

NEWS MAGAZINE

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The Cliffe, Stubbins

John B. Taylor
2008

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 an information centre.
 - c) To seek to protect the heritage of Ramsbottom.
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PROGRAMME 2008

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| June 18 | Ms J. Fitton - <i>Cotton Threads</i> - the Hutchinson family legacy to Bury |
| July 16 | Ms Dorothy Greaves - Visit to Rochdale Pioneers, Co-operative Museum. Meet 6.30 pm at Carr Street car park, Ramsbottom. Transport by car sharing. |
| August 20 | Mr A. Baldwin - Guided walk around the Scout Moor Wind Farm site. Meet 6.30pm at Carr Street car park, Ramsbottom. Transport by car sharing. |
| September 17 | Mr A. Todd - <i>An Historical Saunter around Ramsbottom Town Centre</i> - Illustrated. |
| October 15 | Miss Margaret Curry - <i>Tales of Two Cities (continued) - Manchester & Salford</i> - Illustrated. |
| November 19 | Mr Jonathan Ali - <i>Ninety Years On</i> - WW1 legacy to Hawkshaw. |
| December 10 | Members Night - Christmas Festivities - Social evening |

Unless otherwise stated, meetings are held at Ramsbottom Civic Hall,
Market Place, Ramsbottom, commencing at 7.30 pm

Entry by donation, please.

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Front cover The Cliffe at Stubbins 2008 by John B TAYLOR

To the left and behind are the old tennis court [1908] and the gardener's lodge house, later Porritt House. The garden has been "improved" by the artist grass cut, shrubs trimmed and some conifers removed to show the building to advantage.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Despite continuing absence from the Heritage Centre refurbishment having been further postponed whilst a bid for additional funding, and an application for planning approval, are being considered, requirements imposed in order to ensure, for environment reasons the external finish of the building -is in sympathy with that of the newly refurbished Library across the road. Society activities have continued unabated, This year marks the of the donation to the townspeople of Ramsbottom by Col. AT. PORRITT, of Nutall Hall, and Park A small group of members working together with Friends of Nuttall Park and Bury MBC, is arranging an appropriate commemoration, to be held on 12th July. Plans include the mounting of a replica of the plaque commemorating the original donation of 1928 into a stone monolith quarried from nearby Fletcher Bank Quarry and very generously donated by Marshalls Mono Ltd., the quarry owners. The Society has also organised a children's Art Competition, involving children from all schools in the town, with prizes to be awarded on the day by our mayor. A great day is anticipated. The Holcombe Moor Heritage Group, of which the Society is a member, has been working to create greater public awareness of the attributes of the Moor, partly a MOD training area, including flora, fauna, and aspects of historical interest former farmsteads, and industrial sites. Walk leaflets and orientation boards have been produced, and an archaeological dig is planned for later in the year jointly with University of Manchester Archaeology Group; this may be an

opportunity for those members who took part in the Society's own dig' last year to have another go. During the winter members of the Conservation Group have taken part in recently established Ramsbottom Business Group activities attending meetings and making contributions when appropriate; whilst we aren't strictly a business in the commercial sense developments in the town are very much our concern, and I believe it's right we should be involved. Another new venture in partnership with Bury BMBC Archive and other community groups, is the planning of a joint photograph archive, intended to bring to a wider audience the of member organisations via a shared web-site; it seems to be a highly technical business, and we are fortunate indeed in having John LEYLAND, our own web site manager involved on our behalf. Mention of photographs brings to mind the 2007 Photo Competition the results of which were declared at our March meeting, A wonderful array of images of events and activities taking place during the year, one of which depicted an activity not previously mentioned in these columns, that of member Graham TWIDALE gilding Ramsbottom and districts post boxes; with permission of the Post Office of course, but what a difference Graham's made to the image of the town. So, much goes on. We now look forward to summer, with the first Summer Ramble of the year at the end of April.

Tony Murphy

BOOK REVIEW •OUR BOYS - THE GREAT WAR IN A LANCASHIRE BY
JONATHAN ALI

This is certainly a book with a difference, reflecting as it does the heartbreak of a community seen through the eyes of a person raised and still living in the village, ninety years after the events he describes. Hawkshaw was undoubtedly an unlucky village, having to endure a disproportionate number of casualties during the Great War as 40 of its 141 young men who went to war did not return. Picking painstakingly and comprehensively through contemporary records the author has been able to compile short pen-pictures of the 40 men and attach a photograph of each to the narrative, Although each death is put into its military context, he does not attempt anything more than an outline of the actual course of the war, and this has helped to localise the story, giving the overall impression that it is a story of Hawkshaw rather than of the war itself. Although the soldiers are the main focus of the story, the narrative paints a much wider picture of the village and some of its characters in particular the headmaster of the local school, Thomas BECKETT , who strove to keep in touch with the local men at the front, We get an overview of some of the village institutions it's three churches, the local mills and farms, the football team, but surprisingly not the village pub, which fails to get a mention. We are reminded that in such a small community everyone knew everyone else, and that each death was not just a blow to the immediate family but to all the village

Inhabitants. The official notifications from the front were formal though often speaking warmly of the qualities of the deceased but much more poignant were the letters sent by colleagues and follow Hawkshaw soldiers to the families, The story did not end with the end of the fighting and this is portrayed towards the end of the book For the widows and surviving the agony would continue, and the incident of the woman unable to watch the end-of-war celebrations as she sat at home behind closed curtains is particularly moving, The coming change in the way wars would be fought is hinted at in the disclosure that Hawkshaw lost just one man in the 1939-1945 War. Nobody was hurt when a Zeppelin flew over the district in 1916, apart from an elderly lady who died of shock but those of us old enough to remember will recall civilian casualties at Tottington in 1944. All in all this is an excellent publication, marred only by some less than perfect proof reading. That should not be allowed to detract from the merit of the book which is a "must" for both local and military historians as well as the general reader The combination of text and photos has skillfully managed and the italicising of letters and verse breaks up the text and is easy on the eye, The high quality glossy paper and an imaginative cover add to the attraction of the book, and reading it will only confirm the first-sight impression that the price represents very good value for money.

Ken Inman Chairman, Buy Branch, Lancashire Family History and Heraldry Society

["Our boys " is available at Ramsbottom Library for only £8.00 Editor]

CONSERVATION GROUP SPRING 2008

This spring the Conservation Group report is more to do with work in progress than of new projects completed, It continues however to be varied, interesting and challenging. In the last magazine I mentioned what is being done in preparation for the anniversary of the opening of Nuttall Park. The Friends of Nuttall Park, led by Bury MBC park ranger Amy LEACH, are organising an important event:

The "Nuttall Park Extravaganza" event is to be held on July 2008 to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the park's opening by Lt Col PORRITT on July 21st 1928.

Andrew TODD wrote about that day in 1928 for the 70th anniversary (RHS Magazine number 17) and mentioned the original bronze plaque which was cast to commemorate the gift of Nuttall Hall and the park; by Lt Col PORRITT to the people of Ramsbottom. The 27-inch plaque is still held by Ramsbottom Heritage Society (I wonder how many of you have read the inscription on it when you visited the Heritage Centre?) Obviously .it is relevant to this summer's celebrations so we are busy pursuing ideas as to how it can be made more accessible to the public. Brenda RICHARDS has nearly finished the interpretation board, which tells the story of Nuttall Hall and in this magazine

we publish an article which gives glimpses of Lt Col PORRITT his family and their company. We hope that by the time the autumn magazine is published we will have erected two other interpretation boards. The New Jerusalem Board will be completed as soon as the council have renovated its site on the corner of Ramsbottom Lane and Factory Street and we are in the process of upgrading the Market Place board, which has deteriorated over the years. There has also been some progress on the University of Manchester's report on the archaeological dig at Kibboth Crew. We have now seen the draft report and there will be a site visit by Mike NEVELL, Director of the Archaeology Unit, to check some of the measurements and take a final look at the structures there. We hope that following a submission to the NHS and the council, the horribly garish yellow and black bollards around the car park in Carr Street will be painted black with a white line near the top, as are all the other bollards in the town. Having admired the local post boxes with their gilded sovereign's crests I'm sure you will be glad to know that Graham TWIDALE's paintbrush will soon be in action again. This time his task (with council permission, of course) will be to repaint some of the street signs, which have become so shabby they are difficult to read. You will remember that just over a year ago, the Ramsbottom Conservation Area was greatly extended and at that time an independent report was commissioned by Mick NIGHTINGALE, the Conservation Officer for Bury, to identify factors which are detrimental to visual impact of the area. Anne MORTIMER, Brenda RICHARDS, Graham TWIDALE and I have volunteered to help him prepare a management plan to deal with these issues so if you have any ideas which might preserve the heritage of the town, please let us know, Bury- Archive have approached us and other similar local groups with the suggestion of a joint heritage photograph website, With John LEYLAND, we are still looking into the implications of this and Tony MURPHY will be attending the next meeting to discuss it further. As you will see a wide variety of issues come under the remit of the Conservation Group and if you would like to be involved or just to find out more, you would be more than welcome to come along.

Kate SLINGSBY

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION 2007

Overall winner of the Dickensian Trophy is Alice O'Brien for her entry in the Town & Country Category. Congratulations.

Category winners are - Town & Country First prize Alice O'Brien
Ramsbottom Wharf 2007

Highly commended Tim Meadows & Karen Clarke

Events & Daily Life

First Prize Ian Summers First load for Scout Moor Windfarm 2007

Highly commended Brenda Richards & Ian Summers

Buildings

First prize Brian Clarke Cottages,Bass Lane, Summerseat

Highly commended John O'Connor & Kate Slingsby

Themes

First prize Brenda Richards

Highly commended Linda de Ruijter & Judith Appleby

LT COL A T PORRITT: DONOR TO OUR TOWN OF NUTTALL PARK, 1928

We hope the following article helps to satisfy curiosity about certain members of the PORRITT who were our town's most generous benefactors. As well as conducting our research we have used the work of others, notably Derek FITTON and John SIMPSON, to whom are particularly grateful.

PORRITTs', Stubbins Vale Mill Notes on Company Background:

When the PORRITT family established mills in the Ramsbottom area, they already had a long tradition of involvement in woollen manufacturing. During the 19 Century they carried on woollen manufacture in Norfolk and soon afterwards they moved to the West Riding of Yorkshire and settled at Easington, Early in the 17th Century one Thomas PORRITT migrated from there to Birstall., also in the West Riding, where he earned his living as a maker of broadcloth. Thomas prospered and became a master clothier. The business was handed down in the main line of the family until the 18th Century when Joseph PORRITT (1746-1802) transferred his business - first to Rochdale and then to Bury. Around 1825, Joseph's two grandsons Joseph (1808-68) and James (1810-96) became partners in their firm J and J PORRITT, Joseph decided to try his luck in the specialised work of making woollen felts for the paper industry, They had premises in Stanley Street, Bury in 1829, expanded rapidly and moved into Dearden Clough Mill in 1838. Brother Samuel PORRITT (1815-84) was taken into partnership and in 1842 brother-in-law John AUSTIN (1820-71) joined the firm. Soon they decided to lease a fulling mill from the GRANTS at Springwood, Ramsbottom. The firm's assets continued to grow. They again faced the problem of premises and also wanted to be free from the vagaries of landlords so they bought the Stubbins Vale Estate, .James PORRITT designed their mill, which was built alongside the railway line using millstone grit from quarries on the estate. He was so anxious to see that the work was properly carried out that he went up on the scaffolding every day, and was actually seen climbing to the top of the chimneystack to make careful examination. The partnership of PORRITT Bros & AUSTIN was installed in the new Stubbins Vale Mill in 1851 and they

left Springwood in 1852 following problems with the effluent. Senior partner Joseph PORRITT and his sons left the company and returned to Springwood in 1858. (The three PORRITT brothers had some twelve sons between them so their portion of the assets of the firm would not be very great.) Later Joseph bought Sunnybank Mills at Helmshore. Samuel PORRITT, who had five sons, decided to follow his eldest brother's example and left the firm in 1866 to start up in Bamford. When James PORRITT died in 1896 aged 85, his sons continued the business at Stubbins Vale Mill. Austin PORRITT continued his father, Richard Millett PORRITT's work in installing new machinery at Stubbins Vale Mill. A new weaving shed was added to the mill complex in 1907 and in the following year electric light was installed throughout the mills, Austin PORRITT also made the firm into a limited company and included fifty employees among the shareholders. Because of World War I some of his expansion plans were put on hold but there were more additions from the 1920s to 1940s. During World War some parts of the mill had to be closed down because of shortages but demand for papermakers' felts continued to be high. The company contributed to the war effort by manufacturing felt for sealing bullet holes aircraft tanks. They opened a canteen at Stubbins Vale and workpeople began to enjoy holidays with pay. Throughout the war they also paid special allowances to the dependents of employees who were serving in the Armed Forces. Derek FITTON includes the following as a quotation:

The PORRITTs had not desecrated the landscape like so many of their fellow industrialists. Their mills and houses were unobtrusive and well built. They planted trees along this part of the Irwell Valley and it has maintained its predominantly rural atmosphere. The PORRITT Family: Austin Townsend PORRITT (1875 - 1956) grandson of James PORRITT James had married Mary Hannah AUSTIN (1813-77) sister of the firm's John AUSTIN in 1832. Their son Richard Millett PORRITT (1840- 1906) married Sarah Jane TOWNSEND (1844-1936) in 1874 and the following year Austin Townsend PORRITT was born. In the 1881 census the family is listed at Greenmount House, Stubbins, Lancashire with the occupation of the head, Richard M. PORRITT, given as woollen manufacturer. Apart from his son five year old Austin, there are two daughters, baby Alice and Kate aged four. The household also included three female servants who had all been born in Shropshire. *

In addition to its church and board schools -Edenfield Church of England School, Ewood Bridge National School, Stubbins Congregational Day School and Turn Board School - Edenfield was home to a number of small private schools during parts of the 19th Century. These included Acres House, run by Miss Jane WILSON, a cousin of Edenfield's vicar. It was advertised as a

ladies' boarding school but boys were admitted and Austin Townsend PORRITT was a day pupil there between 1881 and 1885. The family still lived at Greenmount, Stubbins. The 1891 census includes Austin PORRITT as a boarder at Rossall School Fleetwood where he was educated from 1885 to 1891. According to his obituary he became a governor and one of the school's most generous benefactors, donating between £50,00 and £60,000 and a number of books to the school library. We are told that he endowed a leaving scholarship to northern universities and that each year before World War II, he used to send enough pheasants to Rossall to feed whole school. One of the buildings and some of the playing fields were named after him. A T PORRITT was one of the area's early motorists. In July 1907 he drove his car to Scarborough racecourse where members of the Ramsbottom Company of Volunteers were enjoying their week's 'most enjoyable encampment'. On 23rd August 1907, this report appears in the Ramsbottom Observer:

Child knocked down by Motor- Major PORRITT to the Rescue. What might have been a very serious accident occurred at Bent Gate, Haslingden on Monday afternoon, when a boy named Joseph CAMPBELL aged five years, who resides with its grandmother, Mrs JACQUES at Bent Gate, attempted to race across the road in front of a motor car with the result that the side of the car caught the child and threw him violently down against the kerbstone inflicting a severe cut to his head and bruising to other parts of his body Had it not been for the almost miraculous manner in which the driver of the car pulled up in a remarkably short distance, the child would probably have been killed. The child was immediately picked up and carried to his grandmother's house. Major A T PORRITT of Stubbins, the owner of the car, at once motored to Haslingden and brought back Dr John HARRISON who dressed the child's injuries. Meanwhile Mrs Austin PORRITT [who married him in 1906 Editor]) carefully attended to the child. Major and Mrs A T PORRITT acted most commendably throughout and were in no way to blame for the unfortunate occurrence.

During the World War I he raised the 2/5th East Lancashire Regiment and took it to France in 1917 but was invalided home the same year. For the short time that he was in France he was Acting Brigadier and had since taken a great interest in the Territorial Army. Until about two years before his death he was Honorary Colonel of the East Lancashire Regiment. In 1920 Col PORRITT gave a small plot of land as a recreation ground for the people of Strongstry and an old army hut was opened there as a village institute. It was divided into three — a games room, a newsroom and a practice room for Stubbins Vale Silver Prize Band. (Known to locals as Hanson's Band because from 1888 they were conducted by William HANSON and his son James, they

are reputed in 1906 as having two band practices a week on the premises of Stubbins Vale Mill in winter or in the open yard in summer.) In 1923, he presented five acres of land at Chatterton for playing fields. Five years later, having purchased Nuttall Hall and grounds comprising nearly fifteen acres, he gave them to the township of Ramsbottom as a peace memorial. Following a storm of applause at the opening ceremony at Nuttall Park, he began his speech by explaining that it had been considerably over twenty years since the idea first presented itself to him that Nuttall Hall and its surrounding grounds should at some time be transferred to the town and preserved as a public recreation ground and open space forever. (He was keenly interested as a member of the East Lancashire Playing Fields Association whose aim was that there should be five acres of open space for every thousand inhabitants.) Having already planted the park with trees and shrubs, he pointed out to the crowds the beauty of the site with the surrounding 'noble hills and woods' which were 'great assets' urging the people to plant trees for future adornment'. He also bore the costs of constructing tennis courts, a bowling green and a bandstand, In 1931 he added to his gift a further 14 1/2 acres of land as an extension. His obituary says:

These are only a portion of his benefactions. He has placed the town and neighbourhood greatly in his debt by his public spirit and generosity.

Brought up as a member of Stubbins Congregational Church, A T PORRITT had offered a piece of land near Stubbins Station as the site for an iron or concrete mission church. In 1923, the following year, the congregation had decided to continue to raise money for a more permanent building. On 5 June 1926 Mrs A T PORRITT laid the foundation stone of St Philip's, Chatterton. Six years later a procession left the old mission for the opening by Col PORRITT of St Philip's as a Parish Church. In 1928 he was granted a coat of arms, mainly coloured red and gold, with a shield which is described as having on it two roundels each with a leopard's face, Above the shield is a helmet and, on a green wreath, an heraldic antelope in black with a silver collar. It is holding a red rose between its forelegs.



On 10th February 1931, his appointment as Deputy Lieutenant of the County Palatine of Lancaster was announced. Contemporary reports say he was: a member of the firm PORRITT & SPENCER, woollen manufacturer of Bamford, Stubbins and Helmshore, a generous benefactor to the township, the council's representative on the County Council for several years, succeeding Mr STOCKDALE, senior magistrate for the district, having been appointed in 1907, President of the Ramsbottom British Legion, Vice-president of Ramsbottom Conservative and Unionist Association, life governor of Ramsbottom Cottage Hospital trustee of the Peel Memorial, Holcombe, and one of the leaders of the Conservative party in the Heywood and Radcliffe Division. The extension of Nuttall Park by an extra 15 acres was announced in 1931 along with the Deputy Lieutenant appointment. Before World War 11, Lt Col PORRITT was a member of the famous North Lonsdale and John o' Gaunt clubs of archers and was acknowledged as one of the best archers in the country. On 19 September 1930 at Springfield Park, Lancaster (at the 230th Recorded meeting in the 258th Year of the Society of Archers) :

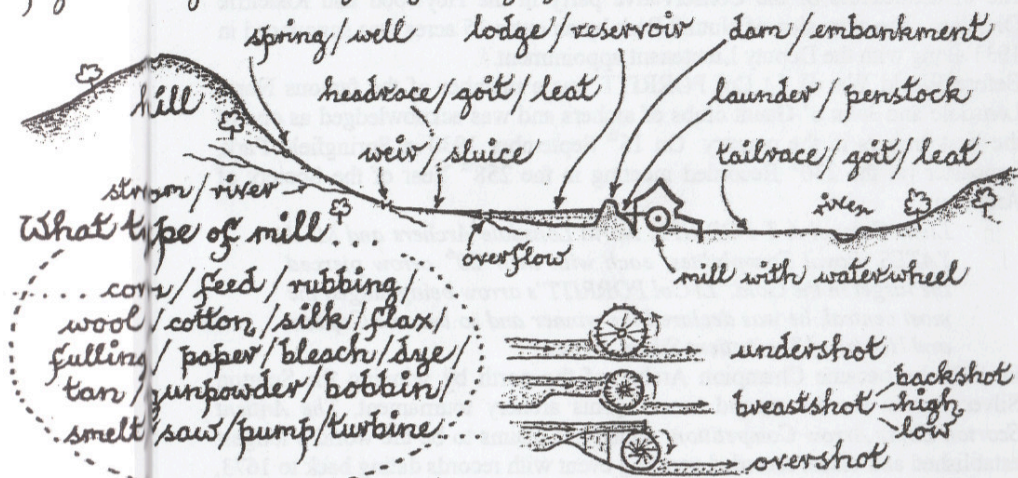
Lieut Colonel A T PORRITT, North Lonsdale Archers and Mr J YATES, Royal Toxophilites, each with their 20th arrow pierced the target in the Gold. Lt Col PORRITT's arrow being judged the most central, he was declared the winner and so became Captain and Holder .of The Ancient Silver Arrow.

In 1936 he became Archer of the -north by winning the Scorton Silver Arrow for the second time. .(This archery tournament, The Ancient Scorton Silver Arrow Competition, which has claims to be the world's longest established and oldest recorded sporting event with records dating back to 1673, is still an annual event, The targets are set at 100 yards and the winner is the first archer to pierce with his arrow a three-inch diameter black spot in the centre of the 4-foot target. The 300th recorded meeting is due to be held at Scorton in the North Riding of Yorkshire on 17th May 2008, when some of the finest longbow archers will take part. Today the original Silver Arrow is deposited with the Royal Armouries in Leeds and the winner is presented with a replica to keep for one year.) In 1937 Lt Col PORRITT won the challenge prize, gilt arrow and retainable prize at the John o' Gaunt Bowmen's prize meeting.

Austin Townsend PORRITT is listed in a 1911 telephone directory - which seems to cover most of northern England. He is at *The Cliffe*, Stubbins as Ramsbottom number 57 (with the company of PORRITT Bros and AUSTIN as Ramsbottom 100) but by 1923 his telephone number has become Grange-over-Sands 67 with no phone number for this area. It seems that for health reasons he had made his home at Yewbarrow Lodge, Grange-over-Sands. His cousin, Harold PORRITT (1855-1910) had lived in Grange .from 1895 to his death and had been a most generous benefactor to that town. Later, the now disused lido

* Take a stroll around Ramsgate, looking at the LOOKING AT WATER POWER WALK

Try it... any time, any day, any year. 3 miles



Do you know...? Visit them...

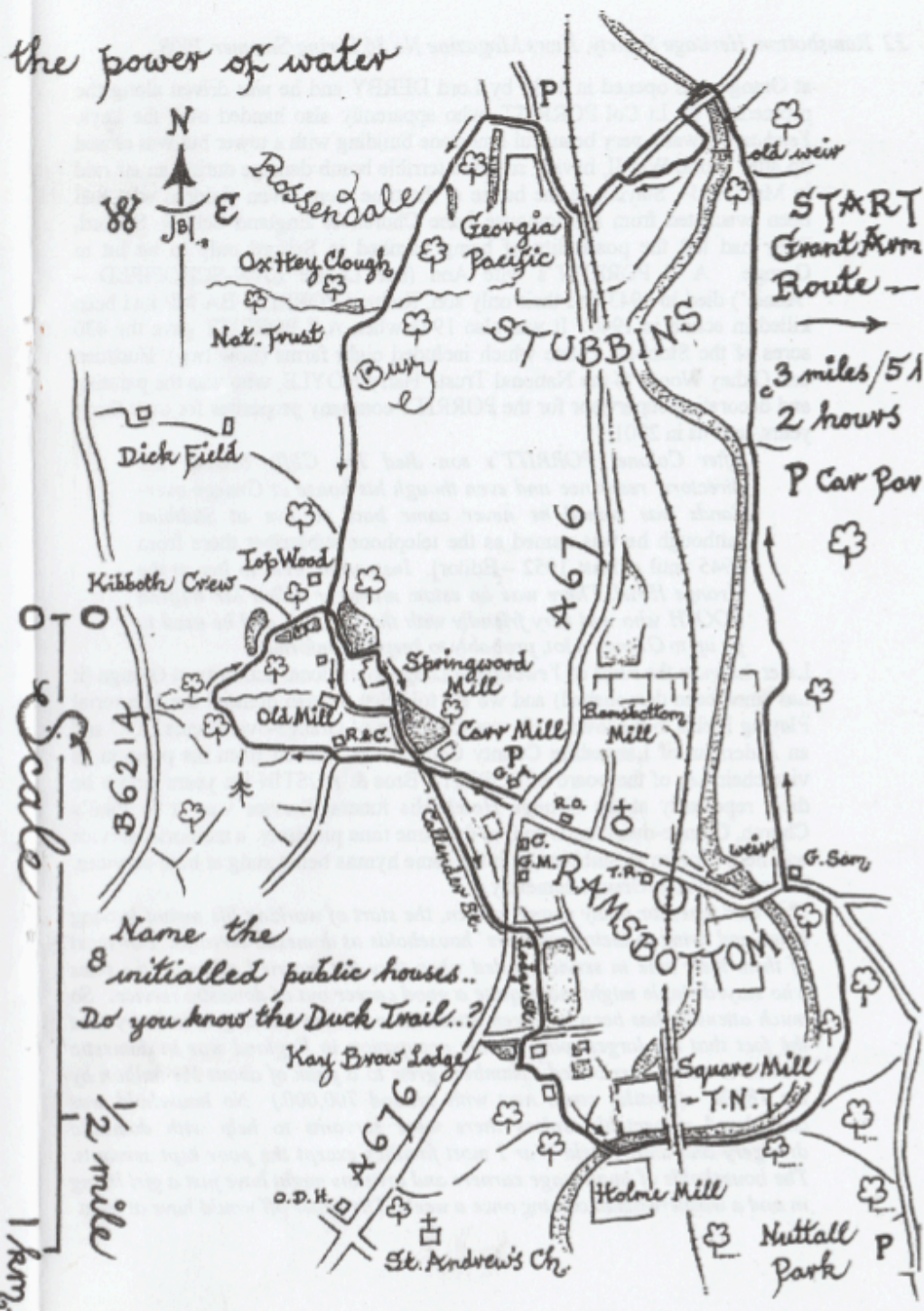
- * Higher Mill Museum, Helmshore... high breast 20' diam. 10' wide
- * Quarry Bank Mill, Styal, Cheshire. (Nat. Trust)
- * Nether Alderly Mill. (N.T.) two' overshot 12' diam.
- * Abbeydale, Sheffield
- * George Leatt's Ind. & Folk Museum, Skipton.
- * Lancaster Mill, Ravenglass, Cumbria.
- * Sketton Mill, Cheshire.
- * Lady Isabella, Laxey, Isle of Man... backshot 72' 6" diam. 3' wide and others...

John B. Taylor 2008

Scale

1 km

the power of water



at Grange was opened in 1932 by Lord DERBY and he was driven along the promenade by Lt Col PORRITT, who apparently also handed over the keys. Yewbarrow was a very beautiful limestone building with a tower but was closed up after World War having suffered terrible bomb damage during an air raid in May 1941. Staying in the house at the time were seven children who had been evacuated from Broomhouse Lane Church of England School, Salford. They had left the possibility of being bombed in Salford only to be hit in Grange. A T PORRITT's wife Ann (née Louise LAW-SCHOFIELD 'Annie') died in 1943 and their only son, Richard PORRITT BA MP had been killed in action in 1940. It was also 1943 when A T PORRITT gave the 436 acres of the Stubbins Estate which included eight farms (now two), Buckden and Oxhey Woods to the National Trust. Harry HOYLE, who was the painting and decorating supervisor for the PORRITT company properties for over thirty years, told us in 2001

After colonel PORRITT's son died The Cliffe became the directors' residence and even though his house at Grange-over-Sands was ruined he never came back to live at Stubbins [although he was named as the telephone subscriber there from 1945 until at least 1952 — Editor], Instead he went to live at the Grange Hotel. There was an estate manager called Mr Wilfred BOOTH who was very friendly with the Colonel, and he used to go up to Grange a lot, probably to keep him informed].

Later, he gave the ruins of Yewbarrow Lodge to the local authority at Grange (it has since been demolished) and we are told that he also donated the Memorial Playing Fields to the town. He was Chairman of Grange-over-Sands UDC and an Alderman of Lancashire County Council, He retired from his position as vice-chairman of the board of PORRITT Bros & AUSTIN ten years before he died, reportedly at the Grange Hotel. His funeral Service was at St Paul's Church, Grange-over-Sands and, at the same time precisely, a memorial service was held for him at Stubbins with the same hymns being sung at both services. He was buried in Grange cemetery.

[At that time, for many young women, the start of working life meant leaving home and living in their employers' households as domestic servants. For most of them their time in service ended when they got married although the ones who stayed single might make quite a good career out of domestic service. So much attention has been attracted to women working in industry that the fact that the largest paid female occupation in England was in domestic service is easily overlooked. Numbers grew to a peak of about 1 1/2 million by the 1870s. (Textiles came next with around 700,000.) No household was considered respectable unless there were servants to help with domestic drudgery and until World War I most families except the poor kept servants. The households of small wage earners and artisans might have just a girl living in and a washerwoman coming once a week. The better off would have at least

a cook and a general maid while the wealthy would have several indoor servants and perhaps a gardener and a man in the stables as well. The great majority of domestic servants were young, unmarried and poorly paid and opportunities for better paid work locally would mean that by the 1880s owners of large houses like the PORRITTS would have had difficulty in recruiting their servants from this area. As stated above the childhood home of A T PORRITT had three female servants all born in Shropshire. Twenty years later, on census night 1901, with the rest of the family away in London, A T PORRITT is at home Greenmount where there are also four female servants: Sabetha BALL aged 36 born at Willington, Shropshire, Annie BRAITHWAITE (31) born at Kendal, Westmorland, Manfreda CARR (17) born at Gresford, Derbyshire and Catherine RICHARDS (56) from Montgomeryshire.]

A History of Edenfield and District by John Simpson (Edenfield Local History Society 2003)

A Brief History From 1825 To 2000 - Stubbins Vale Mills by Derek Fitton

Profit from Porritt by Clyde Tweedale (RHS Magazine No 10 Winter 1994-5)

Ramsbottom Observer— 26 7 1907, 13.2.1931 .

Bury Times 25.2.1956

Family Life in Britain 1900 1950 by Edmund Swinglehurst

State and Society A Social And Political History of Britain by' Martin Pugh (1994)

EDITORIAL TEAM REPORT

Over the years we have been encouraged by favourable comments to believe that the, RHS news magazines are well received and much good material has been submitted, Responses from members to articles we have recently published have been pleasing. In answer to our request for memories of early flooding in Ramsbottom Jean POGSON and Norman KAY sent us very interesting articles whilst Brenda RICHARDS, whose research on the GRANT family contributed so much to the Society's blue plaque on the Grat Arms has followed up Life and Times of William GRANT (Pamela PARKINSON's piece in our last magazine) with more new information about GRANT family* history. We are very grateful for all three pieces which appear in this issue showing that the news magazine is really working properly and is not just a matter for the editors. All contributions are very welcome, from fully worked articles to just a paragraph or so about something that happened in the past. As in the PORRITT story in this issue, snippets of information can be used within longer articles. We also thank Norman KAY for the following message which I am sure he would want us to share with our readers.

One brand of fizzy drinks being sold at the time [the 1930s Editor] had an unusual type of bottle, of a design that I have not seen or heard of for seventy years or »now. Instead of a normal screw cap it had a glass ball pressed up to a narrow part of the neck, and held in place against a rubber ring by pressure in the bottle. The ball had to be forced down to allow the liquid to be poured out. I was surprised when the 'Origin of Words' column of the Sheffield Telegraph informed me that the bottles had been patented by Hiram CODD. and used by him to supply beer and soft drinks. The report went on to say that 'wallop' had been a slang word for cheap ale, and Codd's Wallop ' became a derogatory term for the weak, gassy beer he sold. The term 'codswallop' has acquired a more extended use since then. How interesting it was to see the centre pages of the Autumn 2007 issue of the RHS magazine with its display of bottles used by Ramsbottom mineral water manufacturers in the past! And even more, it had illustrations of both a full and an opened CODD bottle. I must pay tribute to Mr John B TAYLOR who produced the illustration. based on work by Malcolm STARKIE. The illustrations of local scenes and buildings he has been providing for the magazine for a decade and a half, have given endless pleasure. particularly to former residents of the town.

Editors: Elizabeth DUXBURY. Barbara PARK, Janet SMITH and Andrew TODD

EXTREME WEATHER IN THE '30s AND '40s

*At the end of a piece entitled 'Extreme Weather in RHS Magazine Number 33 we asked readers to send in their memories, particularly about local flooding in the 1930s and the severe winter of 1947. We publish below two articles we received in response. What we did not **know** at the time, obviously, was that torrential rain in January 2008 would bring the worst floods for years. The River Irwell burst its banks in several places, affecting toads, gardens and parks. The Nuttall Park bowlers' premises were inundated and a wide expanse of water flowed across the park, through the tennis courts and over on to the old Ocean Chemicals site before re-entering the river channel. The bowling green and Ramsbottom United's pitch also lay under water. Modern flood defences seem to have prevented water from entering other buildings as it had done in the past:*

A TRAGIC FLOOD

The River Irwell had occasionally flooded the Kenyon Street area in previous years. It was said that the height of the river water had caused surface-water

drains to back-up and run into factories and houses. The receding tide always left behind a layer of mud. This had to be cleared from floors, and also from floor coverings and other items which residents had not been able to take upstairs, or store above the water level. I always wondered why the weir was kept in place. Removing some or all of it might have made it possible to lower the height of the river alongside the mills. Perhaps the weir still had some purpose of which I was not aware. Perhaps it still has.

However, the tragic happenings on 13th December 1937, and the rest of the month, were something of much greater consequence. I was 13 years old at the time. The weather had been atrocious for several days and it was no great surprise when, as I walked along Bridge Street on my way home from school, I heard about the extraordinary flooding. A crowd of people stood at the Peel Bndge end of Kenyon Street, from a small part of which the flood had receded because the street sloped upwards towards that end. River w'ater had nsen swiftly as it ran along from where it had overflowed at the north end of Kenyon Street. At Stead Street, just before it reached the other end, most of the water flowed to the right, and then left into River Street. Both these streets sloped down towards the river. Eventually the main flow⁷ began to run over the low' wall back into the river. It may be that the pressure of the water caused part of the wall to collapse, but I am not sure about this. When I arrived I w⁷as told that the floodwater had earlier reached a height of over a metre in most of the area affected. By then it had subsided to about half of that height, and was still going down.

Work had stopped at all the factories. During the day a horse-drawn cart had been used to bring workers out of the mills, some of them having to use a ladder to come down to the cart from the first floor. Some residents had been taken to their flooded homes on the cart and others, anxious to see what damage had been caused to their property, had walked through waist-high floodwater. One ample had been an incongruous sight, huddling together under a small umbrella as they struggled along.

The heavy rain that had swollen the river further up the valley must have ceased. When the river level fell, and stopped overflowing, the floodwater gradually drained away from the streets. I took off my shoes and made my way along the 70 metres or so of cold liquid mud to our house in Heap Street. It was a desolate and depressing sight.

Dad had been called from work when the floods had started, and by the time he arrived home the depth of water was higher than on any previous occasion of which we had known. Mother had earlier lilted some small pieces of furniture and other items and taken them upstairs, or piled them on the table or in other places where the)⁷ had been sale in previous floods,

When she noticed the front door had burst open she waded across, intending to close it. In doing so she fell and became totally immersed in the cold, muddy water. And it was not just water; all kinds of chemicals and waste products

found their way into the Irwell Dad arrived to find her upstairs, soaked and shivering, and my three-year--old brother was with her, cold and frightened. Dad helped them to settle down in bed to keep warm. What caused most concern though was the fact that mother was pregnant, and the new arrival was almost imminent.

One of my sisters has since told me that, early in the afternoon, children in St Josephus School were told by then teachers about floods affecting Kenyon Street. They were also advised that if they had relatives with homes nearby, and known not to be flooded, they could leave school early and go to stay with them. My three sisters and another brother were allowed to go to Grandma KAY's house in Bolton Street, where they stayed overnight. Aunts Anne and Kathleen came to help Dad clear up during the evening and on the following day.

Meanwhile, Dad had been doing his best to salvage things as the floodwater went down. Contents of drawers and cupboards were soaked, and some damaged beyond restoration. When the water had gone floor coverings were hung on the washing line in the large shared back yard, or thrown out if too badly damaged. Fortunately we had no expensive carpets, but the condition of the linoleum and coconut matting was a matter of concern. The biggest task was sweeping and swilling out the mud. It covered the floors, large parts of the walls, furniture and other things that had been left on the ground floor. A particular problem was the pantry which was a step lower than the kitchen, and led to a coal store under the stairs. The water had to be baled out and it took months for feat place to dry properly. A fire had been lit upstairs, and another was started in the living room when thee fireplace had been cleaned out. I asked Dad where he had got the wood to start thee fire. He said he had used shelves from the pantry/coal store, and had taken down a high shelf from the kitchen. The coal was soaked and muddy and hard to ignite. There was no other heating and it was add, damp and miserable.

My grandparents were unable to help us, because their house across the street was badly affected too. They had also lost most of the goods available for sale in their shop, and stored in low cupboards and drawers. There had been no time to move much upstairs. Also lost were cherished photographs and correspondence. Among these had been a bundle of highly decorated Christmas and birthday cards, sent from France by Granddad during the war, and of great sentimental value. The shop records, including the book in which details of customers' credit were kept, were destroyed. Grandma never had any doubts afterwards that everything outstanding was paid. Once mother had been settled down, Dad started a fire for the grandparents, and hastily helped them to deal with things needing urgent attention. When my aunts arrived to help in the early evening Dad and I went across again to clear out damaged foodstuffs and move some of the damaged furniture around. He then spent the rest of the night cleaning up our house, but it was still very wet as lower parts of the walls were

saturated. (In following years the high water marks were always visible in the houses, even after being wallpapered or painted several times.) I do not recall any help being given by the local council, but in the following days some assistance was given with the cleaning and drying of carpets, I think the articles had to be taken to the council depot for this to be done. Supplies of disinfectant were provided free at the depot. Only later did we find out how widespread the flooding had been, and how much damage had been caused in Stubbins, Summerseat and along other stretches of the river. No temporary alternative accommodation was made available when houses were flooded in those days. The residents were left to make the best of it and continue living in the slowly drying homes. Not many had contents insurance. It was a serious and costly matter for all those affected. I mention this because of the contrast with what happened in south Yorkshire and other parts of the country during the floods of 2007, I was pleased that there was so much concern for those affected, and so much help given. Of course, many fewer people had been victims of the 1936 floods. In Ramsbottom, and the water within a few hours. However, in most cases the effect on individual families was not much. Houses had left just as wet, and took as long to dry out, perhaps longer because there is more and better drying equipment available nowadays. The fires had warmed the house up a little by the following morning. This was fortunate, mother went into labour and my youngest sister was born upstairs during the day. The district Nurse was in attendance as usual. Two weeks of high drama followed: excitement at having a new baby sister, concern about the poor domestic conditions caused by the flood and its aftermath, anxiety because Mother was not recovering as quickly as usual, alarm as she developed pneumonia and panic as pleurisy was also diagnosed. On 30th December the doctor had been called. He said she was not going to recover, and would not last very long. I was to run up to St Joseph's Presbytery and ask if Father McGUINNESS could come and see her as soon as possible. He soon after I got home, just in time to say a few prayers before she died. One reference to the 1936 flood in the last Heritage Society Magazine does mention a pregnant lady being brought from her home on a cart and taken to hospital, but this must have been some other lady. I can understand why Mother was not taken to hospital on the day of the flood. She had not then gone into labour, and when she did she was warm and comfortable in bed and did not seem to be in any danger. But a few days later, when pneumonia and then pleurisy had been diagnosed, the nurse and the doctor had calling to see her. They knew the condition the house was in. Why had she not been taken to hospital then? There was no National Health Service at the time, and some medical facilities were rudimentary. It is only when looking back at incidents like this one realises what improvements have been made since then.

Norman KAY

SEVERE WEATHER 1936 and 1947

I have only a vague recollection of the floods in Ramsbottom in 1936, but one event is still very clear in my mind. At this time I attended St Paul's School, Crow Lane. I was in Miss WHITTAKER's class along with a little boy named Jackie — maybe he was a little younger than me. Some time during the day two men, who may have been policemen or firemen, came into the classroom with a little girl of about seven years old. She was very distressed and crying and was an older sister to Jackie. The two men had come to take the children to safety because their home in Kenyon Street had been flooded. To this day I can recall these two children clutching each other and crying. The winter of 1947 is still very clear in my mind. By this time I was a pupil at Bacup and Rawtenstall Grammar School, Waterfoot and I travelled to school by tram. After a very heavy fall of snow which had drifted a lot, I struggled down to Ramsbottom station to catch the train to Waterfoot. However there were no trains running because they were all blocked in by snow somewhere or other. So I trudged up Bridge Street towards my father's shop, 22 Bolton Road West. This was on the western side of the road, so the fronts of the shops opposite, which faced west, had caught the drifting snow - they looked as though they had a white buttress right up to the roof. News came through from school that they had no fuel to heat the building, but exam pupils were requested to attend if possible. I was an exam pupil and after a couple of days we were able to get to school. Because it was so very cold and there was still no sign of fuel pupils and teachers were allowed to wear whatever we could to help to keep us warm. At the time we were still suffering from the effects of World War II and the three books we had to study for the School Certificate Examination were either out of print or difficult to obtain. The Shakespeare book we did manage to get, *Nicholas Nickleby* never arrived and the poetry book *Palgrave's Golden Treasure* was in very short supply. The school advertised all over the county asking people to please lend us their copy. Altogether we had about 40 copies for 160 pupils, so each form used the set of poetry books for a few days before it was passed on to the next form. As we were already one set book short we had to know thoroughly the other two books. Somehow or other we managed to get through. I don't remember when the heating was turned on. Like many exam pupils and their teachers, I was off sick with flu.

Jean POGSON

[Have you memories of life in Ramsbottom?

Do you have an anecdote about the "bold days " or even the modern days?

Has your family or home got a story to tell?

Did you work for a local mill or earn your living from the land?

The magazine needs your stories. If you do not feel you can write an article, just get in touch with the Editors and use can get your story into print and share your memories. Editor.]

THE NUTTALL AREA - GOITS AND WATERCOURSES

Once the January 2008 flooding (and the level of the river) had subsided the arches of the East Lancashire Railway bridge which crosses the goit had been brought into full view. Reeds growing around the site had been flattened. A substantial stone wall lining the side of the goit which runs past the riverbank continues to form a sharp corner before carrying on straight again. In this corner was a large amount of debris, indicating that some of the floodwater from the usually dry goit had probably been flowing into a culvert opening which had appeared at the corner. Pressure from the floodwater flowing through the culvert also seemed to have broken through at its other end, partly reopening a long-blocked outflow from the culvert into the River Irwell because at this point in the riverbank there is now a hole about 21/2 feet across by 1 foot high. The hole has, across the top, a large stone lintel set in an L- shaped section of stone wall. At low water the footings of a small breakwater are revealed. This would have been built into the wall to stop the flow of river water disrupting the goit. The goit itself continues towards the site of Nuttall Mills where its water to power two waterwheels before re-entering the River Irwell. An extract from *Irwell Reservoir Scheme 1833* by Peter Ewart and T. Ashworth's *Observations upon the Mills, Power and Waterfalls* (Bolton Archives) gives the following details: -

Nuttalls Cotton Mill - Grant and Brothers, Fall 27 feet 11 inches , one Water Wheel 15 feet wide and 28 feet 3 1/2 inches in diameter, their Manager affirms that in 7 years they have only lost 7 1/2 days from being short of water.

Beyond these waterwheels at Nuttall the flow had to continue downstream to take away' the water. To keep the wheels turning the water could not be allowed to back up whenever the river level was high, Therefore, power could only have maintained with the tailrace built lower than the river. The Nuttall Mills tailrace may actually have flowed through quite a long tunnel which ran along the riverbank and crossed under the river before exiting into Gollinrod Gorge. Down there is a large breakwater and a nearby tunnel opening into the river. (Possibly associated with the building of the breakwater on the opposite bank of the river, is a site from which stone has quarried) A similar system with a tailrace flowing through a (smaller) tunnel exists at Burrs.

Ian SMITH

THE GRANTS AT THE BATTLE OF CULLODEN, 1746

And what of William GRANT before he farmed at West Elchies in Speyside? His father was William GRANT, born 1707. It is believed that this branch of the Clan GRANT came from Glen Cearneach at the foot of the Monadhlaith Mountains, There is even a suggestion that they may originally have lived in a castle - possibly Muckrach castle. And the Culloden connection? It appears to be common knowledge in Speyside, where the information was handed down orally though the family and is now recorded in at least two books that a number of sons of this family, along with others defied the chief of Clan GRANT's wishes and went to fight at Culloden in April 1746 on the side of Bonnie Prince Charlie. Three brothers Alexander, Daniel and William (the youngest and then only 13) survived but had to be protected from the pursuing Hanoverians and later from the taxmen who were ordered to give up the names of men who fought at Culloden. These were desperate and frightening times as the Hanoverians set out to destroy the Highlanders old way of life and virtually destroyed the sovereignty of the Clan Chief. Daniel and William found shelter within the lands of Patrick GRANT, Lord Elchies, who gave them a little croft on the Haugh of Elchies. As we know William farmed here and was a cattle drover before moving to Lancashire. His brother Daniel became a farmer at Ballintomb - again alongside the River Spey. Daniel's sons Daniel and William came to Ramsbottom. In 1841 Daniel was a manager living at Barwood Lea. (*this is highlighted as I haven 't confirmed which Daniel this was but it is noted in RHS's Grant family tree as brother to this William so should I quote it as true?*) William is on the 1851 census as manager (cotton), living in Higher Nuttall 'With wife Jessie and children William and Jane and on the 1861 census as an overlooker- cotton mill, living with his family in Winfield House, Higher Nuttall, He was therefore one of five William GRANTS to live in Ramsbottom, the others being William, senior; his son William of William GRANT & Bros; William, his grandson, son of John GRANT of Nuttall Hall, and of course William .his grandnephew son of his nephew the first mentioned William of Higher Nuttall). Alexander, the brother returning from Culloden, was sheltered b)' Alexander GRANT, the Laird of Ballindalloch. To protect his identity he used the name of Alexander Cearneach. His great grandson, another William GRANT, became the founder of William GRANT & Sons Ltd - famously known for their Glenfiddich Malt Whisky.

Brenda Richards

Francis COLLINSON, The Life and Times of Wiliam Grant (1979)

Censuses 1841/1851 R.G. 107-2212/1861 R.G 9-2837

Highlander Web Magazine- excerpts from the book Bloody Culloden.

Ian MACKINTOSH>,local historian from Elchies

Correspondence with Jim SHELTON and Richard STRACHAN, Speyside

LOCAL RESEARCH

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

Bury Museum and Archive, Moss Street, Bury, BL9 0DG tel: 0161 253 6782

Email: archives@bury.gov.uk Website: www.bury.gov.uk/archives

Opening Hours:

Tuesday	1pm - 4pm	2nd Saturday of the month 10am - 4pm
Wednesday	1pm - 4pm	
Thursday	10am - 4pm	
Friday	10am - 4pm	

(We ask that people get in touch to make an appointment in advance of any visit to the archives as these opening hours could be restricted at short notice due to staffing levels)

Our new searchroom features large reading tables, computer and internet access, microfiche readers and access to Picture Memories. Paper catalogues are available in the searchroom and in Reference and Information Services, Bury Library. We run an enquiry service, offering 15 minutes staff time, and we hold details of researchers in the area who offer fee based services. The building has lift and ramp access, lockers and public toilets. The Ramsbottom Heritage Society's Collection, including photographs, is on permanent loan.

Bury Central Library (Reference and Information Services), 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 OS maps for the whole of Bury MBC, including Ramsbottom, copies of local newspapers, thematic collections of news cuttings worth pursuing for local biographies, census returns and parish registers on microfilm.

Lancashire Family History and Heraldry Society; membership secretary Pip Cowling, 33, Windhill Old Road, Bradford, BD10 0SE – tel 01274 611087, email membership@lfhhs.org.uk. Ordinary membership is £12 per year (concessions £9.50) and this entitles you to 4 magazine issues, an opportunity to publish your research queries and findings, and 14 meetings each month with speakers at venues all over the county, including Bury and Rawtenstall. More information is available on www.lfhhs.org.uk.

Ramsbottom Library and Adult Learning Centre, Carr Street, BL0 9AE – tel 0161 253 5352 (IT – tel 0161 253 5354) email Ramsbottom.lib@bury.gov.uk

The library boasts a state-of-the-art IT suite, with a visually impaired and disabled-friendly workstation, back copies of the *Ramsbottom Observer* 1890–1950 on film and microfiche reader. Much of the Ramsbottom local history of the Rev R R Carmyllie, local census returns and several filing drawers of local newscuttings and booklets are also available.

Opening hours are: 9.30am to 7.30pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday
9.30am to 1pm on Saturday. (Closed on Wednesdays)

RAMSBOTTOM HERITAGE SOCIETY'S WALK PROGRAMME

2008 Season

The circular walks start at 2pm on the 4th Sunday in the month, beginning in April and running through until September. With distances between 3 to 4 miles, the walks are taken at a leisurely pace suitable for children and reasonably fit adults, dogs welcome.

We hope everyone will enjoy an afternoon out and benefit from the exercise and friendly company. Sensible footwear and waterproof clothing is recommended.

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|------------------------|--|
| 27 th April | The Cheesden Valley (a local history look at <i>The Forgotten Valley</i>). Meet opposite Owd Betts public house. Guide - John.B.Taylor. |
| 25 th May | Peel Tower – Dickfield – Kibboth Crew. Meet Holcombe Stables, Moor Road, Holcombe. Leader - Brian Haynes. |
| 22 nd June | Chatterton, Irwell Vale, Lumb, Stubbins. This easy circuit includes part of the <i>Irwell Sculpture Trail</i> . Meet Chatterton playing field. Leader - Linda de Ruijter. |
| 27 th July | The Musbury Valley. Start Higher Mill Museum car park, Helmshore. |
| 24 th Aug | Some Pubs and Clubs of Ramsbottom. A repeat of last year's most popular walk – a potted history by that well-known drinker Andrew Todd! Meet at the Grant Arms. |
| 28 th Sept | Gollinrod and Nangreaves Circular. Start Nuttall Park car park. Leader - Joan Young. |

For further details and if anyone is interested in leading a walk in the local area, contact Linda 01706 827602 or Joan 01706 827245.