *Rovers' Return*!

In the autumn Dad sent for us, because the bombing had reduced considerably (we didn't know the doodle bugs were 'waiting in the wings'). Mum decided I should have a perm (my first) to make me look 'presentable' so I was taken to a hairdresser and reluctantly plugged into one of those perm machines with long, dangling wires (one per curl) and left to cook. Sadly, a year after my arrival, I said goodbye to the new school friends I had managed to make, including Mona GREGSON and Freda POOLE, and away we went again to Southampton. I only came back once, when I was in my late teens, to spend a fortnight's holiday with my cousin Edna (nee LAMB) and her husband Ernest ROTHWELL.

Until, in 1997, my husband, Peter, and I drove to Shuttleworth whilst holidaying in the north. I asked a lady arranging flowers outside the church if she knew who held the key. She directed me to the organist, Geoff WILLETTS, since sadly deceased, and he let us in. It was very moving for me, because having been brought up a Baptist the last time I was there was in 1932. I was four years old, attending my



Grandad's funeral and I could remember it clearly. I mentioned to Geoff's wife, Marion, that I was related to the LAMBS with whom I had lost contact 40 years ago, and to my amazement she was able to put me in touch with my late cousin Eddie's son, also named Eddie, who still lives in Ramsbottom. So we now correspond, and he has been able to give me news of the family I thought I had lost forever. This has been a great joy to me. And, of course, I have also joined Ramsbottom Heritage Society.

Freda Molyneux (nee Liptrott)

## **TWO SURVIVING BUILDINGS FROM RAMSBOTTOM'S 'OLD GROUND'**

Soon to occupy the Old Ground Mill site, bounded by Cross Street, Back Bolton Street, Old Ground Street and Square Street, is *St John's Court*, 22 houses and maisonettes. The noisy work of site levelling, I am told by one inhabitant of Scotland Place, has the distressingly early start time of 6am! Despite its name, the mill was never part of the original PEEL and YATES' Old Ground calico printing complex which covered the town centre from 1783 to 1821-2. Old Ground Mill was a mid-19 Century erection, specialising for many years as a cotton waste processor. It was, I think, largely cleared in the 1980s, and was recently MARTIN'S builders yard. I know of only two remnants of the original Old Ground buildings:-

1 the Dry-house, now Scotland Place (initially known as *Scotch Row* when converted to the present four cottage terrace when the Old Ground became redundant)

2 the large, quoined, three storey house on Silver Street, no 16/18, now flats, but probably once the manager's residence, substantially built, sufficiently so to be approximately assimilated into the new street pattern which grew up on the site of the Old Ground from 1821 onwards - it stands 18 inches proud of the present street line.

I have, incidentally, sent the builders some alternative historical names for their new court - this part of the town was known as Little Meadow, which sounds twee enough! The owner, according to the 1842 Tithe Schedule was John GRAY - can't see *Gray Court* catching on!

Andrew Todd (2002)

## **GEORGE GOODRICK, THE *GRANT ARMS* AND THE TRUCK SYSTEM**

Golden Jubilees have been in the news. Two years ago, at a family history fair in Grassington, I met the great great granddaughter of John GOODRICK, brother of Ramsbottom's most famous licensee. George GOODRICK was landlord of the *Grant Arms* for over 50 years, taking over in 1834. This charming middle aged lady told me that in the family there was still the large silver tree, presented by his customers in 1884, to commemorate a Ramsbottom jubilee - half a century of clearing them out when they had drunk too much of his wares. The family had moved from Terrington, near Malton in Yorkshire, to Manchester. Hume ELLIOT suggests that George

GOODRICK had been 'a trusted servant of Mr John GRANT at Nuttall Hall'. The GRANTS had many dealings in Manchester, which may be how GOODRICK came into the family's service, but it seems no coincidence that John GRANT'S daughter, Isabella, married Andrew Sherlock LAWSON of Aldborough, near Ripon, in Yorkshire, only about 15 miles west of Terrington. The *Grant Arms* has always been *the* public house in Ramsbottom, the oldest in the town centre, and therefore a natural focus for consumers of alcohol both on and off the premises. As a child in August 1914, Joe HITCHON came to live in one of the three now demolished cottages on Ducie Street, just behind the *Rose and Crown*. In 1990, he could recall the women from the two rows of back-to-back cottages on the north side of Carr Street coming to the *Grant Arms* for beer, 'in clogs with the jugs under their shawls'. But it did not start life as a hotel, and there is an interesting story behind how it became one. Originally called *Top o' th' Brow*, on account of its commanding location at the head of what was to become Water Street (later Bridge Street) Ramsbottom's 'great house' may have been built at the time of the construction of the Old Ground by PEEL and YATES in 1783, probably for a resident partner. It was common in the pioneer days of the Industrial Revolution for the proprietor to live on site, not least to ensure that the buildings were secure, and to organise a defence if machine breakers appeared. The precise age of *Top o' th' Brow* is unclear. In the 1794 Survey of Tottington Lower End, *Top o' th' Brow* is not named specifically, but is clearly the 'Capital Messuage Stable, Garden, and other Court Lands' [sic] in Higher Ramsbottom, owned by Henry WARREN, occupied by John ROSTRON, and valued at £15, the same rateable value as given to Barwood Lee. Hume ELLIOT states only that the GRANTS occupied the house on coming to Ramsbottom in 1806, and that its previous occupant had been Henry WARREN, one of PEEL's partners. As with other arrivistes, the GRANTS preferred to perpetuate their own name in that of their house, and rechristened it *Grant Lodge*. According to Hume ELLIOT, Grace McKENZIE, wife of William GRANT (1733-1817), founder of the Ramsbottom dynasty, was especially attentive to flowers and plants, and it was probably she who instigated the flower garden, which occupied what is now Market Place. It was laid out:-

**... 'in the shape of a heart,' whose lines curved round right and left from the front of the house towards the gates, which, with stone pillars and rounded capitals, stood just opposite the top of Bridge Street. Round the outer fence of the garden ran a row of goodly trees, which continued in front of what is now the Conservative club and Dr DEANS' surgery [the Civic Hall and the lodge house - Editor], and past the site on which the old Wesleyan Chapel was built in 1825, and where the handsome and commodious successor since 1874, now stands [Adderstone Mansions - Editor]. The trees extended northwards towards the point where the New Jerusalem Church was afterwards erected [at the sharp junction of Ramsbottom Lane and Factory Street - Editor] —'**

Thomas HAYHURST, writing in 1884, said of *Grant Lodge*:-

**It was then a beautiful residence which had frequently been used by Sir Robert PEEL. Gardens and orchards came down to what is now the line of street; it was**

colour-washed, and commanded an extensive view of the valley towards Summerseat, and formed moreover, a pretty object in the background from the hills east of the vale. It had been well furnished and specially pictured. Today the interior walls of the building are exhibited with pride by one of our most notable landlords in the county, George GOODRICK, an octogenarian. Immense paintings - rough, but indicative of the intense loyalty of [sic] the GRANTS - hang upon the walls in the spacious corridors, and in the larger rooms. Structurally, the place is but little altered. It is safe to assume it will not be altered whilst George GOODRICK lives - and he is chatty and vigorous as many men a generation younger.<sup>2</sup>

William GRANT had died in 1817, and his gardening widow Grace in 1821. By then, their four sons, the most famous generation of the clan, had settled in other, more salubriously located houses, and *Grant Lodge* became surplus to domestic requirements. The town centre must, by the 1820s, have resembled a permanent building site - the Old Ground had been abandoned in favour of the much more productive Square Works, space was available, and labour was needed. Houses were being erected piecemeal along and around Bolton Street and Bridge Street.

The hard, hot physical labour involved in calico printing created a large market for beer. And the boomtown condition of Ramsbottom made this an especially profitable market. Yet new towns on 'greenfield' sites often have to rely on what infrastructure already exists in the rural locality. The nearest public houses to the Old Ground had been in the older settlement of Holcombe Village, where Higher House (the *White Hart*) and Lower House (the *Shoulder of Mutton*) were the only ones in the area. The *Rose and Crown* came sometime between 1794 and 1818. By 1820, the construction of turnpike roads from Holcombe Brook to Ramsbottom and to Holcombe Village had created new opportunities and the *Hare and Hounds* and the *Bay Horse* had appeared at key junctions. But there was nothing in the immediate town centre, where the biggest demand lay. *Grant Lodge* occupied an ideal site for an inn, and the power that the GRANTS had in the town could increase its profitability .

Virtually our only source on the involvement of the GRANTS in the beer trade comes from Ramsbottom Chartist physician Peter Murray McDOWALL who in 1842 gave evidence to a parliamentary committee on the illegal operation of the truck system. A verbatim record of the committee's questions and its witnesses' answers was published later that year. McDOWALL accused the GRANTS of keeping public houses out of Ramsbottom through their powers as magistrates.<sup>3</sup>

This was not through any commitment to temperance, rather to protect their own beer retailing venture. In 1828, the Messrs GRANT petitioned the magistrates to license *Grant Lodge*, a purpose possibly not made harder by the fact that William, the senior brother, had, as HAYHURST records, himself become a magistrate in 1824. A small survey at Bolton Archives amongst the ALBINSON Collection, reproduced on page 14, hints at local politicking for the beer market. Mileages between *Grant Lodge* and existing public houses were given, implying that opponents claimed the town was already well served.

The survey states that Mr John SHARPLES of Horwich Vale opposed the application. Perhaps he had interests in one or more of the other public houses. The map also shows that a public house, referred to as *Crown Inn* (clearly the *Rose and Crown*) existed in Ramsbottom. This inn appears in ROGERSON's directory of 1818. In the rate book of 1834, it was occupied by Arthur LOW.<sup>4</sup>

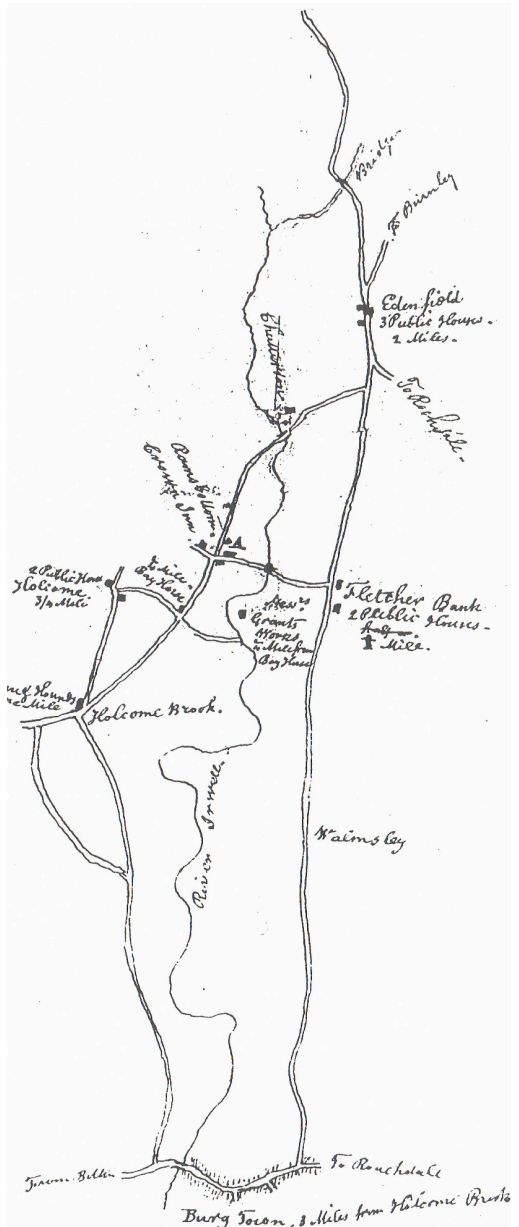
Situated in Higher Ramsbottom, in the earliest population centre of the town at Carr, the *Rose and Crown* was built to save PEEL and YATES' workers the steep hike up to Holcombe, site of the only two inns in the area.

Evidently, SHARPLES' opposition came to nothing, since *Grant Lodge* became the *Grant Arms* in 1828. Perhaps the licensing of *Grant Lodge* was intended simply to secure a share of the legitimate beer market of the town. Or it may have been to involve the GRANT workforce even more in the truck system.

### The GRANTS and Truck

Truck or 'tommy' shops, where employers provided their workers with groceries and other goods, were inevitable in view of the remote locations of many early water-powered factories. The presence of substantial falls of water, not of labour, determined early mill location.

Pauper 'apprentices' carted up from city workhouses, and lodged in apprentice houses, as



Sketch of roads and public houses in the village of Ramsbottom with distances from Ramsbottom and number of public houses in each place, dated 14<sup>th</sup> August 1828



at Nuttall and Summerseat, were an early solution to labour shortages. Once Factory Acts restricted child labour, cotton masters had to use free labour. The truck shop and the terrace of mill cottages were initially a means of attracting, rather than exploiting workers; and the procurement of coin from distant banks, despite security difficulties, was essential if these isolated industrial colonies were to function.

All this was part of the paternalistic model of enterprise, so much a feature of the early days of textile industrialisation, and later to reach its apogee in those communities where the millmaster saw an obligation to educate his workers and provide for their spiritual succour in shape of a chapel of his own persuasion.

The chance survival of the PEEL and YATES wage book for 1801-2, for their carding and spinning mill at Burrs near Bury, shows how benevolent this early paternalism could be, an import of squirearchical social responsibility from the countryside. Credit notes were issued to employees for purchases in the town's shops, mostly household goods, since the factory had its own truck shop. Sums incurred would be honoured by the firm, and deducted from wages. In the hands of a benign employer, the loss of direct contact with money wages would have been a small price for these rural workers to pay for convenient access to a well stocked shop, given that they worked 12 hour days, or nights, with limited opportunities for getting into Bury, a mile away. They probably welcomed the disciplined provision for family deaths that compulsory membership of a funeral club afforded, their employers making the deductions from their wages thrice yearly. No less valuable was the guarantee of credit from their employer for boots and clothes at town shops, at a time when war with France and harvest dearth were pushing prices upwards, squeezing living standards to some of their lowest levels since the worst Tudor harvest failures of the 1590s. Interestingly, one of the 16 shopkeepers named in the Burrs wage book was William GRANT, whose drapery shop on The Wylde marked the launch of his 'Cheeryble' sons into business, and perhaps introduced them to the inner workings of the truck system.<sup>5</sup>

Abuses led to a tightening of the law in 1831, making the payment of wages other than in cash illegal. But the ASHTONs at Ramsbottom Mill could still stretch the letter of the law as long as infringements, as at Burrs, were of advantage to their workforce. The ASHTONs were rated good employers by Ramsbottom Chartist physician Peter Murray McDouall in his evidence to the 1842 select committee:

**The only place where there are independent shops is in the village of Ramsbottom; the only reason of their independence is, that the ASHTONs have no shop at all; they pay in money, deducting the house rent, the price of the mutton or beef when they kill cattle for the people, and the money lent upon the Saturday night (Question 2060).**

The retention of the beef money was technically illegal, but it was clearly a practice which suited all parties. It sounds like an age old rural practice, communal killing and consumption of a large beast, but imported into an industrial context, an intriguing half way stage in the development of an independent retail network that delivered food in return for cash.

Monopoly provision and payment of wages in kind, however, led to the abuses most usually associated with the payment of wages in goods - poor quality food ('tommy rot'), high prices and a culture of 'tick' which led to improvidence. The provision of housing by the masters, wages being top-sliced for rent, led to the evils of the 'Cottage system', described by Friedrich ENGELS in *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, his famous study of Manchester and district conducted during a 21 month stay here between 1842 and 1844. Workers were compelled to take the masters' houses, and pay above the market rent for them, even though the employer ran no risk of rent arrears, having first charge on their tenants' weekly wage. No worker dared cross their employer, for fear of losing their home. Some workers were compelled to take one of these houses, even though they had one already! In the pioneer years of the early 1800s, good money was to be made from truck. A unique sophistication, however, that the GRANTS introduced to Ramsbottom was a company public house which operated a truck system in connection with beer!

The Truck Acts relied upon the actions of local magistrates, a class closely connected with the factory owners. The only evidence that I have encountered of the truck system in Ramsbottom, Nuttall, Brooksbottom, Haslingden, Irwell Vale and Edenfield, is contained in the testimony of McDOUALL who, with an income independent of the GRANTS, could make the allegations that their workers could not. This well known radical activist had practised medicine in the town since 1835, and in 1842 was living at 18, Bolton Street, presumably his surgery. He was therefore ideally qualified to assist the 1842 Select Committee on the Payment of Wages in its investigation of the considerable shortcomings of the 1831 Act, and gave evidence on 17<sup>th</sup> June.

McDOUALL claimed that the GRANTS had a truck shop in Nuttall, where they were the sole landowner and employer. To circumscribe the terms of the Act, they let the shop to an agent, at a staggeringly high rent, thereby benefiting from monopoly provision, but at one step removed. Since they owned the whole village, they let no other shopkeeper lease a property to set up in competition. But in Ramsbottom itself, and alone in the district, the ASHTONs, the other big employer and property owner in the town, did not operate the system. This almost certainly made it dangerous for any fellow employer to flout the law too clearly, and here the GRANTS paid wages in cash, having no tommy shop in the town. The absence of truck shops with a tied customer base allowed 'free shops' to flourish in Ramsbottom, a circumstance which may have affected the speed at which houses on Bridge Street and Bolton Street converted to shops in the 1840s and 1850s, and which may in part be responsible for the survival of Ramsbottom's unique townscape to this day. The Ramsbottom workers, claimed McDOUALL, were more provident than those in the surrounding district, and their condition far superior: 'ASHTON's mill,' said McDOUALL:-

... is the only mill in the district where there are to be found any of the people owning property ... the people dressed better, their houses were furnished better, and they appeared more independent and comfortable on their scanty means (Qnn 2060-5; 2160-72).

Truck was 'prevalent', claimed McDOUALL, between Bury and Manchester, and in the Ramsbottom/Haslingden district, but not in Manchester 'because the middle class would resist it', a reference to the harm that truck did to normal retailers (Qnn 2212-5). But where a manufacturer was a dominant economic and social force, as in the remote Ramsbottom district, it was far easier to evade the law. *George Goodrick, the Grant Arms and the Truck System I* went on to allege that the GRANTS employed the truck system at the *Grant Arms*. Around 100 of their dyers and block-printers were paid there by the landlord on a Saturday night. Whilst the GRANTS are named in the evidence, George GOODRICK is not, but McDOUALL's references to the landlord must be to him. As with their Nuttall shop, Messrs GRANT kept their hands clean by using an agent, in this case their tenant GOODRICK, to disguise their own involvement. GOODRICK was a trusted and discreet retainer, having been butler to John GRANT at Nuttall Hall, and he could therefore be relied on to handle the firm's weekly wage bill, to make the appropriate deductions, and to use his control of the workers' wages illegally to boost beer consumption:-

**.... they have a very large inn in the village and being magistrates, they take very good care not to license any other place ... those employed in the dye-works are paid there, and the block printers ... they have established what they call a round table, and the block printers receive notes from the book-keeper at the works, the landlord of the inn finds the change; they send up the whole of them under the plea that they cannot give them change; the men and boys bring a note from the shop, and the publican pays them the difference due to them on account... and 3d is deducted from every man paid any wages there.**

**.. it is charged for the change (Qnn 2172-81).**

The deducted 3d was actually paid to the workers in liquor, whatever their age or wage, McDOUALL explained - block printers might be paid 5s, 15s or 20s, but each was paid 3d of it in drink:-

**... the little boys in the dye-house are paid there; I have seen them come down drunk (Qnn 2182,2193).**

There was of course a large temptation for the workers to carry on beyond the 3d - on a Saturday night, the inn would close at midnight or one o'clock:-

**I have known them remain there till they have exhausted their credit and their money (Qnn 2190,2192).**

Despite these drinking bouts, McDOUALL said that the *Grant Arms* was 'well conducted', and was not a disorderly house (Qn 2191). The system welded the GRANT workforce to the *Grant Arms*, turning them into a captive market for beer. Truck bred improvidence, McDOUALL argued, since the men could obtain drink on credit. And on the Saturday night, GOODRICK would settle the account, deducting from the wages 'his own score for drink during the week, which score is freely run up for the men, thereby fatally encouraging intemperance for the sake of profit' (Qn 2195).

The Committee wondered whether anyone could refuse to be paid in the public house:-

**He would charge it whether they go or not; it is understood it is for his trouble in giving change, and comes in in drink [sic] (Qn 2198).**

Had anyone insisted on their legal right to be paid fully in cash?

**I am not aware of any man who asked the question; it is the rule, and all seem to submit to it... . There would be a complaint made regarding him, and it would be easy to find fault with his work ... (Qn 2200).**

McDOUALL went on to describe how he had personally travelled with the GRANTS' licensee/wage clerk, perhaps hitching a lift in his trap or cart, when he had gone into Bury to collect 'a bag of silver' from the bank for the payment of the wages (Qn 2186).

### **McDOUALL and the GRANTS**

McDOUALL's evidence to the Select Committee on the Payment of Wages comes as a powerful antidote to the many accounts of the GRANT family's excessive generosity. It would not have reached as wide an audience of course as DICKENS' characterisation of them as the 'Cheeryble Brothers' in *Nicholas Nickleby* or in HAYHURST's *Appreciative Estimate*, and even in recent times his allegations have been largely unknown. McDOUALL did not fit into the cosy set up that most of the manufacturers had established around Ramsbottom in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. He was a radical, a campaigner for parliamentary reform and a national figure in the Chartist movement. He had served a prison term for sedition from 1839-40.<sup>6</sup>

McDOUALL hinted at a common practice in the Ramsbottom area of medical men conniving with the masters, factory inspectors and parents by signing certificates of age for children too young for employment under the Factory Acts. A Mr HUTCHINSON had the monopoly in Ramsbottom. In return, such surgeons were given this paid work on a regular basis, to the exclusion of the more honest members of the profession. McDOUALL told the 1842 select committee that he had never been approached to sign one (Qnn 2259-66). It may be that this issue had caused ill feeling between him and the GRANTS. But it seems more likely that this was just one further abuse to which McDOUALL's medical practice amongst their workforce alerted him. In 1838, he had published some damning statistics about the GRANTS' houses, citing the overcrowded state in which their workers lived. In what was almost certainly Nuttall Village, 137 of the 309 cottages had just *one* bedroom, for the typical family of four to seven members. Twenty of the 137 had between eight and 13 members. The workers had to occupy GRANT houses as a condition of their employment, the cost of rent, water and coal being deducted from their wages (Qnn 2270-4). The all-encompassing nature of the truck system in the area, but especially in Nuttall, meant that many of the GRANT workers lived in a near cashless economy. This made it difficult to obtain services, like medical aid, which the GRANTS did not supply. Women resorted to 'money clubs', a not-for-profit lottery, to raise sums in times of need. It seems that despite having an extensive practice, McDOUALL made little money, since his patients had none to give him - 'the working men complain that they cannot send for a medical man, and there is no chance of getting your account paid if you attend,' he commented wryly to the Committee (Qnn 2253-8).



It was impossible for a member of the GRANTS' workforce to testify against them, which is why so little evidence of their involvement in truck has survived. In June 1842 Benjamin MORGAN, an employee at the Cambrian Works near Bridgend, had preceded McDOUALL as a witness to the committee; he concluded his evidence by emphasising how precarious his position was:-

**There is one thing I wish to say; that I fear that, in consequence of my being examined, I shall be discharged when I get home ... I hope the Committee will consider that.**

**What makes you think you shall be discharged? - Because I am so much against the system; but I am only one out of 3,000 who have the same feeling against it (Qnn 2046-7).**

As magistrates, and with the legal profession largely sympathetic to the masters, the GRANTS and other operators of the truck system had little to fear from the courts. Workers did not complain because they would lose their house and job. Moreover, the names of such troublemakers would be passed on quickly:-

**. . . there is such a communication between the masters, that I have know a messenger sent to the various mills with the name of the man discharged; they have complained to me of it perpetually; and I have known families emigrate 40 or 50 miles (Qn 2091).**

McDOUALL cannot have been popular with the GRANTS, a known radical with an ear for the complaints of their workforce. His evidence to the 1842 select committee must have been of particular annoyance to the family, especially as manufacturers were on their guard to conceal any involvement in truck on account of parliamentary interest in the abuses of the 1831 Act (Qnn 2068-9).

William GRANT'S death on 28<sup>th</sup> February 1842 must have been a family tragedy, and the eulogies from the *Manchester Guardian*<sup>1</sup> about his successful and benevolent life must have had the shine taken off them by McDOUALL'S accusations of illegal exploitation of an enthralled workforce.

McDOUALL'S testimony is the only source material I have encountered on the GRANTS' 'darkside', and its accuracy has been questioned. Did McDOUALL resent the GRANTS because they would not let him in on the scam of signing Factory Act certificates for underaged workers? Was he simply a troublemaker who had a grudge against manufacturers in Ramsbottom, Nuttall, Brooksbottam, Haslingden, Irwell Vale and Edenfield, the area in which he claimed to have knowledge? Any reading of his life story, however, suggests that he was an intense idealist, genuinely appalled by the abuses of unfettered capitalism, whilst the detail of his evidence has a very authentic ring - he exonerates the ASHTONS, and GREIG at Stubbins, of any involvement in truck, which suggests a close level of enquiry; and his accusations tally with practices elsewhere. And could anyone have made up:-

**. . . the masters carried it to such an extent that some of them bundled the cheeses into the people's houses, that they might have less money on Saturday to pay them (Qn2155).**

Similarly, would any inventor have gone to the length of citing wage levels, which were better with the GRANTS than the ASHTONS, because a considerable portion could be recouped through higher prices and rents?

The accuracy of McDOUALL's testimony has become irretrievably connected with the iconography of the GRANTS, universally celebrated as the life models for DICKENS' oddball altruists, the Brothers Cheeryble. The GRANTS were a regional power - from the minutes of evidence (Qnn 2160-1 ) it is clear that Stockport Radical MP Richard COBDEN, a member of the 1842 Select Committee, knew of the firm by name. McDOUALL's allegations of the GRANTS' involvement in illegal activity may already have spread beyond Ramsbottom. These early years of the Industrial Revolution were wild, insecure times for entrepreneurs. Before limited liability evolved in the 1840s, failure meant personal ruin, and could result in bankruptcy and prison. Fortunes were laid down for families who may not have cared too much to know, in later, more comfortable generations, how roughly their money had been made. Some redeemed the reputations of their ancestors retrospectively, by engaging in charitable acts - the AITKENs, another trucking millowner family according to McDOUALL, were some of the Valley's greatest benefactors a generation or so later. McDOUALL's accusations can only have been damaging to the GRANTS' social aspirations in the regional capital, Manchester, where truck was frowned on by its free trade elite.

Perhaps their reputation needed rescuing long before McDOUALL and 1842. Is it possible that the legend of the 'Cheeryble Brothers' and their utopian generosity was a similar damage limitation exercise by the GRANT interest, with the connivance of a socially and literally ambitious young novelist working on his third novel, and looking for 'realistic' characters against whom to contrast optimistically his many villains? This rich vein for speculation must wait for a future issue!

Andrew Todd

## References

1. William Hume ELLIOT, *The Country and Church of the Cheeryble Brothers* (Selkirk, 1893)p72
2. Thomas H HAYHURST, *An Appreciative Estimate of the Grant Brothers, of Ramsbottom* (Bury, 1884) pp39-40
3. Select Committee on the Payment of Wages, Minutes of Evidence (Parliamentary Papers, vol xi, 1842) Question 2172
4. Arthur LOW, commemorated on an 1834 datestone on nos 72-78, Bridge Street, was almost certainly the man who in 1848 took out a lease from the GRANTS to build the *Railway Hotel*, opposite the newly opened station,
5. Francis COLLIER, *Workers' Family Economy in the Cotton Industry: a Country Factory, Burrs Mill, Bury* (Chetham Society, 1965) pp34-5
6. Trevor PARK, *The Mysterious Doctor McDouall* (Ramsbottom Heritage Society News Magazine, no7, Summer 1993) pp9-11
7. *Manchester Guardian*, 5<sup>th</sup> March 1842, quoted in HAYHURST, pp57-8

## LOCAL RESEARCH

The Heritage Society has no staff, and cannot offer a research or query service. The following institutions could be approached:

**1 Bury Archive Service - Edwin Street (off Crompton Street) Bury BL9 0AS; tel: 0161 797 5897** - preserves the historical records from the 1650s to the present day of a wide range of organisations and private individuals from all parts of the Metropolitan Borough. There are over 30 tons of documents, maps, plans and photographs, almost all of which are available for consultation in the public reading room. Holdings include the records of local authorities (eg Ramsbottom Local Board, and UDC, including many building plans) schools, churches, businesses, trade unions, sports clubs, charities, political parties and other social organisations. The Heritage Society's Collection, including photographs, is on permanent loan there.

The service is in Edwin Street (off Crompton Street, next to Plumb's Hi-Fi shop), and entrance is via the yard at the far end of the street on the right-hand side. The reading room is open from 10am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm every Tuesday; and at the same times on other weekdays Monday to Friday, but please make an appointment in advance by ringing archivist Kevin Mulley before any visit. Group visits (minimum six persons) on evenings and weekends are available if booked in advance.

**2 Bury Central Library (Reference and Information Services Department) Manchester Road, Bury, BL9 0DG; tel: 0161 253 5871** - has publications on local history, historical printed works of local interest such as trade directories, older Ordnance Survey maps for the whole of BMBC, including Ramsbottom, copies of local newspapers, thematic collections of newscuttings worth pursuing for local bibliographies, census returns and parish registers on microfilm.

The library is open from 9.30am to 5.30pm each weekday (open until 7.30pm Wednesdays), and from 9.30am to 4.30pm on Saturdays.

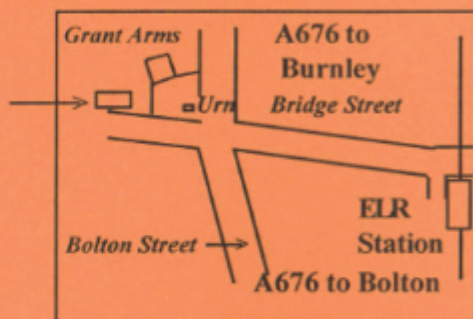
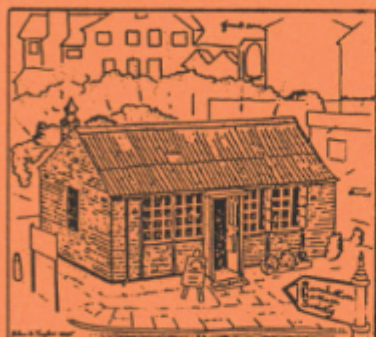
**3 Ramsbottom Library, Carr Street, Ramsbottom, Bury; tel: 01706 822484** - has much of the Ramsbottom local collection of the late Rev RR Carmyllie, local census returns and several filing drawers of local newscuttings and booklets, as well as Hume Elliot's history.

**4 Lancashire Family History and Heraldry Society; membership secretary Vicky Barlow, Bob's Ley, 6, Mowbreck Lane, Wesham, Preston, Lancs PR4 3HA; tel: 01772 687234** - membership is only £9-00 per year, and this entitles you to four magazine issues, an opportunity to publicise your research queries and findings, and 14 meetings each month with speakers at venues all over the county, including Bury and Rawtenstall.



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