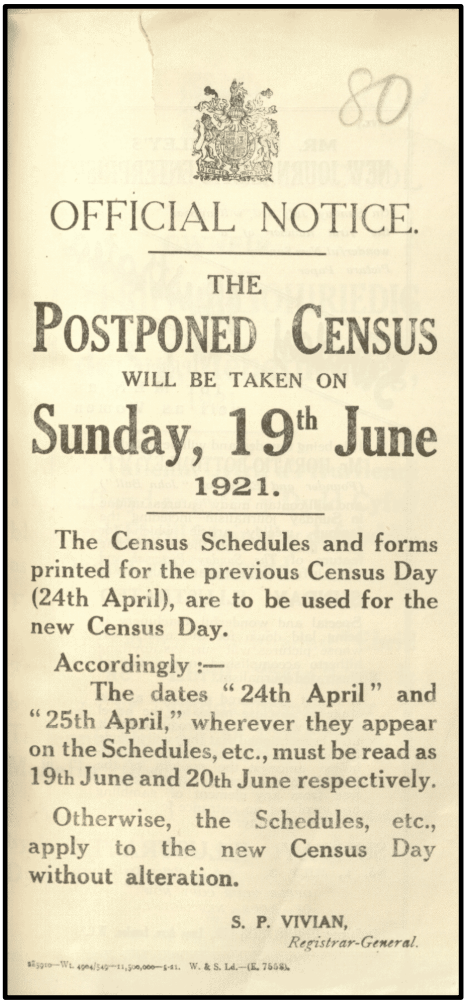
2022 No 1

HEBDEN BRIDGE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

www.hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk

Spring 2022



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OFFICIAL NOTICE.

THE

POSTPONED CENSUS

WILL BE TAKEN ON

Sunday, 19th June

1921.

The Census Schedules and forms printed for the previous Census Day (24th April), are to be used for the new Census Day.

Accordingly :—

The dates "24th April" and "25th April," wherever they appear on the Schedules, etc., must be read as 19th June and 20th June respectively.

Otherwise, the Schedules, etc., apply to the new Census Day without alteration.

S. P. VIVIAN,
Registrar-General.

[illegible]—Wt. 4904/345—11,500,000—4.21. W. & S. Ld.—(E. 7558).

Published by the Hebden Bridge Local History Society

The Birchcliffe Centre

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The society has sections for those with a particular interest in local prehistory, family history and folklore.

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Cover: Why the 1921 Census was delayed – see article inside

Welcome to the Spring Newsletter. Thank you to everyone who has contributed. There are reports of the lectures for 2021-2022, news about the release of the 1921 Census, activities and forthcoming events. If you'd like to share your research or pose a query on something historic for the Autumn 2022 issue, please send it to the Secretary by 1 August 2022.

Contents

Society Publications

For information on all the Society's publications, see details on

www.hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk

Changing times, changing status

Barbara Atack

The Hebden Bridge Local History Society is now a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

In the annual report last October, we highlighted the society's need to seek charitable status. The old society has now been dissolved by a Special General Meeting and the first meeting of trustees will happen in May. This process involved becoming independent of the Hebden Bridge Literary and Scientific Society, which had been the Local History Society's parent body since its formation in 1949, and also instigating a new constitution.

Thank you to all our members for your support throughout this process and thank you also to the members of the committee who worked so hard to enable the change-over.

Who do you think they are?

30th April to 2nd May. 10am – 4pm. Birchcliffe Centre

Alice Longstaff was a pioneering local photographer and her work gives us a fascinating insight into local life in the 20th century.

The exhibition organisers are hoping you may be able to give details of people and places in the photographs - so do go along and maybe there will be a picture of your forebears.

Publications

The following Society publications can be ordered via our website (http://www.hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk/)

History in the South Pennines: the legacy of Alan Petford. Edited by Nigel Smith. Published Spring 2017. Hardback. 442 pages, 143 illustrations £25 (plus £2 towards postage)

Pennine Valley: a History of Upper Calderdale. Edited by Bernard Jennings. Originally published 1992. Reprinted with corrections 2011. Paperback. 224 pages. £14.99 (plus £2 towards postage)

Pennine Perspectives: Aspects of the History of Midgley. Edited by Ian Bailey, David Cant, Alan Petford and Nigel Smith. Published by Midgley Books, 2007. Hardback. 346 pages. £18.00 (plus £2 towards postage)

The Diaries of Cornelius Ashworth 1782-1816. Edited by Richard Davies, Alan Petford and Janet Senior. Published 2011. Hardback. 368 pages. £19.00 (plus £2 towards postage)

Hebden Bridge Town Centre Trail. 2008. 27 pages. £2 (plus £2 towards postage)

Occasional Publications series

These titles are short print runs and some are close to going out of print so act now if you want to collect the complete series!

Midgley and Warley Probate Records. Edited by Mike Crawford and Stella Richardson. Published 2022. Paperback. 220 pages.. £9.99 (plus £2 towards postage)

Midgley Probate Records: Household and Family in the Upper Calder Valley 1531-1731. Edited by Ian Bailey and Alan Petford. Reprint of 2007 edition by Midgley Books. Published 2012. 116 pages. £9.99 (plus £2 towards postage)

City in the Hills: Dawson City and the Building of the Walshaw Dean Reservoirs. By Corinne McDonald and Ann Kilbey. Published 2012. 52 pages. £11.99 (plus £2 towards postage)

Going to War: People of the Calder Valley and the First Weeks of the Great War. By M. Crawford. Published 2013. 145 pages. £9.99 (plus £2 towards postage)

Sowerby Probate Records: Household and family in the Upper Calder Valley 1688 – 1700. Edited by David Cant and Alan Petford. Published 2013. 215 pages. £9.99 (plus £2 towards postage)

Enclosing the Moors: Shaping the Calder Valley Landscape through Parliamentary Enclosure. By Sheila Graham. Published 2014. 130 pages. £11.99 (plus £2 towards postage)

The Medieval Park of Erringden. By Nigel Smith. Published 2021. 150 pages, 49 images. £11.99 (plus £2 towards postage)

Heptonstall and Wadsworth Probate Records 1688 – 1700. Edited by Mike Crawford and Stella Richardson. Published 2020. 195 pages. £9.99 (plus £2 towards postage)

Hebden Bridge and the Railway in the Nineteenth Century. By David N. Taylor. Published 2019. £9.99 (plus £2 towards postage)

The Clothing Industry of Hebden Bridge: selected texts. Edited by Nigel Smith and Diana Monahan Published 2018. £9.99 (plus £2 towards postage)

Lecture Reports 2021 - 2022

Sheila Graham

22 September 2021

WHO PUT THE HALL IN OLD TOWN HALL **David Cant**

It was an immense pleasure to be back with an 'in real life' talk and to listen to a demonstration of the multitude of skills involved in the surveying of vernacular buildings and constructing a story about their past. David Cant has long experience working with the vernacular buildings of the Calder valley, and his focus on Old Town Hall on the hills above Hebden Bridge exemplified the riddles and puzzles that face someone trying to make sense of an old building.

The term 'hall' is used to apply to many spaces in buildings, from the humble entrance to a modern semi to the great hall of a medieval castle. In this case it is the name of the building itself, identified as such in a will of 1713. An essential part of tracing the history of a house is to make use of a variety of documentary sources. Alongside wills, maps are invaluable. In the case of Old Town there is a detailed map by Myers from the 1830s which shows the hall, and a Christopher Saxton plan from 1602 drawn to help with a dispute about pasture rights at Old Town. The first 6" OS map from the middle of the 19th century and the 25" OS map from 1964 chart some of the changes in the building known as Old Town Hall. Additionally there are good aerial photos and modern satellite images, which can clarify the layout in a way that is sometimes difficult on the ground.

Calder Valley houses built in the 17th century typically have a large central hall, known as the housebody, so part of the inquiry into Old Town Hall would involve identifying this room. Rather

surprisingly, the Hall as it now stands seems to lack an easily identifiable hall.

David took the audience on a virtual tour of the outside of the building, noting significant architectural features on each elevation that could point to its history and the changes it had undergone. One gable, for example, showed a mix of features, with blocked openings and new windows, changes made to accommodate new uses of the building over the centuries. Different architectural features contributed to the jigsaw of clues: the chamfered mullions and transoms typified windows of the 17th century as compared to the flat mullions of the later 18th and 19th centuries; the hood mouldings over the windows had both a practical and decorative function. An elegant archway into a courtyard, the finials on the roof and chimney stacks set at an angle suggested a prestigious building. The types of stonework used on the gable ends suggested where changes had been made to the building.

Inside there were more puzzles, with no large room at the centre which could have been the hall. Fireplaces raised more questions than answers: one that was undoubtedly 17th century but not particularly big; another with an elegant surround was installed in front of a doorway; a large arched fireplace bizarrely contained mullion windows and the staircase of a later cottage conversion; and what looked like a blocked-in fireplace hung on an outside wall. Another key feature for the surveyor of vernacular buildings is the roof timbers. In the case of Old Town Hall the structures of different dimensions and strengths in different wings pointed to different periods of construction.

In order to turn the mix of puzzles and theories into a more coherent story, the existence of documentary evidence in the form of censuses, deeds, the rolls of the Manor Court, parish

records, planning records, rates, wills and inventories can all be trawled for evidence to shed light on the history of a building.

In the case of Old Town Hall, David was able to weave together the documentary evidence of specific events and the architectural evidence of surveys to suggest reasons for some of the changes. He felt there was enough evidence to suggest a 16th century timber framed house which had been either demolished or encased in stone, as was common in the 17th century. Additions to the house which suggested a more prestigious style coincided with changes of ownership, and particularly owners who became occupiers. At the point when the textile manufacturing owners moved out, the building became an early textile factory, entailing more alterations, and eventually the conversion of one wing of the building to a row of cottages.

It was a fascinating and satisfying process of analysis and puzzle-solving that David emphasised involved a lot of teamwork, from the group of enthusiasts from the Yorkshire Vernacular Buildings Study Group, the co-operation of owners, and the expertise of archive staff.

13 October 2021

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SHIBDEN HALL — David Glover

Shibden Hall is a much loved and much visited landmark in Halifax and David Glover set himself the challenge of outlining 600 years of its history in just sixty minutes. The house was built by clothier William Otes on a site with good water supply and south facing fields in Schepedene – the valley of sheep. It was a timber-built house, with a slightly different configuration than the current building. The front was set back, and inside there would have been galleries around the large central open area of

the housebody. Over the years different owners made changes according to a sense of status or fashion. The Otes family were related to some prominent Halifax families – the Waterhouses and the Saviles, and after William's death a tussle for inheritance was fought out in the Chancery Court. Interestingly, the court decided in favour of the eldest daughter, married to a Savile, over the claims of a son born to a second wife.

During the period of Savile ownership in the early 16th century, some significant changes were made to the building, notably encasing the housebody front with stone, and internally dividing it in two. Some changes are still being discovered – recently a large stone fireplace was uncovered behind panels in the parlour. After 1522 ownership passed to Robert Waterhouse, who gained wealth and prestige by acquiring public offices including the right to collect the tithes that had to be paid to Lewes Priory, and the office of Ulnager, who checked and sealed wool cloth to guarantee a standard, collecting a fee for each piece.

The owners of Shibden Hall seemed to veer between grandeur and poverty – Robert Waterhouse junior made more alterations, including decorative features such as stained glass and decorated timbers. A later Waterhouse, Edward, was knighted, but fell into serious debt and re-mortgaged to such an extent that he eventually lost ownership of the hall.

By 1615 the house was owned by the Lister family, and it was during this period that the aisled barn was added. Some notable Listers were Thomas, a Republican who fled to Lancashire when the Royalist army arrived in Halifax, and James Lister, an apothecary who was memorialised with a fine carved monument in Halifax parish church. The Lister family seemed prone to remaining unmarried or at least childless, and the property passed between brothers until the assumed heir Jeremy Lister, father of the hall's best known owner Anne Lister, was deemed

to be incapable of managing the estate and by-passed in favour of his daughter.

When she inherited in 1826, Anne Lister certainly wanted to improve Shibden, which she described as 'shabby'. She employed John Harper of York as her architect, and drawings exist of a much-enlarged house with a fanciful tower to claim its place in the landscape. It seems Anne's reputation as a better manager than her father was justified – she went ahead with the tower, and an impressive lodge on Godley Lane, but not the more grandiose improvements. She also developed the coal mining on the property, naming the pit for her partner Ann Walker – the tall ventilation shaft still stands. Her energy is evidenced in her many travels, and she famously died from an infected insect bite while in Georgia, her body being returned to Halifax in a seven-month journey. She was buried in Halifax parish church; in 2000 her broken tombstone was uncovered, but the actual site of her burial is not clear. Ann Walker, who inherited Shibden Hall suffered from mental ill-health, and was removed from ownership as incapable in 1843.

The Listers remained at Shibden until 1933, with Dr John Lister making changes and improvements to the hall and gardens, including the garden based on a paisley pattern and the extension at the back of the hall. His three children remained unmarried, and so the last Lister at Shibden was John junior, a generous and civic minded man. He found the Anne Lister diaries and published some edited extracts in the Halifax Guardian illustrating the life of a 'Halifax Lady'. It was not until much later that the work of Helena Whitbread and Jill Liddington made the remarkable content of the diaries accessible to the public.

John Lister was active in politics, being appointed as the treasurer of the Independent Labour Party and was also the

founding president of the Halifax Antiquarian Society. Unfortunately he followed in the tradition of falling into debt, and in the 1920s his financial problems necessitated the sale of the estate. However, another philanthropic citizen, Henry Charles McCrea, bought the house and land, enabling John Lister to continue living there till his death, on condition that the park itself be opened to the public. It was officially opened in 1926 by Edward Prince of Wales. A Folk Museum was established at Shibden Hall in 1953, displaying many historical artefacts. The hall and grounds have been much improved in recent years through lottery heritage grants, and with the publicity generated by Sally Wainwright's dramatization of the life of Anne Lister, its fame has never been greater.

27 October 2021

SYLVIA PLATH IN YORKSHIRE **Heather Clark**

Heather Clark is the author of an acclaimed biography of American poet Sylvia Plath, and, speaking from her home in the USA, she shared some of the ways in which the landscape of West Yorkshire influenced Plath's poetry. Plath visited the area when the parents of her husband, Ted Hughes, were living at The Beacon, in Heptonstall. At first, she responded to the moorland landscape as something foreign and romantic, wrapped in her feelings about the Brontës and her idealisation of the relationship of Heathcliffe and Cathy in Wuthering Heights.

With Hughes, she first visited in September 1956, soon after their marriage. In letters to her mother Plath speaks of the moorland round Heptonstall as being 'wild, lonely and perfect' and one of the first poems she wrote about the area was *November Graveyard*, inspired by Heptonstall churchyard. But her response to the place was not entirely positive; to a friend she described how she

felt constantly watched, the curtains twitching to see the American visitor in the narrow Heptonstall streets. Friends and neighbours who met Plath recall her as aloof, or perhaps rather shy.

On their visits to Heptonstall she and Hughes enjoyed long walks, and she described the moors as her favourite landscape, after the ocean. It was the walk to Top Withens, with its Brontë connections, which inspired her the most, forging a deep connection with the landscape. She identified herself and Hughes with Cathy and Heathcliff, the dark heroes of Wuthering Heights. *Two Views of Withens* written in 1957 reflects a mental unease. Both the relationship with Hughes, and the uncompromising moorland landscape made Plath feel a sense of suffocation and loneliness. She felt alienated too by Hughes' family, and jealous of his relationship with his mother, who she described as 'the plump mistress of a tiny kitchen.'

The voice of her poems about the moors is disturbed by the landscape, and threatened by the darkness and hardness of the stone. Hughes was aware of her turmoil, recording in his poem *Stubbing Wharf* how she couldn't share his vision of making a home in the valley, seeing 'only blackness.' In Plath's poem *Hardcastle Crags* the speaker is repelled by a landscape both masculine and English – the hardness of the granite and the grit and the 'humped indifferent iron of its hills'. The darkness contrasted with the light and brightness and focus on people found in Plath's poems about the landscape in Massachusetts, such as her poem *Above the Ox-bow.*

Much of this feeling is bound up with her relationship with Ted Hughes, and her sense that his genius is somehow suffocating her. Heather quoted from an unpublished short story *Afternoon in Hardcastle Crags* in which a barely disguised Sylvia and Ted are given the names of Hughes' real-life siblings, and with dark

humour Plath depicts the husband being almost casually indifferent to her fate: she notes in a deadpan voice 'My husband is a genius!' Her relationship with Olwyn, Hughes' sister, had broken down completely after an argument at The Beacon.

It is clear that Sylvia Plath's mental state is expressed through the depiction of landscape. The wildness that initially charmed her, turned into something threatening and disorientating – feeling 'ground down by stones' reflecting the anxiety about her relationship with Hughes, and her ability to find a voice of her own against all the weight of an English literary tradition.

Heather was able to answer questions via Zoom, and explained something about her sources both written and oral; the six weeks she spent in Hughes' house in Mytholmroyd; and the contacts locally who helped her become familiar with the landscape of the poems. She also was pleased to note that the talk had taken place on Plath's 89th birthday. Her biography of Sylvia Plath, *Red Comet: the short life and blazing art of Sylvia Plath*, was published in 2020.

10 November 2021

SPINNING THROUGH THE WEST RIDING **John Cruikshank**

John Cruickshank followed a career as an orthopaedic surgeon by embarking on studies in local history, completing a PhD focusing on the Headingley area of Leeds. Fascinated by the very different nature of the Leeds townships of Bramley, Armley and Wortley, he has now begun to uncover something of the pre-industrial organisation of textile production in this and other areas of the West Riding of Yorkshire.

Studies of the West Riding textile industry made in the first half of the twentieth century have rarely been questioned or updated. The townships John has looked at were producing mainly coloured broadcloth – dyed in the wool, plain woven and

cropped to give a short nap. He particularly wanted to focus on the processes involved after dying and before weaving.

Preparing the wool for spinning required a process of either carding or combing. Carding involved pairs of a kind of wire brush used to straighten the fibres, while combs had much longer spikes to produce a long staple lying in parallel. It has been accepted that cards were used to prepare the yarn for woollen cloth, while combing was needed for the yarn for worsted. However, John's researches challenge that this was the case in the West Riding during the 16th and 17th centuries. The probate inventories of broadcloth producers in and around Leeds had different kinds of comb, but the earliest mention of cards is 1708. John explained that the raw wool had to be de-greased ready for dying, and then oil had to be added to make it ready for spinning. Olive oil from Seville used for this purpose is found in inventories as well as rancid butter which served the same purpose. The metal spikes of the combs were heated to apply the oil and straighten the long wool fibres.

What seems to be a Yorkshire invention – the scribbling box – replaced combs at the start of the 18th century. Scribbling is the process by which combinations of different kinds of wool fibres are mixed, cleaned and aligned ready for spinning. John would love to know more about what the boxes looked like, but they were used by children in the domestic setting. Scribbling became one of the first processes to be industrialised, with scribbling mills, but these boxes must have been part of pre-industrial production.

Another area which John thinks has been misunderstood is the organisation of spinning. The traditional picture of a small wooden spinning wheel operated by treadle is a line wheel – used to spin flax or hemp for linen production. This would have been too slow for the woollen industry. The wheels that would

have been used were much larger and are often identified as 'great wheels' in inventories. These were operated by hand with the twist inserted with a forward movement and the wheel turned backwards to wind the yarn onto a spindle. The very fast spindle movement in the hands of a skilled spinner would be similar to that of the 20th century mule spinning machine and importantly produced yarn of a predictable quality. Wordsworth depicted this in his portrait of the shepherd Michael's wife: 'two wheels she had/ Of antique form; this large for spinning wool/ That small, for flax'.

This small-scale division of labour with a wife spinning yarn for her husband to weave stands in contrast to the estimates made over time about the number of spinners needed to provide yarn for the weavers. The ratio has been estimated as between 4 or 5 spinners per weaver, but there are wide variations and not much confirmative evidence. In the Leeds area between 1688 and 1742 there were 43 looms but only 9 wheels. In the production of broadcloth, most of the spinning was 'put out' to workers at home, with the finished yarn delivered to the weaver. John envisages entrepreneurial women involved in this important and skilled part of the production of wool cloth; but the fact that only widows or spinsters made wills or had inventories of their property goes some way to explain why the tools of their trade are missing from the documentary evidence.

There is also little evidence about how much spinners were paid. It was not a single industry, as it involved different kinds of yarn, and wages would be dependent on place – women workers in particular would not have had the mobility to follow the higher wages. Just around the corner was the industrial revolution and the beginning of the mechanisation of textile production, but these women spinners were more than simple auxiliaries in the domestic industry – they were making a skilled and essential contribution to one of the most important trades in England.

24 November 2021

THE MEDIEVAL PARK OF ERRINGDEN — Nigel Smith

Nigel Smith has been exploring the history of the medieval park of Erringden for a number of years, and it was the subject of his PhD and of his latest book. Nigel's talk revisited the topic, which continues to fascinate. More evidence has been retrieved from documents which in themselves can be obscure, and present the added obstacle of being written in Latin. The story that he tells is constructed of a jigsaw of documentary evidence, studies of the landscape involving much walking with an eye for relevant features, and the use of comparisons both from medieval times and modern practices.

Before the establishment of the Erringden park, the whole of the upper Calder valley was claimed as the forest of Sowerbyshire, an area where deer hunting was the right of the de Warenne family. 'Forest' does not denote woodland, but an area outside (foris) the common law. Punishable offences included taking deer, but also taking wood, collecting nuts and allowing the escape of animals. An increase in population in the fourteenth century meant a demand for more land, and the landowners were left to balance the appeal of greater profits from rents set against the reduction in deer for hunting. Parks were the compromise answer, providing a confined area where deer could be contained and hunted.

Nigel guided us through the history of the development of the park, which at its fullest extent was about 3,000 acres. It went through both extensions and reductions during its 125-year existence. The most probable date of its creation was late in the 1320s, when mentions of the park's 'palings' (fences) occur in court rolls. There is evidence of its enlargement later in the century, encompassing ground that was less desirable for farming. Nigel spoke of the significance of the 'mandike stones'

which are mentioned in documents as forming a line where enlargement took place. Dick's Lane, originally Dike Lane, probably marks the line of the boundary ditch. Nigel's exploration of the terrain has distinguished other likely boundary ditches which have left signs in the moorland landscape.

Deer were an important part of medieval life, and the possession of a deer park was a status symbol. The hunt itself was an exciting and prestigious activity, recorded in wonderful illustrations from a fourteenth century French book of hunting which Nigel shared. Documents record that venison was a high value gift as well as being of practical value to the household. Erringden's steep terrain and distance from the de Warenne's base at Wakefield make it likely that it served as a stock park, providing replacement deer for the family's other parks.

Names on maps provide hints about some potential sites of buildings related to the management of the park. The keeper or forester would have lived in a lodge centrally in the park, and old OS maps show a building which seems to fit the criteria, having the name Lodge dating back to 16th century. Similarly, Palace House may have been the home of the palliser who maintained the fences. Many parks had an observation tower, which may have been at Tower Hill, while Bell House may refer to a bell used to call the deer in to feed.

The demise of the park – it was dispaled in 1451 - was probably driven by economic factors. The need for profit led to the land being divided among tenants who then sublet at higher rents. The disputes and conflicts this entailed over the years provided yet another productive source of information. Documents such as court and manor rolls provide a scattering of clues about the history and day to day reality of Erringden Park. Maps have fossilised some names which add more substance and the

landscape itself holds more answers which can be interrogated by someone, like Nigel, with the expert eye.

8 December 2021

The Alan Petford Annual Memorial Lecture

THE DAM THAT ISN'T AND THE GREAT FLOATING PLUG OF THE COLDEN — Dave Smalley

Each year our Society signals its debt of gratitude to local historian and extraordinary teacher Alan Petford, who died in 2015, by choosing a piece of original local history research as the Memorial Lecture. This year the work of Dave Smalley, which appeared in the book produced to honour Alan's legacy, was revisited in this lecture.

Dave's initial interest in the dam of Colden water situated high on the moors at Nodale (also Noahdale) was stimulated by a local legend of how it had failed catastrophically in 1936 and that a giant floating plug of dam wall could still be found in the landscape. A study of the site over many years revealed more about the way the dam had been originally constructed, and how its extension in about 1826 had built in its failure a century later.

Local history research often involves a synthesis of lucky finds in archives, context and comparative studies and painstaking interrogation of the existing landscape, looking for evidence of man-made interventions. Dave told of his lucky finds in archives, shedding light on the way the dam was financed, at a time of rapid expansion of the textile industry in the area. The financing of the industry required some hefty capital investment. In 1805 wealthy merchant and twice mayor of Leeds, Alexander Turner, bought the land at Nodale where the dam was constructed. An enormous £7,000 loan, taken out in 1810 by Turner and his father-in-law, James King of Mytholm, was probably used to finance

the building of the dam to secure the water supply of their mills along the Colden.

Looking for clues in the landscape, especially in such a remote and hostile site, requires some knowledge of how such dams were built, and Dave studied the construction of comparative dams in order to make sense of what his searches were revealing. At this time there was expertise in building for the canals, using sandstone blocks and a technique of packing earth and clay to produce a water-tight wall. Dave was able to identify how the dam had been expanded in 1826 by building a wall on top of the earlier dam, in a way far less able to withstand the pressure of the increased depth of water. Exploration of the site gradually revealed some of the cast iron pipework and the stonework which had been described in a survey of the dam in 1936. The supposed floating plug was revealed as part of an engineered spillway.

In assessing what caused the breakdown of the dam in August 1936 Dave turned to twentieth-century documents. First of all he was able to dismiss the idea that there may have been a freak weather event – rainfall records show a dry summer and only 3mm of rain on the day of the breach. It seems that the failure was caused by a combination of poor construction and poor maintenance. The dam was owned by tenants in common: Todmorden Rural District Council and Hebden Bridge Urban District Council, whose records remain, and private owners John Clegg and John Pickles & Sons of Mytholm. Letters reveal serious concerns about lack of maintenance of the site in September 1935, when a leak was noted. The waterman who had been paid to check the dam had not been living near the area for four years and the dam wall was in a poor state of repair. In June 1936 the dam failed seriously, and the Todmorden surveyor Brearley Oldfield noted that he had let down the water by allowing it to escape. In August a portion of the embankment had given way

and a statutory investigation reported that the upper section of the wall had flushed away. The poor construction of the 1826 raised wall revealed that no watertight puddled clay was to be found. Faced with the obligation to either repair or breach the dam, the joint owners decided to discontinue the services of the waterman and seemingly let the inevitable collapse happen.

One fascinating piece of oral evidence has also been woven into Dave's research: Eva Stansfield recorded in the 1970s how, as a girl, she had run down to the Colden at Jack Bridge to watch 'the pash' of water when Nodale dam burst. As she was the niece of the Brearley Oldfield, it seems likely that it was the work of letting down the dam water in June that she saw and remembered. Letters, minutes, newspapers, indentures, contracts, maps, aerial images, photography, landscape investigation and reminiscences all provide fertile ground for the researches of a local historian.

12 January 2022

CINEMA IN HEBDEN BRIDGE **Kate Higham**

As a committee member of Friends of the Picture House, Kate Higham is a real cinema enthusiast and she described how cinema has been at the heart of the town since the early days of the travelling theatre tents.

The late nineteenth-century race to master the technology of capturing moving images saw bitter rivalries, but no-one had really grasped the potential of the medium until the Lumiere brothers perfected their Cinematograph. This was both camera and projector, enabling large groups to watch the screen, and portable, so that cinema could travel from town to town. At first it was the technology that was the star, and the short films that were made showed scenes from ordinary life. The entertainment of the masses was music hall, and the short films were often

shown as a post-script to a programme of variety acts, only gradually becoming the main attraction.

Possibly the first travelling cinema to reach Hebden Bridge was in 1898, and films were also shown in the Co-operative Hall, but the turn of the century saw a greater demand for the newest entertainment. In 1911 approval was given for a permanent building, the Royal Electric Theatre and Hippodrome, with a design by local architect William Cockcroft. It opened in November 1911 and was so popular that a year later additions were proposed. There are recollections of 'the blood red tub', a wooden building with the most basic of seats, and of the snacks of tripe bits and chips purchased nearby to round off an evening's entertainment.

Throughout the First World War the Royal Electric thrived and by 1919 there was a demand for a more substantial building, which is the one we know today. Sutcliffe and Sutcliffe were the architects, and Oldfield Watson was the builder. The original plans show rows of seats very close together, with enough seating for 946. The grand opening was on 12th July 1921 and the cinema was given rave reviews as 'a fine place with elegance comfort and convenience'. Special mention was given to the gold upholstery and the lack of flickering in the projection. It was officially 'the coolest place in town.' The films themselves were now the main event, with an opening double bill ' Torn Sails' and 'The Iron Stair'. The manager was Selwyn Greenwood, who also showed films at the Co-operative Hall.

Cinema was thriving throughout Britain, and the Picture House had to fight off competition from cinema chains such as Gaumont and Odeon, but the popularity of going to the pictures soon saw Sunday opening, and the Saturday matinees beloved of generations of children. The 1960s were a more challenging time with audience numbers falling, and the cinema closed for

several months in 1964. It was rescued by local businessman Lloyd Brearley who ran it on a shoestring until he was forced to sell in 1971. It looked as if its fate would be a carpet warehouse, until Hebden Royd Council stepped in to purchase it, with Brearley continuing as manager. Over the next few years its future was precarious as the council tried to make budget cuts, but eventually money was invested in refurbishment making the building more suitable for live events. Cleaned and rewired, with electric lights replacing the ancient gas lights and rows of seats removed for better legroom, it re-opened in April 1978. Cinema nationally was struggling against competition from multiplexes as well as home videos. The removal of government subsidies for the film industry meant that the Picture House remained financially precarious. Again the council considered selling the building, but protests from the Friends of the Picture House secured a temporary reprieve. In a story as nail-biting as any old silent film, a plan to demolish the cinema was defeated by a single vote, and from 2011 Hebden Royd Town Council took on the lease, continuing improvements such as digital projection and live streaming of theatre performances. Further hurdles have had to be overcome: the Boxing Day floods of 2015 meant the removal of the ground floor seats, and only the audience confined to the balcony, wrapped in blankets. A full re-opening in March 2016 boasted an improved foyer, with restored stained glass and the old brass clock.

And just when you thought it was safe… along came Covid! But the Picture House, like a true adventure hero, survived to celebrate its centenary in July 2021… and so the story goes on!

26 January 2022

A HISTORY OF THE HOUSE OF THORNBER **Ann Kilbey**

Many in the audience recalled the little red vans belonging to Thornber Chicks which used to be seen around the valley. There was a real rags-to-riches story to be told about the family firm and Ann Kilbey, society member and local historian, who had worked for the company in the 1960s, was the person to tell it. What began as an enterprise with just a few broody hens in orange boxes became a company who were world leaders in the hybridisation of poultry.

Born in Mytholmroyd in 1888, the son of a fustian dyer, Edgar Thornber was by the age of 12 at work as a half-timer cotton twister and by 13 had left school to work full time in a local mill. For most boys of his class that would have been his life. However, the Thornber story is punctuated by national and world events which led to new opportunities, and the Thornber poultry business was incubated in the fustian weavers' strike which started in 1906. Poultry keeping and breeding for showing was a popular hobby and Edgar Thornber had the foresight to turn a hobby into a business. He purchased twelve broody hens and built a hatchery from orange boxes at the back of their rented cottage in Mayroyd. Soon, he and his brother had built up a business, with 300 broody hens, and were advertising and travelling the area to find more broody hens and to sell their chicks. He never returned to work in the textile industry.

The ambitions of the young man were constrained by the dependence on broody hens to incubate the chicks, which were the source of the profit, and Edgar Thornber was keen to try out new ideas which would enable his business to grow. The Gloucester Artificial Incubator relied on oil or gas to provide the right temperature for incubation, and could house 390 eggs.

Forced to move on from Mayroyd, the family rented Newhouse Farm, and the barn became the incubation room, where more incubators were installed. Some canny business sense (cash with order meant he had capital to play with) and the growth of the railway infrastructure (the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway enabled fast delivery) contributed to the success of the enterprise and by 1913 Thornbers were able to purchase Newhouse Farm.

Also around this time the focus of interest for the business moved to producing appliances for egg production, with their own design of 'Silver Hen Brooder' and the association of sheet-metal worker Ben Stansfield. The war gave the firm other obstacles to overcome with severe grain shortages, as well as lack of raw materials needed to construct the brooders.

In the 1920s things took off again, and an increase in the number of poultry keepers was met by the clever marketing strategy of a Thornber Annual, full of advice and of course advertising. However the General Strike of 1926, which paralysed transport, presented an urgent problem of what to do with the chicks which couldn't be sold quickly. There was no facility for the rearing of chicks beyond one day, so most of them had to be sold through local auctions. Determined never to be caught out like this again, Thornbers moved to develop an innovative battery brooder in which stacks of trays held 400 chicks per unit.

The focus on hardware wasn't the only innovation at Thornbers. If you want to sell chicks for egg-laying, you have to be able to distinguish between male and female chicks, a notoriously difficult procedure. Japan had come late to egg production, but was at the forefront of researching this area, and in 1925 found a tiny difference that enabled day old chicks to be sexed. Edgar Thornber brought Japanese chicken-sexers to teach the method to his workforce. Skilled workers could sort over 800 chicks per hour and claimed 95% accuracy.

The Second World War again caused problems of supply and delivery, and the appliance manufacturing was turned over to the war effort. In 1944 Edgar Thornber died, leaving his son Cyril to run the business. He soon turned his attention to finding the perfect egg-producing hen breed, using techniques developed in America. Hybridisation of different pedigree breeds was conducted in a meticulous scientific way, with thousands of records pointing to the most productive birds. This work was almost scuppered by a serious outbreak of fowl pest in England which required the slaughter of the entire flock. Cyril appealed directly to the ministry, and was able to negotiate a short reprieve to allow the birds to lay and their eggs to be gathered so that the hybridisation could continue. The most popular bird was number 404 of which 250,000,000 were sold.

A demand for cheap food after the war led to other innovations, such as battery cages, and special environmentally-controlled buildings for egg production. Eventually these were sold all over the world. In the United Kingdom, Thornbers seems to have been ubiquitous, with an army of sales reps, each issued with the red van bearing the Thornber name, to deal directly with poultry keepers. After hatching, the chicks were delivered all over the country within one day. Designs for hygienic new incubators were copied from innovations in America to be produced locally. The data generated from hybridisation and sales saw the introduction of computers fed by punched paper instructions.

The Thornber empire was derailed suddenly by the lifting of import restrictions which had protected the business from competition. New hybrid birds from abroad rapidly came to dominate the market, and in the late 1960s the Thornber poultry business was wound up. A third generation of Thornbers however have continued in a different sphere, being major providers of business premises in the Calder Valley through their business parks.

9 February 2022

MANAGING SPACE, MANAGING PEOPLE **Murray Seccombe**

Constables and highways in seventeenth century Sowerby

Our Hon Sec Murray Seccombe has been exploring seventeenth-century records to discover more about the ways that townships and manors organised and administered the highway networks as part of his PhD studies. Updating members of the society, he described the chance survival of a very rare document – the notebook of the accounts of the Constables of Sowerby from 1628 to 1695.

The Constable was a township official whose duties included law and order, but also the upkeep of the highways. Areas like Halifax, with its thriving textile trade, depended on having good connections and safe roads for the transport of cloth to markets across the Pennines and beyond.

The upkeep of roads was in theory the responsibility of the citizens of good standing – a statute duty which required them to give six days unpaid labour to keep the roads in good order. In reality, the eminent landowners took on responsibility for the highways which bordered their land, providing the necessary carts, horses and men from their own workforce. In default of providing the means to do the work, they would be liable to pay a fine, which in time probably became a subscription or local rate.

Sowerby was a large township which in terms of administration included the township of Soyland, though the two areas looked in different directions at parish level; Sowerby towards Halifax and Soyland tied closely to Elland. It was bounded by eight other townships, including Todmorden-cum-Walsden, because part of its area, the 'Sowerby Ramble,' stretched around Erringden

towards modern Hebden Bridge. Court records show that Sowerby township had concern for roads outside its own boundaries, where failure to keep up the roads had a big impact on the ability to trade effectively. At this point the roads needed to be viable for pack horses rather than carts, and there is emphasis in the litigation on the failure to cut back hedges: sharp branches would have caused a threat to the precious cargo of cloth.

The constables' account books recorded the whole gamut of the official's duties, from controlling the movement of poor people such as vagrants, who needed to be ushered out of the township and towards their recognised place of settlement, so that they didn't become a financial burden on Sowerby ratepayers. Constables were also responsible for collecting national and local taxes, and for administering military duties of local citizens. The details of the record-keeping reveal the origins and destinations of travellers across the township, which included a number of far-flung places such as Germany, the Low Countries and even North America. But it was the maintenance of highways, keeping the infrastructure efficient, that was one of their chief duties.

One of the interesting things to see from these records is the development of a stronger civic society, with the vestry as its focus as a kind of proto-local council. There was nothing approaching popular democracy of course - the vestrymen were a small coterie of relatively wealthy and educated men who were pursuing their shared interests in enabling the growth of trade and an efficiently managed administration of the township. The accounts detail the amount spent on getting and carting stone, building new bridges and setting stones for new or improved highways. By the 1670s there was a move to making the roads more suitable for wheeled vehicles, even with some references to cartways. The beneficiaries of the economic recovery in the second half of the century were men of some wealth and

education, and these were the ones who dominated the decision making and administration of the townships. Constables were held to account by Justices of the Peace, and had to answer for their performance in key duties, known as the Fourteen Articles. Some powerful characters emerge from the written records. John Dearden of Sowerby, for example, who lived at the magnificent Wood Lane Hall was a key mover in the vestry. Joshua Horton of Howroyd in Barkisland was a powerful JP who dominated the administration of Sowerby.

The big picture that emerges from this jigsaw of details is of a state entity being formed organically, rather than a top-down imposition of government. The constables' control of the space and the movement of people and goods was at the heart of this local governance. Key taxes were a response to local needs, and vestry government was a dynamic force driven by local elites and concerned primarily with local infrastructure. This bottom-up approach to organising society was based on sharing jobs and responsibilities for the general good of all those with a financial stake, the first steps towards local government.

23 February 2022

WILLIAM MORRISON **Janet Senior**

A Yorkshire success story

Their shops may be a familiar part of our townscapes, with their logo carrying the family name in instantly recognisable colours, but finding documentary information on the story of the growth of Morrisons supermarket from a humble enterprise to a major player proved surprisingly difficult for Janet Senior, an experienced user of archives. There is almost nothing relevant in the archives, and the company itself seemed to have very little interest in preserving its history. It is known that the company

name that is now associated with Yorkshire, and specifically with Bradford, originated in Scotland. William Morrison was left an orphan at the age of 9, and eventually moved to Bradford where he became an apprentice grocer. He married Amelia Schoon, a woman from a well-off family, and in 1899 opened the first Morrison's shop, being recorded in the 1901 census as a butter and egg merchant, and ten years later as a provisions merchant.

However it was his second wife, Hilda Ryder, who became the driving force of the business. They expanded the number of shops and the range of produce they sold, though maintaining their market stalls. Their son, Kenneth Duncan Morrison, born in 1931, was a student at Bradford Grammar School, and seemed destined for a career as an accountant, though working for the family firm in his holidays. However as his father's health declined, his mother asked him to take over the firm. It was Ken Morrison, with the dynamic support of his mother, who took the shop to new heights.

One of his early innovations was to adapt his shop into a prototype supermarket of the kind seen in America. Adding an extra door, so that there was a clear route through; providing baskets so that customers could make choices; and positioning three tills at the exit point were improvements that proved very popular. When an old cinema was re-purposed and opened in grand style as a Morrisons Supermarket by the Coronation Street star Pat Phoenix, there was real excitement about these new ways of shopping. Throughout the sixties Morrisons continued to expand and build, maintaining a business model that the firm claims makes it special. It continues to own most of its food producers, and the packaging and transportation businesses on which it relies.

Janet's own memories of the company betray a real fondness for Ken Morrison, who nurtured a strong personal relationship with his staff. The relentless expansion brought trouble with the takeover of supermarket Safeways, a step too far which threatened the survival of the company. However Sir Ken Morrison's human touch and retail instincts led him to the innovative idea of mimicking a market street in his stores, with food prepared and sold by fishmongers, butchers and bakers, which proved very successful. His success was celebrated in his life: he was appointed a CBE in 1990 and knighted in 2000, awarded honorary degrees, business awards and the freedom of the City of Bradford. The supermarket continues to thrive, though Janet felt it no longer had that personal touch, and certainly isn't going to provide those childhood memories of market stalls and the old Co-op divi number that some of the audience cherished.

9 March 2022

A NOTABLE EPIDEMIC: THE 1880-81 SCARLET FEVER OUTBREAK IN HALIFAX — John Brooke

After two years of constant discussion about the progress of the Covid pandemic, we have become all too aware of epidemiology, and the ways in which disease can spread. John Brooke, local historian and author of *Cruel Lives: a history of some West Yorkshire epidemics,* related the story of an epidemic a hundred and forty years ago, which killed more than a hundred people in Halifax.

He began by describing life in Victorian Britain which for many people was fraught with the danger of contracting and dying of one of the many diseases which were endemic and only barely understood. He reminded the audience of the massive increase in population in the first half of the nineteenth century especially

in industrial towns like Halifax and Bradford. Over-crowded conditions in slum dwellings, poor sanitation, pollution and poverty all played a role in allowing measles, smallpox, typhus, typhoid, whooping cough, TB and scarlet fever to sweep through the population. Life expectancy of a child born to a poor family in a northern industrial town was about half that of a child born to a better off family in the south of England. Most of these deaths were young children; in some of these areas two fifths of children died before the age of five.

The 1851 Ranger Report in Halifax had made a clear link between poverty, poor housing and death from infectious disease, and records of cases of disease and subsequent deaths had started to be kept by public health officials. Scarlet fever was one of the endemic diseases that every now and then showed a sudden growth and became an epidemic. In 1880 local records showed a cluster of cases, not in the poorest areas of the town but in the well-to-do west Halifax and West Park areas. This news generated publicity and alarm. The spread was rapid with 102 children dying in just a few weeks. These were early days of epidemiology, reliant on medical officers and local GPs going house to house to find cases and then to record the results. Action was taken, with school closures, and parents advised to keep their children in the house, but it was realised that there also needed to be an investigation into the causes of the outbreak. Why had scarlet fever struck this particular part of town?

John explained that everything centred on a farm at Royles Head in Warley. Robert Bell, the farmer, provided milk to the residents of the Hopwood Lane area of west Halifax, and this turned out to be the link between the cases. In November 1880 there had been one scarlet fever death. When Thomas Bell contracted the disease, he stopped delivering milk, and asked a farm worker called William Horsfield to take over the milking and delivery. He lived in poor, filthy conditions, and although all of his family

contracted scarlet fever, he continued to go to work for Bell until early January. He was made something of a scapegoat and condemned in the Halifax Guardian. But the epidemic was now established, and between January and February there were 80 deaths from the fever.

For the Medical Officer, Mr Ainley, unpicking the causes of the epidemic was crucial. Again this involved painstaking door knocking and collecting of data, which made the link directly with the milk deliveries – of 125 households traced which received milk from Bell's farm, 53 had scarlet fever cases. Of the 72 left uninfected, most had no children or had previously recovered from the disease, which gave them some immunity.

The conclusion was that it was the combination of Horsfield's lack of basic hygiene and the lack of understanding of the importance of isolation which caused the fatal epidemic. But it wasn't just that scarlet fever was carried by Horsfield to infect the households; a key feature of the spreading of the disease was the milk itself. A more up to date understanding of the nature of the bacterial disease concludes that the milk became infected when the cows had mastitis, opening them to the infection carried by the milkman.

What the case demonstrates most clearly though is that a systematic collection and analysis of data about disease and urgent action to isolate and change behaviour, can contribute to the saving of life.

23 March 2022 **Shirley Daniel**

REMEMBERING CRAGG HALL **Roy Collinge**

1820 - 1921

On the morning of the twelfth of August 1921, the residents of Cragg Vale woke to find their landscape changed: the magnificent Cragg Hall, part of the fabric of the community, was a smouldering ruin. After a hundred years there is no-one left with memories of the Hall, so Shirley Daniel and Roy Collinge of the Cragg Vale Local History Group decided that they would delve into its history and tell the tale of what was acclaimed as one of the finest buildings in Yorkshire.

We were introduced to the enterprising Hinchliffe family who made such a mark on the community during the changing times of the 18th century. Samuel Hinchliffe and his descendants were clothiers who were keen to innovate and exploit the water power of the area. His son Richard Hinchliffe built the first mill in the valley, and soon had an empire of properties, with more mills and cottages built for the workers. The dynastic ambitions came to a peak in the nineteenth century with Hinchliffe, who with the help of some inherited money, purchased the Cragg Hall estate, and started building a new house to replace the rather modest original which then became known as Old Cragg Hall.

Hinchliffe Hinchliffe was apparently not a man to splash out his money, and was known to be strict with his children, making sure that they worked at least as hard and long as his workers. He helped local charities, but he also continued to enhance the wealth of the family by investing in land for building. He did not have luck with his family however – his sons and a nephew who were set to inherit all died young. His surviving child, Helen, was seen as a headstrong young woman, and after she eloped there was not much hope that she could safeguard the Hinchliffe legacy. After being widowed twice, and left with a fortune by her

second husband, she met and married 21-year-old William Algernon Simpson, a bank clerk who was thirty years younger. Mr and Mrs William Algernon Simpson-Hinchliffe formed the partnership which created the magnificence of Cragg Hall.

Unlike her father Helen was keen to spend her money and immediately after the marriage in 1902 brought in architect Edgar Wood, prominent in the Arts and Crafts style, to begin the transformation of the hall, with a gothic archway to the grounds. At Christmas the house was thrown open to workers and neighbours, with a generous Santa and a sumptuous meal at the Sportsman's Inn. Over the next few years the couple continued to extend the Hall, which doubled in size and was transformed and modernised following the fashions of the time. There were fanciful towers and turrets, an elaborate covered porchway where carriages could be received, a hall with a magnificent staircase, a drawing room and a billiard room. Like all the best mansions of the time they innovated with electric lighting and had an icehouse, a cold store and hot house to supplement their entertainment.

Over a few years, the grounds were landscaped to give a terraced garden designed for pleasure, with tennis courts, croquet lawn, a gazebo and fountain and a revolving summer house. With the completion of the bathing pool and boating lake, in 1907 Cragg Hall was ready to celebrate and staff were invited to a fabulous garden party, which was captured on photograph. The list of guests who were entertained at Cragg Hall includes the celebrities of the day such as Dame Clara Butt. Sadly, there are no surviving photos of the internal decoration of the Hall.

The Simpson-Hinchliffes were civic-minded people, generous and involved in the social life of the valley. Algie was keen on sports and fancy cars, once transporting his racing pigeons in his Rolls Royce. He bred racehorses, including a champion hunter

called Broadwood. He also had political ambitions, standing as Conservative candidate for parliament. After the outbreak of war, Algie bought his own ambulance and drove out to the front, while Helen worked as a nurse. However, she became seriously ill and died in London in 1917.

Algie then lived alone at Cragg Hall and in 1921 was preparing for the sporting festivities of the 'Glorious Twelfth'. It was he who first noticed the burning smell and rescued the maids. There was an attempt to call the fire-brigade while the house staff and neighbours tried to fight the fire. Eventually the horse tender from Hebden Bridge arrived and the more modern motor machine from Halifax. It seems that there was a frantic effort to pump water from the river, but falling masonry destroyed the hose, and the rain that arrived at dawn fell on a ruined house. Soon after this Algie sold the mills, and moved to Wetherby where he lived until his death in 1963.

The life of the Cragg Hall estate continued under the direction of another local character: Tar Billy (as William Sutcliffe, a road constructor, was known) continued to open the grounds for local events and built New Cragg Hall on the footprint of the old mansion. Some of the garden survives, reached through the original gate-house, with hints of a century's old magnificence.

1921 Census Released

Anne Melia

Well it's finally arrived: the 1921 Census was released at the beginning of the year and we are able to find out about our ancestors' lives just after the First World War and the impact the war had on our families. This article looks at what we can find out from the census, how to access and search it and some tips for getting the most from it.

The information provided by this census is very familiar to anyone who has used previous censuses but the 1921 Census has some new details such as place of work and employer's name and whether the parents of children under 15 were still alive.

The information given on the 1921 Census is:

- name
- relationship to head of household
- age in years and months, which gives a much more accurate idea of when someone was born than just age in years as in previous censuses (though it still doesn't stop people from subtracting a few years from their age!)
- male or female
- marital status or for children under 15 whether their parents are both alive, father dead, mother dead or both dead. This question reflects the impact of the war on the children of this generation. For marital status people were asked for the first time to say whether they were divorced as well as single, married or widowed. However, statistics show that the number of divorcees was greatly under-reported so many of them were recording themselves as widowed or single or in some cases still married. This reflects the perceived stigma of divorce at this period when it was still relatively uncommon for ordinary people to be granted a divorce.
- where born (county and town or parish or whether born outside of the United Kingdom)
- if attending school and whether whole time or part time
- personal occupation, whether an employee, employer or working on own account, and if working for an employer their name and address
- place of work. This can give a much better picture of someone's working life. It will also be very useful for

local historians once the census is more widely (cheaply!) available.

The final column asks the number of children under 16 and their ages. This appears to have caused as much, if not more, confusion than the question on the previous census about number of children born to a couple and how many were still alive.

The census date given on the form is 24 April 1921 but in fact it took place on 19 June due to a general strike planned for April. This is useful to know when working out approximate dates of birth from ages!

The census is only available on FindMyPast at the moment and it's pay per view though subscription members receive a 10% discount. The costs are £3.50 for a copy of the original census entry and £2.50 for the transcript. It is expensive to get both and I would recommend just getting the original entry so that you can read the information yourself as the transcriptions do contain errors. It is available free of charge at Manchester Central Library, The National Archives and the National Library of Wales.

There are a number of ways to search the 1921 Census. When you first go in, you are presented with a simple search for a person but can opt instead for an address or an advanced search.

When you find a match that looks promising, if you hover over the transcript button on the right-hand side it gives the names of some of the other people in the household which can help determine whether it's the right entry before purchasing it. When you purchase the record you are presented with the household schedule but by selecting 'Extra' you can find other supporting information such as the address which is on a

separate page in this census, a map and a description of the enumeration area.

I mentioned errors and to give one example: my great-grandfather was born in Dublin, Ireland but when I found him on the 1921 Census index he was recorded as being born in Dublin, Suffolk, England though the original entry is correct! FindMyPast are working hard to correct errors and users are encouraged to report any issues to them. They have now corrected the entry for my great-grandfather.

There is some very useful information missing from this census which was provided on the previous one in 1911: the number of years a couple had been married, how many children they had and how many were still alive. It was considered that this question was difficult to understand so in some cases wasn't completed accurately and there are many examples of couples including the names of children who had died. It also presented difficulties for couples who had both been widowed and had children from a previous marriage as well as children from the current marriage.

What's next? At some point, when FindMyPast have recouped the costs of digitising and indexing the census, it will become part of the normal subscription and will hopefully be available via the library's subscription. They haven't given a timeframe for this yet. Sometime after this, once the period of exclusivity has run out, it will become available on other services such as Ancestry who will do their own indexing. This is the last census for a while as the 1931 Census was destroyed during the Second World War and no Census was taken in 1941 due to the war.

The 1921 Census can be found at:
https://www.findmypast.co.uk/1921-census and there's more information about it here:
https://www.findmypast.co.uk/blog/family-records/1921-census

Archive and Family History

Meeting Times 2022

Birchcliffe Centre, Hebden Bridge

The Archive will be open to members on the afternoon of the second Wednesday of the month and on the morning of the fourth Saturday of the month.

Family History meetings are the first Saturday and third Thursday of the month from 2pm – 5pm

Numbers at each session are limited and **pre-booking is required** by emailing librarian@hebdenbridgehistory.org for archive sessions and info@evergreenancestry.com for family history. Masks and hand sanitisation will also be required.

	Archive Wednesday 2 – 5 pm	**Archive Saturday 10 am – 1 pm**	**Family History Saturday 2 – 5 pm**	**Family History Thursday 2 – 5 pm**
April	13th	23rd	Closed	21st
May	11th	28th	7th	19th
June	8th	25th	4th	16th
July	13th	23rd	2nd	21st
August	10th	27th	6th	18h
September	14th	24th	3rd	15th
October	12th	22nd	1st	20th