

COMPLIMENTS OF THE CHRISTMAS SEASON TO ALL OUR READERS

CHANGES AT RASTRICK GRAMMAR SCHOOL



People who have gone past the former Rastrick Grammar School will have noticed some dramatic changes in recent months but what is the history behind that site? The origins of Rastrick Grammar School Foundation are closely linked to the history of St. Matthew's Church which has existed in one form or another for more than 650 years. Records show that there was a chaplain there as early as 1363, and that a John Piper was chaplain in 1411. At that time, it was the usual practice for clergymen to impart the rudiments of knowledge to the youths of the parish it is likely there was a school as well (in those days the word "school" was applied to a gathering of pupils, not to a building).

It is certain, however, that a school did exist as early as 1550. Robert Ramsden became the Schoolmaster in the early 1550's and in 1580 the Chapel building was purchased by him, probably for use as a schoolroom. A Deed dated 11th June 1605 states that there had "from time immemorial been an ancient Chapel within the township of Rastrick, called St Matthew's Chapel, – and also a school for the education of youth above 50 years ago". Records show of a specific provision being made for a school is dated 14th August 1621, when the first known public benefactor of the school, John Hanson, left a small endowment in his will, a yearly payment of twenty shillings towards the maintenance of Divine Service in the Chapel of Rastrick, and for teaching of a school there." The Hanson family connection with the school continued into the twentieth century.

On 4th February 1701, Mary Law, the great-granddaughter of John Hanson, set up a charity in her will for five poor widows and bequeathed properties in Rastrick for endowing a school "for the teaching and instructing twenty poor children to read and write, to be chosen within the town of Rastrick and Brighthouse." It is probable that the first school situated on the Ogden Lane site that Rastrick Grammar School was later to occupy, was built shortly after Mary Law's death in 1722.

In September 1985 under comprehensive education reorganisation in the Rastrick and Brighthouse area, Rastrick Grammar School merged with Reins Wood Secondary School, to form Rastrick High School. The new school continued to use the two existing school sites, in Ogden Lane, and at Field Top Road, but eventually the whole school was located to the Field Top Road site.

The site which has a history as an educational establishment dating back to the 1700's was more recently home to the private Rastrick Preparatory & Nursery School which went into liquidation in October 2019 and

Christie & Co was appointed by Joint Liquidator with Claire Dowson of Begbies Traynor, to market the property.

The Ilkley firm of D2M3 bought the site and obtained planning approval to demolish the Victorian east wing and the nursery school. Permission was also received to remove the portable buildings, convert the main west wing into five homes and build six new homes in the grounds using land where the playground used to be. The plans will maintain the building's original features adjacent to Thornhill Road.



Other buildings on site would be demolished to make way for eight new three-storey detached houses. Many of the materials from the site demolition will be used in the architectural features of the new detached houses and in other work throughout the site. A large area of greenspace would also be incorporated into scheme for residents to use.

In a design and access statement accompanying the plans it states: *'Thousands of children will have enjoyed their education at this school, so it is imperative to us that we do not erase this history from the site, while re-purposing the site to create much-needed housing for the area. Re-using part of the school for the townhouses, and salvaging stone details and other fabric elements for the new build properties will allow us to create a sensitive cohesive development that fits well within the existing context of the site.'*



At the time of the sale, D2M3 director Mark Robinson said, *"the school presents a rare opportunity to deliver a signature development in the heart of Rastrick that reflects the history and heritage of the site."* It remains to be seen how the site will mature in the years to come.

Research by **Paul Thompson**

In our next story, **Alan Flux** tells the fascinating story of his research into a local 1st WW soldier who was killed in action.

A DEATH PENNY WITH RASTRICK CONNECTIONS
Private 30160 Henry Richardson Oddy,
10th Battalion Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment).
Killed in action 20th September 1917

Elland garage proprietor Andrew Greenwood came across a Memorial Plaque or 'Death Penny' when he was scrapping a car some 35 years ago but was not sure what it was. He took it home and only came across it again when decluttering his loft in 2020 during the Pandemic! He thought I might be interested in it as the author of 'The Lost Sons of Rastrick' which came out in 2016 commemorating the 130 men on the Rastrick memorial. My immediate question was whether he could read the name on it. After that it was a question of doing some research and finding evidence. The Penny was for Henry Richard Oddy (known as Harry by his mother but Henry by the army).



A BLOW TO CLUB MEMBERS
PTE. H. R. ODDY OF BRIGHOUSE KILLED
Brighouse Echo 12th October 1917

The secretary of the Thornhill Briggs Working Men's Club (Mr. J. W. Bray) has received a communication to the effect that Pte. H. R. Oddy, Duke of Wellington's Regt., who resided with his widowed mother at 22 Carr Street, Thornhill Briggs, Brighouse, was killed in action on Sept. 20th. The letter which is dated Oct. 4th. and written by Pte. Joe Dent (a member of the club), of the same battalion as Oddy, is as follows:-

"As a member of your club I think it is my duty to inform you of the death of Pte. Harry Oddy who was also a member of the club. He was killed in action on Sept. 20th. and he had a decent grave along with a few more of our battalion. We had several good nights together before we went into the trenches so you will realise I have lost a 'chum'.

Pte. Oddy, who was 32 years of age. Was in civil life a cotton spinner at Messrs. Blackburn and Smith's, Woodvale Mill. He was called to the colours in March last and trained at North Shields and Whitley Bay. He went to France in June last. He was well known and highly respected in the Thornhill Briggs district and had been connected with the Thornhill Briggs Club for a good number of years.

The first piece of evidence was found within the 1861 census which

shows John Richardson, a boot and shoe maker residing on Toothill Bank, Rastrick with his wife Jane and daughters Elina aged 3 years and Sarah aged 1 year. In 1871 the family was still on Toothill Bank with a further child Betsy Hannah. Elina was described as a cotton piecer. By the time of the 1881 census, it shows Christopher Oddy aged 29 years working as a warehouseman married to Eleanor aged 23, a cotton worker living together on Toothill Bank. Next door but one was John Richardson, wife Jane and daughters Betsy Hannah and Lucy. By the 1891 census, the address was Bradford Road, with seven residents, John Richardson, wife Jane, two daughters plus widow Eleanor with Harry, a grandson aged 6 years and Annie, a grand-daughter aged 3 years.

Administrative County of York		The Enumeration of Houses and Persons within the Jurisdiction of the United Kingdom											Page 17	
Civil Parish of Brighouse		Urban Sanitary District of Brighouse		Village or Hamlet of Brighouse		Rural Sanitary District of Brighouse		Polling District of Brighouse		Electoral Ward of Brighouse		Number of Inhabitants		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
No. of HOUSES, TENEMENTS, SHOPS, or PREMISES, or of HOUSES or PREMISES of any kind	Number of PERSONS	NAME and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	AGE in Years	SEX	PROFESSION or OCCUPATION	RELIGION	Whether Single	Whether Married	Whether Widowed	Whether Deceased	(1) Date of Birth	(2) Date of Death	
1	1	John Richardson	Head	32	M	Shoemaker	R							
		Jane Richardson	Wife	30	F		R							
		Elina Richardson	Daughter	3	F		R							
		Sarah Richardson	Daughter	1	F		R							
		Betsy Hannah Richardson	Daughter	11	F		R							
		Christopher Oddy	Head	29	M	Cotton Worker	R							
		Eleanor Oddy	Wife	23	F		R							
		John Richardson	Head	30	M	Shoemaker	R							
		Jane Richardson	Wife	28	F		R							
		Betsy Hannah Richardson	Daughter	7	F		R							
		Lucy Richardson	Daughter	5	F		R							
		Harry Richardson	Grandson	6	M		R							
		Annie Richardson	Granddaughter	3	F		R							

1901 census. The address was 18 Thornhill Bridge Lane with Eleanor, widow aged 43 and daughter Annie 13 years who was working as a silk doffer. There was no record of Harry at that address.

1911 census. For the first time it was the duty of the Head of the Household to complete the form thereby one can see that person's handwriting. Notice how Eleanor spelt her Christian name and that she did not sign it correctly using the word Mrs rather than her Christian name. Harry, was aged 26 and was described as single, working as a cotton spinner.

CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1911.												
NAME AND SEX		RELIGION	EDUCATION	PROFESSION OR OCCUPATION	INDUSTRY	DETERMINED						
1	Eleanor Oddy	R	None	Widow	18 Thornhill Bridge Lane							
2	John Oddy	R	None	Single	18 Thornhill Bridge Lane							
3	Harry Oddy	R	None	Single	18 Thornhill Bridge Lane							
4	Annie Oddy	R	None	Single	18 Thornhill Bridge Lane							
5	John Richardson	R	None	Single	18 Thornhill Bridge Lane							

I may be doing Mrs Oddy a dis-service but I suspect she was either not well educated (although her writing is clear) or she was confused, as shown by the large number of crossings out, deletions and additions. Also note she included John Oddy aged 1 year and 11 months who, according to the transcript of the family grave in Rastrick Cemetery, had died in 1884 so he certainly wasn't alive in 1911.

Elderly widow Mrs Jane Richardson was also there on Sunday 2nd April 1911 which was when the census was taken but I suspect that she was residing there with her widowed daughter, Eleanor.

Henry Richardson Oddy enlisted or attested on 10th December 1915 and trained at North Shields and Whitley Bay. He crossed the Channel from Folkestone to Boulogne on 24th May and was killed in action just under fourth months later. Private Oddy is commemorated both in Rastrick and Brighouse whilst he is buried at Tyne Cot Cemetery at West-Vlaanderen, Belgium.

The Story Behind the Memorial Plaque or Death Penny

The Memorial Plaque was issued after the First World War to the next-of-kin of all British Empire service personnel who were killed as a result of the war.

The plaques about 120 mm (4.7 in) in diameter, were cast in bronze, and came to be known as the Dead Man's Penny because of the superficial similarity to the much smaller penny coin. 1,355,000 plaques were issued, which used a total of 450 tons of bronze, and continued to be issued into the 1930s to commemorate people who died as a consequence of the war.

It was decided that the design of the plaque was to be chosen from submissions made in a public competition. Over 800 designs were submitted and the competition was won by the sculptor Edward Carter Preston using the pseudonym *Pyramus*, receiving two first place prizes of £250 for his winning and also an alternative design.

Carter Preston's winning design includes an image of Britannia holding a trident and standing with a lion. The designer's initials, E.C.R.P. appear above the front paw. In her outstretched left-hand Britannia holds an olive wreath above the tablet bearing the deceased's name, cast in raised letters. Below the name tablet, to the right of the lion, is an oak spray with acorns.

The name does not include the rank since there was to be no distinction between sacrifices made by different individuals. Two dolphins swim around Britannia, symbolizing Britain's sea power, and at the bottom a taken lion is tearing apart the German eagle. The reverse is blank, making it a plaquette rather than a table medal. Around the picture the legend reads 'HE DIED FOR FREEDOM AND HONOUR', or for the approximately 600 plaques issued to commemorate women, the word 'SHE' replaced 'HE'.

From 1919, they were initially made at the Memorial Plaque Factory at Acton, London. Early Acton-made plaques did not have a stamped number, but later ones have a number behind the lion's back leg.

In December 1920 manufacture was shifted to the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich. Plaques manufactured here can be identified by a circle containing the initials "WA" on the back (the "A" being formed by a bar between the two upward strokes of the "W") and by a number stamped between the tail and leg (in place of the number stamped behind the lion's back leg).

The design was altered slightly during manufacture at Woolwich by Carter Preston since there was insufficient space in the original design between the lion's back paw and the 'H' in 'HE' to allow an 'S' to be inserted to read 'SHE' for the female plaques. The modification was to make the 'H' slightly narrower to allow the 'S' to be inserted.

After around 1500 female plaques had been manufactured, the molds were modified to produce the male version by removing the 'S'. The plaques were issued in a pack with a commemorative scroll from King George V but on some occasions, the letter and scroll were sent prior to the Death Penny being dispatched.

Private Oddy is commemorated in Rastrick's Cemetery. The gravestone reads:- *In affectionate remembrance of John son of Christopher & Eleanor Oddy who died Feb. 26th 1884 aged 1 year & 11 months. Jesus called a little one unto Him. Also of the above named Christopher Oddy who died March 14th 1890 aged 39 years. Thy will*

528

7729 Halifax

GENERAL SERVICE
Army Form B. 2512

SHORT SERVICE.
(For the Duration of the War, with the Colours and in the Army Reserve)

ATTESTATION OF

No. 30160 Name Henry Richardson Oddy Corps West Riding Regt.

Questions to be put to the Recruit before Enlistment.

1. What is your Name? Henry Richardson Oddy
2. What is your full Address? 22 Carr Street
3. Are you a British Subject? Yes
4. What is your Age? 20 Years 2 Months
5. What is your Trade or Calling? Callan Apprentice
6. Are you Married? No
7. Have you ever served in any branch of His Majesty's Forces, naval or military, if so, which? No
8. Are you willing to be vaccinated or re-vaccinated? Yes
9. Are you willing to be enlisted for General Service? Yes
10. Did you receive a Notice, and do you understand its meaning, and who gave it to you? Yes (Name R. Baylark)
11. Are you willing to serve upon the following conditions provided His Majesty should so long require your services? Yes

I, Henry Richardson Oddy do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and that I am willing to fulfil the engagements made by me to the above questions.

Henry Richardson Oddy SIGNATURE OF RECRUIT.
J. B. Hepworth Signature of Witness.

OATH TO BE TAKEN BY RECRUIT ON ATTESTATION.

I, Henry Richardson Oddy, swear by Almighty God, that I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to His Majesty King George the Fifth, His Heirs, and Successors, and that I will, as in duty bound, honestly and faithfully defend His Majesty, His Heirs, and Successors, in Person, Crown, and Dignity against all enemies, and will observe and obey all orders of His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, and of the Generals and Officers set over me. So help me God.

CERTIFICATE OF MAGISTRATE OR ATTESTING OFFICER.

The Recruit above named was cautioned by me that if he made any false answer to any of the above questions he would be liable to be punished as provided in the Army Act.

The above questions were then read to the Recruit in my presence.

I have taken care that he understands each question, and that his answer to each question has been duly entered as replied to, and the said Recruit has made and signed the declaration and taken the oath before me at Perth House on this 10 day of December 1915.

Signature of the Justice J. Fairman J.P.

I certify that this Attestation of the above-named Recruit is correct, and properly filled up, and that the required forms appear to have been compiled with. I accordingly approve, and appoint him to the WEST RIDING REGT.

Date 29 FEB 1917 1917

Place HALIFAX for O.C. RECRUITING AREA.

Signature of Approving Officer.

* If on the Recruit is to be asked the particulars of his former service, and so provision, if possible, his Certificate of Discharge and Certificate of Character, which should be returned to him contemporaneously entered in red ink, as follows, viz.-(Name) re-enlisted in the (Regiment)



be done. Also of John Richardson who died June 12th 1906 aged 71 years. Thy will be done. Also of Jane, wife of the above John Richardson who died Oct 26th 1925 aged 88 years. At Rest. Also of Pte. Henry Richardson Oddy 10th Batt. West Riding Regt. killed in action in France. Sept 20th 1917 aged 32 years. Until the day dawns. Also the above Eleanor Oddy who died Sept. 26th 1936, aged 78 years.

from 13th April to 28th September, when it was finally recaptured, along with Passchendaele, by the Belgian Army. It is now the largest Commonwealth war cemetery in the world in terms of burials.

At the suggestion of King George V, who visited the cemetery in 1922, the Cross of Sacrifice was placed on the original large pill-box. There are three other pill-boxes in the cemetery. There are now 11,961 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in Tyne Cot Cemetery. 8,373 of the burials are unidentified but there are special memorials to more than 80 casualties known or believed to be buried among them. Other special memorials commemorate 20 casualties whose graves were destroyed by shell fire. There are also 4 German burials, 3 being unidentified.



Although I had visited Tyne Cot Cemetery many times when researching "The Lost Sons of Rastrick" and my own family history I was able to see Private Oddy's grave during September 2022 when on a Leger Battle-Field Holiday.



Commonwealth War Grave Commission information includes....'Tyne Cot' or 'Tyne Cottage' was the name given by the Northumberland Fusiliers to a barn which stood near the level crossing on the Passchendaele-Broodseinde road. The barn, which had become the centre of five or six German blockhouses, or pillboxes, was captured by the 3rd Australian Division on 4th October 1917, during the advance on Passchendaele. One of these pillboxes was unusually large and was used as an advanced dressing station after its capture. From 6th October to the end of March 1918, 343 graves were made, located on two sides of the pillbox. These were dug out by the 50th (Northumbrian), the 33rd Divisions and by two Canadian units. The cemetery was in German hands again

ST JOHN AMBULANCE BRIGADE HQ

Many people will have passed by a building on Bramston Street, Rastrick which is now called St. John's Chapel of Rest and owned by Charles Wood Funeral Services. Some will know it as the Ambulance Hall but what is its history? Andy Eccles gives a brief insight into how it came to be built.



In December 1880, the Brighthouse News reported upon a proposal to commence a 'detached class' of the Halifax St John Ambulance Association. The members received instruction in giving 'first aid to the injured' and they expanded by going into local factories and shops where they taught the workers in the basics of First Aid. The initial attempt to form a Brigade appears to have failed but a few years later, a local solicitor, Henry Jocelyn Barber, took a keen interest in ensuring that the Association flourished in Brighthouse. Some years earlier, Barber had been principal in forming a Fire Brigade in Brighthouse and he went on to raise money through private subscription to purchase a horse drawn ambulance.

MR. H. J. BARBER.—The current number of *Fire and Water* contains an account of the annual meeting of the West Yorkshire Fire Brigade Friendly Society, recently held here, and gives a portrait of Mr. Henry Jocelyn Barber, the founder of this most useful and popular association. It states that Mr. Barber was born in Brighthouse, and on leaving school entered the legal profession. At the early age of 18 it devolved upon him to equip and re-constitute a Fire Brigade for Brighthouse, for the Royal Insurance Company, and at the request of the Company he accepted the post of chief officer of the Brigade. This post he held for 20 years. Mr. Barber has taken a most active interest in all matters relating to firemen and fire brigades, and through his efforts the West Yorkshire Fire Brigade Friendly Society was formed—soon after to be followed by the "Huddersfield and District" and the "Lancashire Fire Brigade Friendly Society," both of which thriving societies were formed on identical lines to the West Yorkshire. As an authority on fire brigade matters, he is well known in his native county and the adjoining districts. Mr. Barber has taken an active interest in the formation of a district branch of the St. John's Ambulance Association for Brighthouse, and a horse ambulance was provided for the district owing to his energy.

Above report is from the Brighthouse & Rastrick Gazette – 14th June 1890).

Garden fetes and concerts, including a smoking concert, were organised to raise money for the Association. Despite this, the Association still struggled to keep going until the more enthusiastic members decided to form a Division of the St. John Ambulance Brigade in 1901. The following year, a Nursing Section was created under the leadership of the Mayoress, Mrs Samuel Edgar Hirst. She held the role of Lady Superintendent and the two divisions joined together to form a St. John Ambulance Brigade

Corps on the 14th June 1902. Frederick Fielding Bond became the Corps Superintendent and with his support, they grew from strength to strength.

The Brigade needed their own headquarters and money was raised through various methods to reach the required target. One such fund-raising event was a Grand Bazaar held over four days (7th - 9th and the 11th November 1911). Several different sites for the Corps headquarters were looked at and in 1913, it was decided that a site at Bramston Street, Rastrick would be the most suitable. In an effort to clear the site quickly, a number of the Corps members turned up on Easter Monday, the 24th March, to take down an old factory boiler house and a 54 foot chimney which needed to be cleared. Just two months later, on 20th May 1913, Mrs Susannah Smith, the wife of Alderman William Smith of Lands House, Rastrick, laid the foundation stone of what became the Brighthouse St John Ambulance Brigade, although it was in Rastrick. The building was officially opened by William Smith on the 1st August 1914, the very day that Britain declared war on Germany which signalled the start of World War I.

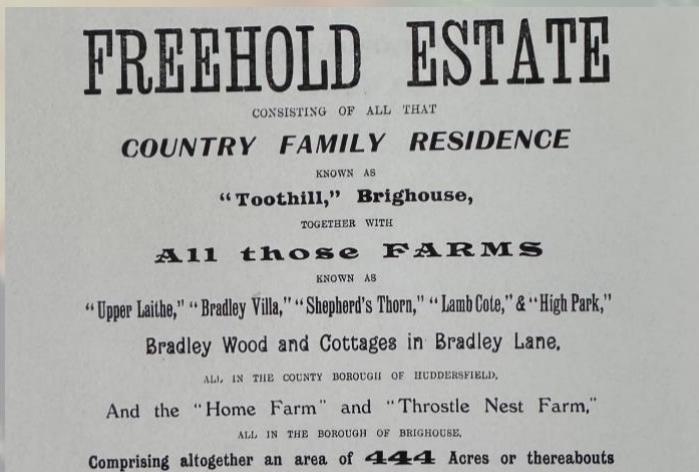
On the 25th September 1914, seventeen of the Corps members were called up active service, several of them worked on the military troop ship, the 'Oxfordshire', which made 115 trips and carried over 60,000 injured troops from France, back to England during the conflict. Sadly, some of the male members who went off to fight for King and Country didn't come back. During this period, Dr. Bond was actively involved in organising the headquarters, along with the mansion houses at Boothroyd and Longroyde to be converted into military hospitals for soldiers wounded in the war and he encouraged many local people to assist the St. John members on a voluntary basis.

By 1937, St. John Ambulance Brigade formed a Corps Band. It went on to become one of the premier marching bands in the country between the 1960's and 1970's and local residents in the nearby streets could hear them practising when they were out in the open at the band HQ on Bramston Street. In addition to their many local performances, they played at the Royal Albert Hall in London, the British Marching Band Championships and even displayed their talents in Germany and the Netherlands. The photo below shows the band marching up Bridge End, Rastrick prior to being disbanded in 1980. The building was taken over by Charles Wood Funeral Services who carry out their business from the appropriately named St. John's Chapel of Rest.



THROSTLE NEST FARM

With over 350,000 hits since the MyRastrick.com website began just over four years ago, I have received countless requests for information from people far and wide. One such message came in October from a lady called Jennifer Trewin of Hull, who descended from the Walton's of Rastrick, a family that once farmed a few acres of land at Throstle Nest Farm, Shepherds Thorn Lane, Rastrick. The Waltons originally came from Whitley, a village to the east of the Ferrybridge Services on the M62 motorway but they moved to the Birds Royd area of Rastrick in the late 1860's to work at Firth House, a farm situated between Woodhouse Lane and Bradley Woods. Joseph Walton was born in 1844 and worked for the tenant farmers, Joseph and George Dyson, neither of whom ever married. When the Dyson brothers retired, Joseph took over the running of the farm for the owners of the Toothill Hall Estate. In 1901, Joseph was shown on the census as a farmer in his own right, living at Firth House with his wife Ann and their sons Albert and George, who were also working at the farm. George was employed as a 'cow keeper and farm worker' and was still working at Firth House in 1911 but he eventually moved on to become the foreman at Longroyd Farm. Another son, William, had worked as a nurseryman at Throstle Nest but in 1910, Joseph was given the opportunity to take over at the farm by Clement Blackburn, the Toothill Estate owner. However, Mr. Blackburn died in 1915 and some of the estate, including Throstle Nest, was put up for auction in 1918. Joseph Walton left Throstle Nest following the sale but he was allowed to retire into one of the estate cottages on Toothill Lane, where he died in 1928 aged 84 years.

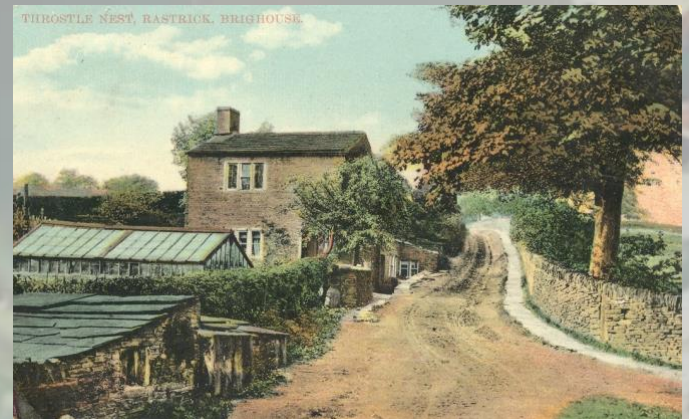


Following the sale of Throstle Nest, the farm eventually closed and fell into disrepair. It was eventually demolished and now, the only remaining trace is the cellar with its arched roof, standing adjacent to the road that leads into the Bradley Wood Scout Camp. It has looked like that for all of my life and I recall cycling past it with my brother and our friends, almost 60 years ago. We came to the conclusion that it was a witch's den and if we hung around, we could be captured and taken into the underworld. I passed this information to Jennifer and she decided to make a visit to the

area, to see it for herself. She came to Rastrick in late October with her two daughters and I suggested that she should try to contact Karen Walton, the owner of Woodhouse Stores on Woodhouse Lane, as I was aware that she was also connected to this same family. This she did and it transpired that they shared the same great, great grandfather, the aforementioned Joseph Walton, pictured below holding a threshing flail at Throstle Nest. Jennifer and her daughters posed for a photograph by the farm cellar, suitably adorned with witch's hats.



Several articles have been written about Throstle Nest over the years, some stating that it was once a coaching inn, but these are all false and it was never anything other than a farm building, which can be seen from this coloured postcard below.



The remaining 'witch's den' cellar, leading into the underworld is shown below.



It's amazing what can transpire from a simple email. (Andy Eccles).

NEXT MEETINGS

TUESDAY 14th JANUARY 2025 - TUESDAY 11th FEBRUARY 2025 - TUESDAY 11th MARCH 2025
5-00pm at RASTRICK LIBRARY, CROWTREES LANE, RASTRICK

You are welcome to come and join our small group but failing that, if you have anything of interest that you would like to include in the March 2025 Newsletter, please let me know via email at rastrick.history@gmail.com