

# Rastrick Local History Group Newsletter

*Unearthing the Legacy, Celebrating the Spirit of Rastrick*

## WELCOME NOTE



Dear Members and History Lovers,

Welcome to the latest edition of the Rastrick Local History Group Newsletter. We have changed the format for the newsletter and hope you like it. This issue has some previously untold stories written by our own history group members that illuminate the vibrant history of our township.

The photograph alongside shows part of the front page of the first edition of the very first newspaper to arrive in the Brighouse & Rastrick area. It was dated the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1859 and was entitled the Brighouse & Rastrick Chronicle, Railway Timetable and General Advertiser. The railway had arrived in Rastrick in October 1840, some six years before Leeds and Bradford and seven years prior to Huddersfield therefore the station was a significant early modern transport hub, and the timetable was very important to travellers. Newspapers were the main source for transmitting interesting information and we hope our newsletter does likewise.

## FEATURED 'STORIES FROM THE PAST' IN THIS NEWSLETTER

### The Borough of Brighouse Cleansing Department - Page 3

Paul Thompson gives an insight into how the local town council was recycling articles long before it became popular in more modern times.

### My Family and the Brighouse Co-op - Page 5

David Bond writes about his family's connection with the Brighouse Co-operative Society going back well over a century.

### Fred Smith & Sons - Rastrick butchers - Page 9

Fiona Gregory recalls a butchery business in Rastrick that many will remember from the 1970's and 80's.

### Junction Inn and the Bottom of Town - Page 10

Andy Eccles examines the brief history of an area of Rastrick that has changed greatly and lost its once famous public house.

## LOCAL NEWSPAPER ARTICLES FROM 150 YEARS AGO

Let's have a brief look at what the newspapers were reporting in Rastrick 150 years ago.

On Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> July 1875, a storm hit the area and the Brighthouse News gave details of flooding around Brighthouse and Rastrick. In Rastrick, the stream that ran between Bramston Street and Brook Street (it is

now culverted beneath Bramston Street Recreation ground) was described as a 'usually dirty and drivelling stream which winds its course through the fields' was so flooded that it resembled a river, bursting out onto the road behind Bridge End Church.

We can probably all remember some great summer storms over the past few decades, but one wonders what this coming summer will have in store for us.

**THE FLOOD.**—A flood occurred at Brighthouse on Tuesday, the like of which has not been seen here since the memorable flood of 1866. Very early on Sunday morning a heavy storm of rain broke over the town, lasting for two or three hours, and this, added to the rain in other towns higher up, on the banks of the Calder, caused such a heavy flow of water as to flood the cellars of many of the dwellings in the low parts of the town. However, the rain abated in the morning, and we had one or two slight showers only during the rest of the day. But with Monday morning the rain set in again, and continued throughout the day and following night, and during the whole of Tuesday morning and afternoon it came down with renewed vigour. The drenching showers which fell on that day were the subject of general remark, many persons avowing that they did not remember to have seen such a succession of heavy rain for several years. The result of all the rain was, as everybody anticipated, a serious flood, approaching in magnitude to that of November 16th, 1866. Work was no sooner over than crowds of people made their way to the most prominent places for having a view of the rushing, rolling river, as well as to those places which are first to give evidence of the effects of a flood. A great many persons assembled on the bridges to watch the progress of the river and look out for the "spoil" which was being carried down. From the yard of Brighthouse Mill a good view of the river was obtained, and at the time we saw it, about 7 o'clock, the height of the river was nearly that of the pavement, and water was rushing into the yard through a small doorway. Subsequently the yard was under water as well as the road opposite the entrance to the mill, so much so that the latter was rendered impassable. The houses on the Brighthouse side of the river at Bridge End were flooded, as well as some of the cellars in Daisy Croft. Several loads of earth gave way on the embankment opposite to Brighthouse Mill, and tumbled into the water. Some of the cellars in Bethel Street were flooded to the depth of several inches. On Sunday the "panhole" of Leopold wire works was flooded, but by prompt attention to a bywash which runs close by the mill flooding was prevented on Tuesday. We hear that at Bailiffe Bridge the water ran down Lightcliffe Road like a beck and across the road by the bar. The Clifton beck was considerably swollen, and at Clifton Bridge the bridges were only just equal to the emergency. Most of the fields along the banks of the river as far as Brookfoot were flooded with water, and down below the lock-house kept by Mr George Brittain, the towing-path of the river was flooded for a considerable distance, and rendered impassable. About eight o'clock the river was higher than the surface of the water in the canal basin, and consequently the water found its way thither. The river continued to rise steadily, and about eleven o'clock at night it reached

its highest point, at that time, by Mr Geo. Brittain's lock-house it was 10½ feet above the average height, being only 3½ feet from the height of the great flood in 1866. —On the Rastrick side of the Calder the effects of the heavy downpour were visible in the lower-lying parts of Bridge End. The usually dirty and drivelling stream which winds its course through the fields between Bramstone Street and Brook Street, was swollen into dimensions assuming the proportions of a river. The great body of the water left the usual course, rushing in a direct line through the fields, until it burst out upon the road immediately behind Bridge End Chapel, and made its way into many of the cottages in Scotty Croft, at the back of the Rising Sun beerhouse. The street grates were altogether inadequate to the occasion, and the water soon accumulated in large sheets at several places, much to the discomfort of those people whose houses were flooded. Furniture had to be moved to safer quarters, whilst the inmates of the dwellings took refuge in their bedrooms, or otherwise left the places to their fate. One man might have been seen leaning half-way out of his chamber window, smoking his pipe and looking on as complacently as though nothing was amiss, whilst women were heard to make eager and anxious enquiries as to how matters stood with their neighbours, some of whom appeared to be more fortunate than others, for although the water got into large numbers of cellars, there were only a few cases where mischief was done in the living apartments. On the following morning the water had considerably lowered, and had left behind loads of sand and rubbish.—In some places the Calder rose about five or six feet above its usual mark.—The fields around the skating-ground were covered with water.

**MEDICAL OFFICERS REPORT :** The Brighthouse News dated the 10<sup>th</sup> July 1875 gave an account of the Medical Officers report to the Rastrick Local Board on the health of the residents of the township. The Medical Officers said that the health of the district is good and sanitary conditions satisfactory, however, his report stated that 53 deaths had occurred during the quarter ending on the 30<sup>th</sup> June which worked out at 33 deaths per 1,000 residents per year.

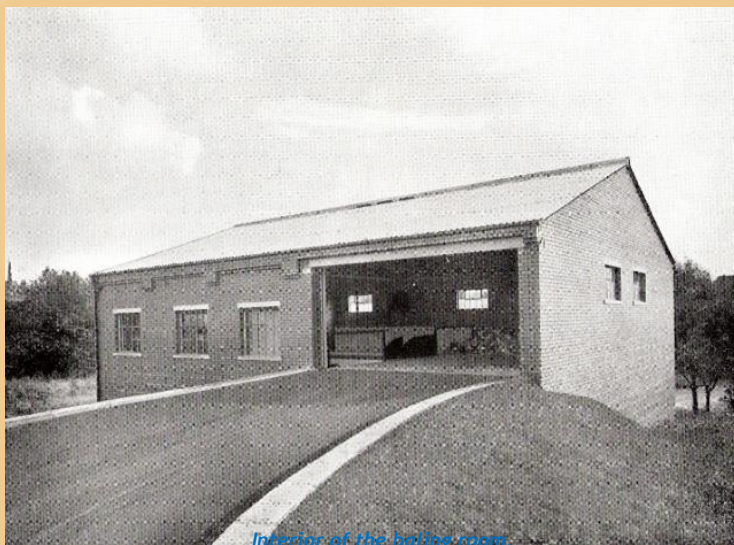
Of the 53 deaths: 22 were children under 1 year old, 8 between 1 and 2 years of age and 4 between the ages of 5 and 15 years. All but two of the deaths were attributed to 'diseases' such as scarlatina, whooping cough, measles, consumption etc. and yet the report states that the health of the district is good. One wonders what number of deaths would have occurred if the health of the region had been in a poor state!

## STORIES FROM THE PAST

### The Borough of Brighouse Cleansing Department - Paul Thompson



*The new building where waste materials were sorted.*



*Interior of the baling room.*

The Cleansing Department of the Borough of Brighouse erected a new Refuse Disposal Works in 1926 and were at the forefront of recycling waste material even back in those early days. Although they started the process of separation, salvage and incineration, no dependable market for the sale of wastepaper was available until 1933 when a contract was signed with the Thames Board Mills Ltd of Purfleet at the price of twenty-five shillings (£1.25) per ton for cleaned, baled newsprint. This contract continued for the next nineteen years and in order to secure the co-operation of householders, leaflets were distributed from time to time, giving details of the income derived from this source and asking that newspaper was kept separate and bundled ready for the dustmen to collect. By this method there was a steady flow of clean wastepaper, and this continued during the War years, even though the supply of newsprint was considerably reduced at this time.

Prior to 1941, the baling of wastepaper was carried out by two hand operated presses, but electrically operated presses were later

introduced, however, these were still hand fed. Even so, wastepaper formed the greater part of the material handled by the Cleansing Department which amounted to £192 in 1934 on the sale of 180 tons of paper but in 1951 this had risen to an income of £7,580 from the sale of 466 tons of paper.

In June 1951 councillors from the Health and Cleansing Committee visited Dewsbury to see the grading and sorting conveyer system and a power press that they had recently installed. They were so impressed that it was decided to proceed on similar lines. They erected a two-storey building with a capacity to store 15 tons of unbaled paper. The intake level was higher than the storage area allowing the grading and sorting conveyer to provide rapid and easy feeding. The power press was situated on the floor immediately below,

allowing gravity to assist the material through the process. As well as paper, other items such as textiles, straw, string and cellophane were sorted into bins at each side of the conveyer. The cost of the building was £4,000 and the machinery was £2,037 with a further cost of £505 for the roadworks. Since the commencement of wastepaper recovery in the Borough in September 1933, 7,100 tons of wastepaper has been sold realising a figure of £42,720.



*The Refuse Disposal Works*

On a personal note, I spent my working life next to the 'tip' on Atlas Mill Road and have two lasting memories of this time. Before the incorporation into Calderdale, the Borough of Brighouse had its own fleet of dustbin waggons and at the end of the day, all the drivers and workmen used to gather by the gates waiting for a bell to be rung indicating that it was time to go home.



*Interior with the sorting conveyor and bins.*

My drawing office window overlooked the Waste Management Department, and this was known by many people as 'The Destructors' as people used to bring their pets to the tip to be humanely killed. I used to see children bringing their cats and dogs to be disposed of and this was carried out in a small asbestos shed where they were electrocuted. The bodies were then placed on the ground in front of our building where they were collected later in the day by a special van which took them away.

## My Family and the Brighouse Co-op - David Bond

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of November 1954, Brighouse Co-op had just declared the dividend they were paying out for the previous six months and my dad, Walter Bond was working on the office counter paying the “divvy” to customers when he received a phone call from the Princess Royal Hospital in Huddersfield to tell him that my mum was in labour awaiting my birth. He had to get permission to leave the counter and catch a bus to greet my entry into the world, so my involvement with Brighouse Co-op started at a very early age. I was mum and dad’s “divvy” baby.

My family’s careers with Brighouse Co-op had started over 40 years earlier when my granddad, Wilfrid Tiplady, left school and started working in a grocery store in 1913, straight from school. He worked in several branches including Lightcliffe, Norwood Green and Bailiff Bridge and was then transferred to Bridge End in the early 1920’s where he met my grandma, Nellie Dennison, who lived round the corner in Brook Street. He continued to gain promotion, eventually to first assistant and was finally given the chance to manage: his first permanent branch management position was in 1947 when he moved to New Road Side branch in Wyke. He was then entitled to live in the manager’s house next door to the branch and my mum moved in with him and his family. Granddad continued to manage the branch until his retirement in December 1965.

Two memories of grandad before he retired stand out. We used to go for tea on Fridays and after we finished, I went back to his shop and helped put up the grocery orders for delivery to the local customers. In those days butter, lard and cheese were in large slabs and had to be cut down into smaller quantities and wrapped in greaseproof paper to put into each order.

Other things such as tea had also to be weighed out and put into packets. Everything the customer ordered had then to be placed in cardboard boxes ready for the delivery man to take them out the next morning.

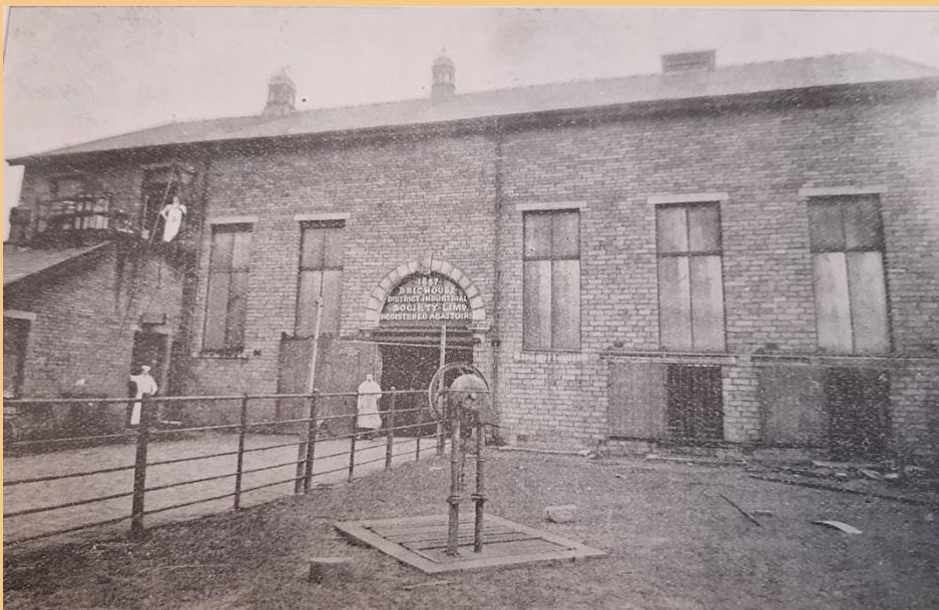
My Co-op career had started at the age of nine. Every Wednesday, grandad used to come to Brighouse on his half day. While he was there, he visited the grocery warehouse on Hangram Street and in the school holidays I went with him. All deliveries to the Co-op branches went from there and granddad had to place his stock orders and view new products. We had to go up in a small lift to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors. It was a great adventure for me to go in that lift. We also went across the street to the greengrocery warehouse to order fresh produce for delivery the next day. My dad started working for Brighouse Co-op in early 1940.



*Co-operative Society King Street store, Brighouse*

His first job was at Wyke Common Branch. His job title was 'flour boy', taking flour from large sacks and weighing it into paper bags for sale to the customers. Over the next four years he worked his way up to 'first man' (assistant manager) and because of the shortage of men during the war he was often asked to stand in for the manager at other branches. He spent several weeks at New Roadside Co-op. When he reached the age of 18, he joined the Royal Navy serving a great amount of time in Australia as a Petty Officer and was not discharged until late 1946. He returned to work for the Co-op and was sent to New Road Side as an assistant to my grandad. My mum was a frequent visitor to the shop as she only lived next door. They soon met each other and started dating and were married in 1950. In the meantime, in 1948 dad had decided he would like to transfer to office work in the Co-op office in Brighouse and started getting qualifications (at night school and via correspondence courses) in accountancy and various other subjects. He quickly gained promotion and in 1960, he was appointed assistant general manager to Mr Harold Mackerel and then finally to the position of general manager and secretary in February 1966 when Mr Mackerel retired. He remained in the position until January 1979 when Brighouse Society was merged into the West Yorkshire Society in Bradford. He decided not to join their management team.

My personal memories start from dad's appointment as Assistant General Manager and he was expected to sort out any problems and emergencies that arose in the various departments. At weekends and as often as possible I went with him. The dairy, slaughterhouse and works department were all situated on a rough road between Armitage Rd and Wakefield Road coming out near the Service Garage. The Co-op had its own



*The Co-operative abattoir in 1887*

milk rounds in those days and problems arose from time to time. We also had to visit the slaughterhouse and often we saw animals being slaughtered while we were there. There were animal pens further along the road where the animals awaited their fate, but they were empty at weekends. The works department

employed several joiners to make fixtures and fittings for alterations to the all the Co-op stores. I also went with dad when there was a robbery at the Co-op jewellers' shop and the joiners were sent to repair the door and windows. Unfortunately, while we were there one of the joiners had a heart attack and died. We also had to visit the coal yard next to the railway line along Birds Royd Lane. In those days there were deliveries of coal and milk and mobile shops visiting homes to sell vegetables and another to sell meat. Grocery branches also delivered orders to customers' homes.

The Co-op emporium on King Street had various non-food departments. There were drapery, shoes, a chemist and hardware on the ground floor, ladies' fashions and toys on the first floor with furniture and carpets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. On the top floor the display department and repairs and alterations of clothes and curtains occupied the space. There were no cash registers or tills in the store. When anybody made a purchase, the money was placed in a capsule along with a small voucher on which was written the price paid and your dividend number (each member had a unique number). These were then sent along a series of tubes to the cash office and were returned within a short time with the customers change. Each purchase was added to your account to determine how much dividend you were paid every six months. In a good year you could receive back one shilling for each pound spent.

Each department had its own manager and once or twice a year a trip was arranged on a Sunday by coach to the seaside. Across the road from the emporium was a paint and wallpaper shop and the gents' tailors and around the corner in Bradford Rd was the jewellery shop and even a small tobacconist. The food hall, grocery and butchery were also in King Street with a cafe on the floor above which was waitress service only. Black dresses, white aprons and caps was their uniform. There was also a television rental department which sometimes meant a visit from Jim Machinter (Mr Waring Green) to repair any faults to the set. Other memories of that time were going to choose fireworks which were for sale in the hardware department at 1d each. This was followed closely by the arrival of Father Christmas after his parade through the town for a six-week residency in the toy department.



*Aire Terrace store, Railway Street junction with Huddersfield Rd.*

By the time dad took over as general manager in 1966 most of the remaining branches still had counter service but the change to self-service had begun. The Aire Terrace Branch was amongst the first and introduced a new concept of

leaving the goods in boxes rather than on shelves thus allowing goods to be offered at lower prices. This was known as a cash and carry store. Several other branches such as Brookfoot, Waring Green and Thornhill Briggs and several grocery branches including Upper Edge, Lower Edge and Brighouse Fields on Thornhill Road in Rastrick were closed around this time, and a new larger supermarket was opened in Towngate,

Wyke which replaced the Wyke, Wyke Common and Griffe Road Branches. A laundrette was also opened across the road. The other main change in the grocery department was in 1974 when the central grocery branch in King Street was modernised and extended into the decorator store which had closed shortly before. Next door to the supermarket was Saint Paul's church which was bought by the Co-op and demolished to make room for a customer's car park in the late 1960s. It is still used as a car park. Above the grocery was the Co-op Cafe which was waitress service. Around 1970 this was closed and sold and became Kingsway Bingo. The slaughterhouse was closed and moved into the old Saint James school. Another big change around that time was the building of a larger warehouse in Bradford which was used by all cooperative societies around the area for all their grocery supplies which were delivered to each branch once a week on a tailback lorry in cages. This system is still used today in all supermarkets.



In 1969 Co-op stamps were introduced to replace the yearly payment of a dividend which meant that customers could gain reward for their purchases on a more regular basis. Every time a book was filled it could be exchanged for a £1 off their shopping. My working life with Brighouse Co-op started at Woodhouse Lane branch when dad was called and told that the manager had collapsed and died during his lunch hour. He went straight up to see the staff and I went with him and asked if I could help them fill the shelves. When the next school

holidays came, I asked if I could continue working in the holidays and spent nearly every school break until I left school going around the various shops filling shelves and serving customers. One holiday there was no work for me in grocery, so I went with dad to the Co-op office where I spent most of the time cancelling Co-op stamp books sent in from all the stores. Two of the early shops I was sent to was Wyke Common where my dad had begun and Field Lane working under Norman Bottomley at that time. After leaving school I spent a year in teacher training college but was soon drawn back to Brighouse Co-op on a full-time basis training to be a branch manager. In January 1975, I was sent to the cooperative College in East Leake near Loughborough on a full time six months course where I gained the certificate in distributive management principles. On completion I was appointed assistant manager in the Wyke supermarket, and on the retirement of the manager of Oaks Green Branch in New Hey Road in January 1976, I became branch manager there. The following year I left to join Huddersfield CRS but came back to Brighouse in 1979 to become the last branch manager of the Woodhouse Lane store before it closed and was purchased by my dad on his retirement from the Society on its amalgamation with West Yorkshire Society.

## Fred Smith & Sons - Rastrick butchers - Fiona Gregory

Many people who lived at the top end of Rastrick between the 1970's and 1980's will remember F. Smith and Sons (Crowtrees) Ltd. on Crowtrees Lane. The shop was owned by Fred Smith - not Frederick - his father Sam always wanted his son to have a name that was shorter than his and with no middle name. Fred was born in 1918 and hailed from Wibsey in Bradford. He worked with his father at the meat markets in Bradford until he was drafted into the army and was sent to north Africa during World War II. He witnessed some horrendous scenes, including the slaughter of many his colleagues. He was wounded and returned to the UK only to be sent back to fight, upon his recovery. This was not something he was ever willing to discuss except after downing a few whiskies, when he became emotional and talked about the dreadful times he endured.



*Fred Smith pictured at his Crowtrees Lane shop*

Mollie, Fred's wife, was from Brookfoot in Brighouse. Her father Herbert was a cabinet maker and undertaker. Mollie attended Brighouse Girls' Grammar School. She was a very intelligent woman who always wanted to learn. At the previous Smith business at 38, Gooder Lane, she would bake bread and cakes daily and walk down from the family home on Slade Lane to the shop where she and Fred would sell meat and groceries.



*Robin Smith pictured at the shop*

In 1974, they had the shop on Crowtrees Lane built and opened it that same year. It was a butchers, grocers and off-licence. Robin, their younger son, was initially the licensee. When they wanted to take on a game licence to allow the sale of meats such as venison and game birds, the drinks licence was switched to Fred, so that Robin could hold the game licence. Holding both was not allowed. The shop was a success in the area, despite stiff competition from the growing supermarket culture. The shop delivered goods free of charge to anybody who required that service. On a Friday afternoon deliveries were made, even if the order was only for a minimal

amount. Friday was also the late-night opening until 7pm. This pales into insignificance when you see the opening hours of today's many local stores, typically opening until 10 or 11pm. As a part of the Smith team, I recall so many wonderful customers, and a few maybe less desirable!

I worked there from 1979 until 1984 when Mollie and Fred decided it was time to retire. Fred was 65, and none of his family had ever lived to 70.

There was no chance of anybody being able to work on what we could afford to pay, so the shop was sold to two brothers who had it for a few years, before selling it on.

I went into nursing, Robin continued his butcher career at Batley's Cash and Carry and Mollie and Fred had a restful retirement, spending their winters in Tenerife and thoroughly enjoying their latter years.

**F. Smith & Sons**  
(CROWTREES) LTD.  
1 and 2 CROWTREES PARADE  
RASTRICK

**BARGAINS IN OUR NEW OFF-LICENCE DEPARTMENT  
FROM NOW UNTIL DECEMBER 30th**

HAIGH WHISKY .. .. .	£4.19
WEBSTER'S GREEN LABEL .. .. .	4 for 59p
Small non-ret. Bottle .. .. .	15p each
TETLEY BITTER (5 pint Party Can) .. .. .	£1.15
DOUBLE CENTURY SHERRY .. .. .	£1.54
CORRIDA WINE RANGE .. .. .	£1.15
MARTINI ROSÉ .. .. .	£1.34
MARTINI DRY .. .. .	£1.45

**IN OUR BUTCHERY DEPARTMENT**

TURKEYS A1 Quality .. .. .	50p 1lb.
FRESH CHICKENS .. .. .	56p 1lb.
SIDES ENGLISH LAMB .. .. .	68p 1lb.
LEGS OF PORK From .. .. .	76p 1lb.
FRESH ENGLISH MINCE .. .. .	66p 1lb.

**ALSO FULLY COMPREHENSIVE RANGE OF  
GROCERIES AND GREENGROCERY**

25 Kilo's WHITE POTATOES .. .. . £1.30

**PLUS MANY MORE BARGAINS**

**PLEASE RING BRIGHOUSE 713606 FOR DETAILS**

**ORDERS DELIVERED**

**TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE OFFERS WHILE  
STOCKS LAST**

The Kirklees Printing Co. Ltd., Brighouse

The above flyer gives the prices of butchery and off-licence goods at F. Smith & Sons.

## Junction Inn and the Bottom of Town - Andy Eccles

It is very sad to see many of our local public houses closing, never to re-open. In recent years, Rastrick has lost the White Horse on Rastrick Common, the Star at Bridge End, the Bandsman/Bramble at Field Lane and the Junction Inn on Ogden Lane.

The Junction was built in 1899 by the Halifax Brewery Company who were founded around 1897 by John Naylor of Halifax, an ale and porter merchant. It was not the first pub on that site. A smaller beer house of the same name occupied the junction of Ogden Lane, Toothill Bank and Rastrick Common from the early 1800's and was run by the Charlesworth family for many years. James Charlesworth took over from his father John, who died in 1864 and James ran the business until the late 1880's.

Naylor had grand ideas for the location and pulled the old buildings down, erecting the much more impressive construction we see today but he sold his brewery company to James Alderson & Co in 1910. When that company got into financial difficulties, they were taken over in 1919 by Ramsden's Brewery of Halifax who in turn were bought by Joshua Tetley's of Leeds in 1964. In recent years, different consortiums under a variety of names, owned the Junction Inn but the lack of stability was reflected by the pubs changing fortunes.



Many will remember the halcyon days of Aubrey and Carol Collins as 'mine hosts' in the late 1970's and 1980's when the pub seemed to be packed almost every night. Zingy's Disco was also popular and in recent years, the DJ, Steve Ingle, had a go at managing the pub himself but the writing seemed to be on the wall. Nowadays, many young people don't frequent local pubs and clubs like they used to do and the modern bars and some top-class restaurants in

Brighouse seem to have attracted many of the local people away from Rastrick pubs like the Junction, eventually forcing the owners to sell the premises.

When the Junction was built, the stone quarries and stone mines located behind the pub were employing many delvers and masons who needed somewhere to quench their thirsts after a hard day in the dusty underground atmosphere. There were numerous houses from the bottom of Bowling Alley up to where the Bowling Club now stands on Toothill Bank and further houses were occupied on Quarry Road, just off Toothill Bank. In 1851 a total of over 260 people were recorded as living in very close proximity to the old Junction Inn, providing a great potential for busy nights and singsongs around the piano.

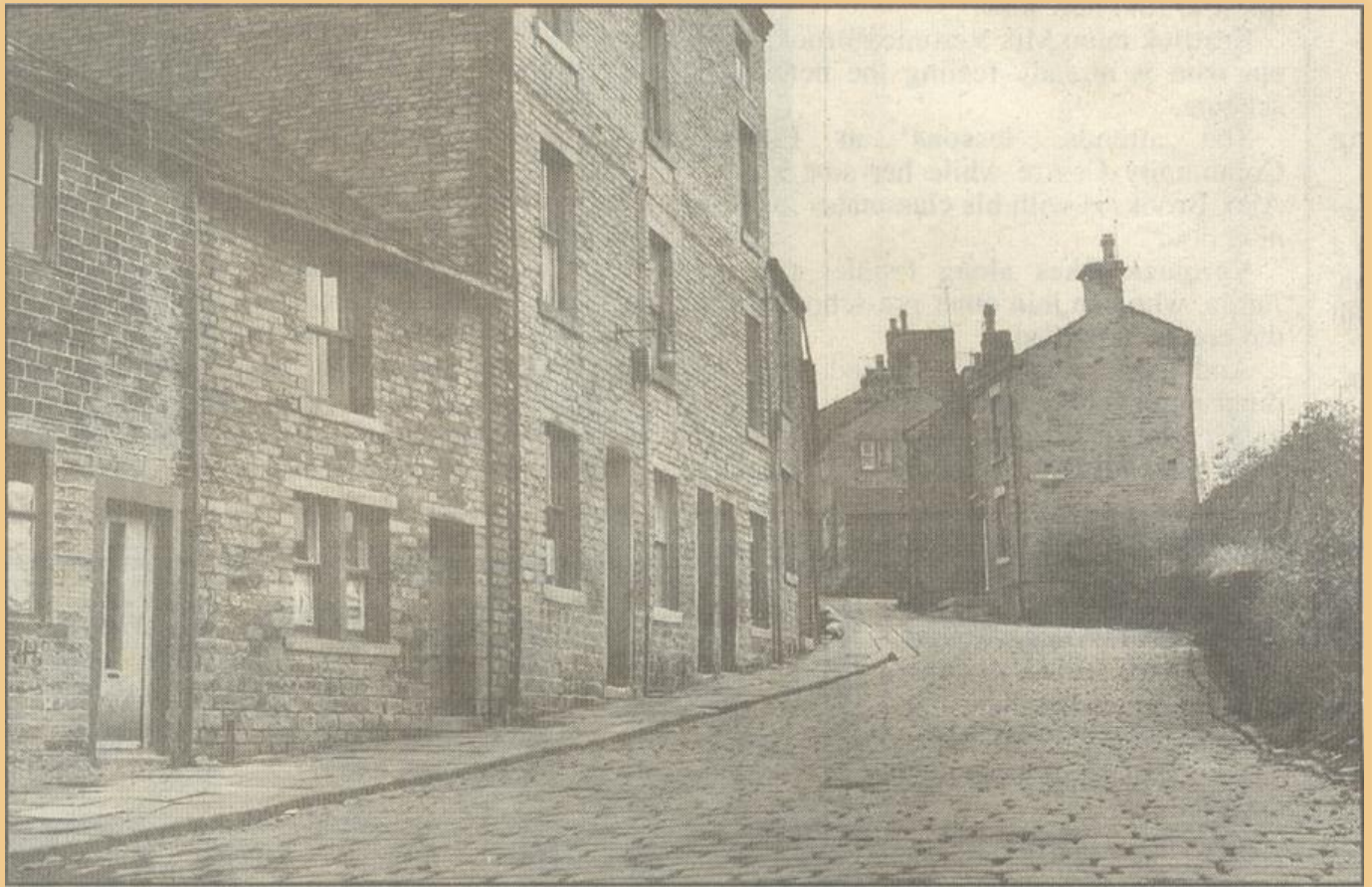
We now live in different times, and the Covid-19 pandemic was probably the final straw. Pubs were forced to close for almost four months from the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and many customers never returned. The Junction Inn has now been added to the list of many other hostelries in the Rastrick area that have closed over the past 130 years.



### Trams and Trolleys

In 1923, one of the last tram tracks to be laid in the West Riding of Yorkshire travelled between Huddersfield and Brighouse via Rastrick. A triangular reverser was fitted outside the Junction which allowed some trams that had come up from Brighouse, to turn around easily and go back again without too much of a problem. This shortened service was only used at busy times, bringing people home from the mills and factories at the end of the working day. The 'reverser' meant that the water fountain (pictured above) in the middle of the road at the bottom of Toothill Bank and Ogden Lane had to be removed.

The tram only lasted for seventeen years on the Rastrick route as they were replaced by the electric powered trolley bus in 1940. Their life was even shorter as the bus service superseded that in 1955.



### Toothill Bank

At the bottom of Toothill Bank was a block of eighteen back-to-back houses in an area known as Top o' th' Hill. It is a mystery where that name came from because it was almost at the bottom of the hill. An old quarry, built into the Toothill Bank hillside on the eastern side of the road closed around the time of the opening of the second Junction Inn in 1899. The old quarry site was developed and became the Rastrick Public Subscription Bowling Club in 1902. On the opposite side of the road was a track leading to Southage Quarries from where excellent quality sandstone was mined until 1955.

Some will remember *the houses being* demolished in 1970, *when* an old waterwheel was discovered under the stone slab flooring of one of the houses. I recall going down to look at it, along with other pupils from Rastrick Grammar School, before it was covered over again. It was reported in the Brighouse Echo dated 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1970 that the waterwheel was part of a small tannery that once existed in the early 1800's but it mistakenly calls the former pub at that same location, the Drovers Arms. It is no surprise that there was a small beer house on Quarry Road, but it was called the Delvers Arms. The licensee was Thomas Lofthouse according to Pigot's Trade Directory of 1828-29 and in the 1881 census, Henry Bentley was the licensee, but they are only two references to it that I have been able to find. Like the Junction, it no doubt helped to quench the thirst of the parched delvers from the local quarries, who occupied these nearby houses.

# Water-wheel placed out of bounds

The old water-wheel which has been discovered beneath the relics of a three-storey house at 5, Southage Place, off Toothill Bank, Rastrick, has attracted so many visitors, some of whom created a danger and a nuisance, that the owner of the property decided to board up the doorway on Saturday.

The house, owned by Mr Philip Bentley, of 208, Thornhill Road, Rastrick, had been empty for about a year since Mr and Mrs J. H. Walton left it. The wheel was discovered while the premises were being demolished and the flag-stones were lifted.

Mrs Bentley noticed a circular stone beneath which she found a huge cavity containing the massive iron wheel.

The wheel, about 25ft in diameter, is difficult to see properly and only a portion of the rim is clearly visible.

## DROPPED LIGHTED NEWSPAPERS

Some of the visitors had dropped stones into the hole to discover how deep it was. A few had also dropped lighted newspapers down the hole so that the blaze would illuminate the cavity below the ground.

It was because of the possible blockage of the hole, which has a stream running through the bottom of it, and because of the dangers of debris and the partly demolished building above, that it was thought wise to close the premises.

It is thought that the property was used as a tannery many years ago, and then later as a public-house called the Drovers' Arms.

Mrs Bentley thinks that the wheel will be extremely difficult to recover, but it may go to the Shibden Hall Museum, Halifax.

For the record, the waterwheel was never recovered due to its fragility and remains hidden underground until it is discovered again, one day in the future.

Mr & Mrs Hammond may still be remembered by some older residents of Rastrick. Mr Hammond had a smallholding at the top of Quarry Road near to Carr Green Recreation Ground, which was later taken over by Gordon Riach, who kept pigs there. Roger Thompson states, *'if we bumped into him up Quarry Rd he always wanted to know what we were up to. We lied.'*

I can remember the houses and shops that stood on what is now a grass banking with mature trees at the Bottom o' Town. I can also clearly remember when they were pulled down. The year was 1973 and I recall it so well because that was the year I left Rastrick Grammar School. After our last day at school, several of 'us leavers' threw our school ties into a fire at the bottom of Bowling Alley, where the demolition men were burning the old timbers. Just before they closed, there was a shop run by the parents of my now departed friend, Graham Swallow. Many will remember his sister Jenny who used to ride horses in the fields behind, adjacent to Bowling Alley. I also recall a fish and chip shop at that location with very high ceilings and a high counter.... or was I just small?

Roger Thompson can go back a lot further than me and says that *"Bottom o' Town was a great place to live all those years ago. Mrs Leah's shop, John Riley's blacksmiths, Mr Tidswell's hens running free, Harold Muir's pony and cart trotting by at the same time every day. Bonfire behind the Junk (Junction Inn) every year. Barbers hut, all those tin cigarette signs. Worth a small fortune now. Even had a fish 'n chip shop. 9d for fish & chips, I can go that far back. Times spent under the gas lamp by the steps across from the Junk*

*as kids. Steps are still there. Surrounded by green fields. God we were so lucky."*

It's strange how people remember those old days so fondly when times were quite hard. Roger goes on to say, *"our house had gas lighting at Bottom o' Town whilst next door either side had electric. My mother got electricity in about 1961 along with a new gas fireplace. That old range we had would be worth a bit now."* I'm not sure that today's generation would agree with Roger, when he says, *"we were so lucky"*.

## PHOTO ARCHIVES & HISTORICAL INFORMATION

---

Immerse yourself in the visual splendour of Rastrick's history with our photo collection and stories. From virtual walks to historic buildings, including churches, mills, schools and houses. There is also a free search facility for almost 8,500 burials at St. Matthews Church and many more at the former Bridge End chapel. Visit [www.MyRastrick.com](http://www.MyRastrick.com) for lots of local historical information.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

---

- Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> July - Brighthouse Historical Society outing to St. Matthews Church, Rastrick, where Andy Eccles leads a walk around the graveyard and introduces you to former residents of Rastrick who were laid to rest in the churchyard over a period of 228 years. Meet in the church car park at 6.50pm for a 7-00pm start. Non-members welcome £3.

## GET INVOLVED

---

### Contribute to Rastrick's Legacy

Your voice matters in preserving the legacy of Rastrick. Do you have old photographs, fascinating anecdotes, or hidden artefacts? Share them with us and become a custodian of our community's history. Email your contributions to [history.rastrick@gmail.com](mailto:history.rastrick@gmail.com). Together, we can ensure our heritage continues to inspire future generations.

Alternatively, come and join our friendly group at Rastrick Library. Meetings are held every second Tuesday in the month at 5.00pm

## CLOSING THOUGHTS

---

Every journey into the past enriches our understanding of the present and fortifies our vision for the future. Thank you for being an integral part of the Rastrick Local History Group. Let us continue to honour and celebrate our town's extraordinary legacy.

*The Rastrick Local History Group*