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Rastrick Local History Group Newsletter

Unearthing the Legacy, Celebrating the Spirit of Rastrick

WELCOME NOTE

Dear Members and History Lovers,

As the evenings begin to stretch out and the first signs of Spring take hold, there's a renewed sense of energy across Rastrick. Those lighter nights always seem to encourage us back into familiar lanes and landscapes, reminding us how closely our local history is tied to the rhythm of the seasons. With summer on the horizon, it feels like the perfect time to look forward to another year of discovery and shared learning.

This quarter also marks the beginning of what may become one of our most significant research projects to date. Our long-standing member, Margaret Usher, has generously donated her entire collection of research documents to the group as she moves into a care home due to ill health. Margaret's work represents decades of dedication, curiosity, and community spirit.

We now have a remarkable archive to explore with books, boxes of notes, photographs, clippings, and carefully compiled histories. There is a huge amount to catalogue, sift through and understand, and we are hopeful that within these materials lie stories waiting to be brought back into the light. It's a privilege to continue Margaret's work, and we look forward to sharing our findings with you as the project unfolds.

Thank you, as always, for your enthusiasm and support. Here's to brighter days, new discoveries, and a season filled with fresh insights into the place we call home.

Please remember, if you want to become involved with our friendly group, you are welcome to join us at our monthly meetings which are held at Rastrick Library at 5pm on the second Tuesday of each month. We look forward to meeting you soon.

The Rastrick Local History Group

FEATURED 'STORIES FROM THE PAST' IN THIS NEWSLETTER

100 YEARS AGO

Huddersfield Town Thrice Champions – Page 3

Not exactly Rastrick but an achievement that was wildly celebrated within the village as Huddersfield Town won the first division championship for the third season running.

STORIES FROM THE PAST

Rastrick Top End in April 1926 – Page 3

John Sheppard has researched what was going on in the top end of Rastrick 100 years ago. This was a time when the Great War had come to an end just 8 years before but did that affect the township?

The Story of One Man's War – Page 8

Paul Thompson tells the story of a John Walton, a Rastrick lad and his involvement in blowing up Hitler's Atlantic Wall which paved the way for the creation of Mulberry Harbours, leading to the successful invasion of Europe by allied forces in WW2.

What's In A name – Page 11

A look by Fiona Gregory at where some of Rastrick's place names derived

G. S. Whiteley & Co, Ogden Lane – Page 14

Paul Thompson looks back at the forge that used to be at the bottom of Ogden Lane

Upcoming Events – Page 17

Meeting dates for early 2026

Closing Thoughts – Page 17

Looking forward to the lighter, brighter evenings of Spring and Summer

100 YEARS AGO

Huddersfield Town win the first division championship for the third season in a row

HUDDERSFIELD MAKE FOOTBALL HISTORY.

HEAD THE LEAGUE THRICE IN SUCCESSION.

NEW CLUB'S SUCCESS DUE TO TEAM SPIRIT.

By defeating Bolton Wanderers at Leeds-road yesterday by three goals to nil, Huddersfield Town become Champions of the Football League for the third year in succession.

No other club in the history of football has equalled this performance.

Mr. C. B. Potter, who came from Derby to manage the Town Club after the departure of Mr. Herbert Chapman to London to run the Arsenal Club, who, incidentally, have been Town's chief rivals for the Championship, ascribes the achievement to the wonderful team spirit existing at Leeds-road.

Mr. Potter says the achievement will be celebrated in some way both publicly and privately.

It has been suggested that the Football Association should recognise the event by the presentation of a special trophy.

Mr. Potter told "The Leeds Mercury" last night it was probable that the directors would entertain the players and their wives privately, and that a function on a public scale, in which all admirers of the team could join, would be fixed up.

As to the secret of the team's success, Mr. Potter said he believed the principal factor to be the fine spirit which existed between the players, the directors, and the officials. He had never had to deal with a better or more loyal set of players.

Speaking of the record set up, Mr. Potter said that although they could not expect to make the winning of the Championship an annual event, they hope to make all their opponents play very hard games next season.

Looking to the Reserves.

Mr. Potter mentioned that the first team was now very keen on the Reserves winning the Central League Championship for the second year in succession.

He said the club had had a good financial season despite all that had been said about the "gates" being unsatisfactory.

They had gone through the tournament with only twenty-nine players, whereas most of the First Division clubs had between forty and fifty players on their books.

The club's policy in not having a large number of players on their register, and thus having to keep some in idleness, was the most economical and best all round.

JOYOUS SCENES.

20,000 PEOPLE ACCLAIM THE VICTORS.

Huddersfield Town's progress has been followed with tremendous interest and there was a scene of great enthusiasm at the close of yesterday's deciding game against Bolton Wanderers.

The crowd, which numbered 20,000, voiced their approval in typical Yorkshire fashion. Meanwhile directors of the club were receiving mutual congratulations and the players on the field, both victors and vanquished, engaged in hearty handshaking.

A Wonderful Record.

Some idea of the Town's terrific task may be gauged from the fact that in the last 124 League games, they have lost only 19. The

three history making seasons are summed up as follows—

Season	Pld.	Won	Lost	Drawn	For	Against	Points
1924-25	42	21	11	10	52	32	57
1925-26	42	21	8	13	53	28	57
1926-27	42	22	8	12	53	27	57
Total	124	64	27	35	158	87	171

On no fewer than six occasions, clubs have endeavoured to achieve the honour which has fallen to the Town. Preston, Sunderland, Aston Villa (twice), Liverpool and The Wednesday have all taken the title in successive years, but all came a cropper at the third attempt.

One of the Younger Clubs.

Huddersfield Town's achievement is all the more remarkable in view of the fact that they are one of the youngest of the senior football clubs. They only secured promotion to the First Division in 1920, in which year they were in the F.A. Cup final.

They won the Cup in 1922, finished third in the League tournament in 1923, and brought off the triple event in the next three seasons.

On top of their premier performances is the fact that the reserve team finished second in the Central League in 1924, became



Clem Stephenson, the Huddersfield Town captain.

champions last year, and they have a good opportunity of repeating the latter performance this year.

The Town have also the opportunity of slipping the record of sixty points for the week which Aston and Liverpool, for the Yorkshire club has still two matches to play.

A report of the match is in page 9, and a picture of the team in page 10.

2 A.M. BLAZE IN LEEDS.

WOMEN ESCAPE IN NIGHT ATTIRE.

Two young women had a narrow escape from a fire which broke out at 1, Lovell-terrace, North-street, Leeds, about 2.20 this morning.

A waterworks employee who was testing mains, noticed a blaze in the cellar kitchen of the house, which is occupied by Rosa Gold, who has a fancy goods business.

He gave the alarm and aroused Miss Gold and another young woman who were sleeping on the premises. They donned coats over their night attire, and left the bedroom.

The fire brigade confined the outbreak, which is believed to have been due to a spark from the fire, to the cellar kitchen, but a quantity of underclothing, house linen, boxes, and mirrors were destroyed, and the doors of the kitchen were damaged.

At the end of half an hour the brigade had extinguished the blaze.

SCHOOL PLAYING FIELD.

The governors of the Bingley Grammar School are negotiating with Bingley Urban Council for five acres of land on the Bynworth Hall estate, at Cross Fields for conversion into playing fields.

This is in connection with the scheme for the provision of a new girls' grammar school on a site adjoining the present boys' school.

Leeds Mercury 13th April 1926

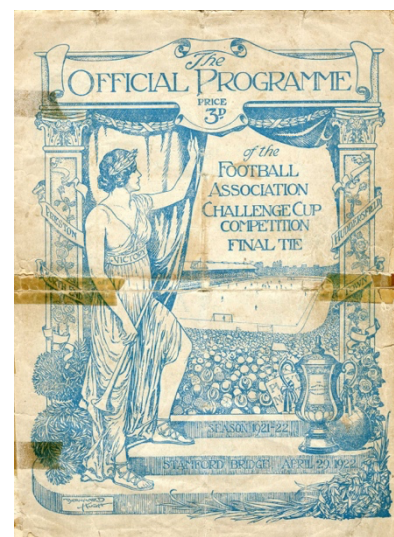
A sporting achievement was celebrated by many people in Rastrick, one hundred years ago on the 12th April 1926 when Huddersfield Town became the first ever team to win the first division championship for the third season in succession.

The victory against Bolton Wanderers on the Monday evening fixture at Leeds Road meant that no other team could overtake Town on points.

Formed only 18 years before, Town weren't promoted to the top flight of football until 1920, the same season that they reached their first FA Cup Final, losing 1-0 to Aston Villa. In 1922, they won the FA Cup beating Preston North End at Stamford Bridge by the same scoreline. They then went on to win the championship in 1924, 1925 and 1926, quite a remarkable feat.

My grandfather's elder brother, Albert Bottomley, who lived at New Hey Road, was a keen supporter of Town throughout his life and attended the 1922 FA Cup Final. He used to talk about the great players in the Town team in that era and what a pleasure it was to support such a successful team.

He gave me his programme from the game when I was about 13 years old, something I have always treasured.



1922 FA Cup Final programme - Huddersfield Town's only success in winning that trophy

Alas, 100 years on and Town are struggling to get into the playoffs of the third tier of English football, how times have changed.

STORIES FROM THE PAST

Rastrick Top End in April 1926 – John Sheppard

A visitor from the 21st century would find much that was familiar in the Rastrick of April 1926. The basic road system was as now, as indeed it had been for over 90 years even then, and the Parish Church of St Matthew stood at the southern edge of Top o'Town. Much of the growth of Rastrick had taken place in the nineteenth century but further expansion was in progress and some features of 1926 have since disappeared. The birth of Princess Elizabeth Alexandra Mary Windsor early on Wednesday 21st April at Bruton Street, Mayfair, London, had no apparent great impact locally. Things went on pretty much as normal, so to get an idea of what was normal, here is a summary of life in Top End in 1926.

Rastrick had become part of the Elland parliamentary constituency. In 1918 suffrage had been extended to women over the age of 30 who were householders, the wives of householders, occupiers of property with an annual rent of £5, or graduates of British universities, in addition to all men aged 21 or over.

In the general election of 1924 Elland returned, on a slim majority of the 84% turnout, William Cornforth Robinson, the Labour candidate and general secretary of the Amalgamated Association of Beamers, Twisters and Drawers.

Since 1893 Rastrick had been administratively within the Brighouse Borough. This was a marriage of convenience between small authorities which could not afford each to build a satisfactory sewage system. The Cooper Bridge works had now been completed but many Rastrick premises were still not connected to the system. Old, shared privies were still common. Gas street lighting in Brighouse was only slowly making its way up the hill. St Matthew's Church was applying for an electricity supply. There was a piped water supply, with the reservoir and keeper's house up New Hey Road (now number 87). Enough adults still around remembered the "good old days" of Rastrick Township and there was perhaps some feeling that Rastrick was a poor relation compared with the increasingly predominant Brighouse.

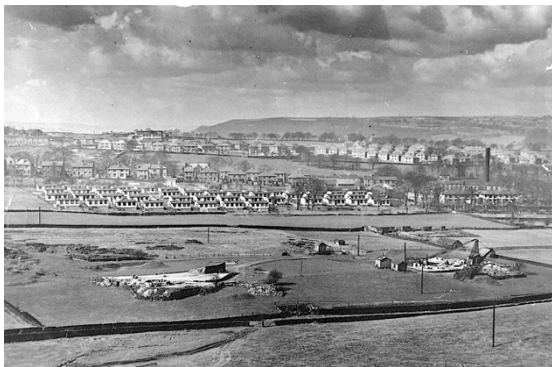


The purpose-built library in Crowtrees Lane was only 14 years old in 1926. The Borough had been unable to see its way to financing this facility so finally Alderman John William Clay gave land and Alderman William Smith paid for the building. On the lower ground floor was a flat where Arthur Firth and his wife Sarah lived. He had been librarian since the opening and would continue to be so for many more years.

Just six or seven years previously many young Rastrick men had returned from the Great War. Some, of course, had not returned and their one hundred and thirty names were recorded on the memorial unveiled just five and a half years previously. Inevitably, practically every Rastrick family would have been affected by the deaths of sons, fiancés, friends and neighbours. Moreover, those who did return, having enlisted in a spirit of adventure, comradeship, patriotic duty, or simply because in the end they had little choice, were now in many cases reluctant to say anything about what they had seen and done. There must have been some very awkward and unhappy relationships back home.

During the industrial revolution Rastrick had become essentially a mill-town. Four big textile mills were prominent in 1926. The smallest of these was Slade Lane Mill, which had changed hands a number of times and in 1926 was occupied by Ralph and Norman Murgatroyd trading as W. H. Murgatroyd and Sons, dyers and bleachers. Three bigger mills were Crowtrees Mill, owned by J. T. Clay and Sons, worsted cloth manufacturers; Spout Mills, owned by Thomas Helm and Sons, tweed, worsted and woollen manufacturers; and the Badger Hill Mills of John Smith and Sons, the largest woollen manufacturer in the district.

In 1926 there would be many who also remembered a mill on the opposite corner to Badger Hill, which is now converted into housing (7-13 Clough Lane and Fixby View Yard). All these mills were now engaged in branches of the woollen trade, though Slade Lane Mill had at one stage been Cheethams' silk mill.



Stone quarrying and mining, which prior to the textile revolution had been the main industry in Rastrick, was still very much in evidence in 1926 with smaller or larger enterprises dotted all over the district, but especially at Southage, Crowtrees, Lower Edge and Upper Edge. The three quarries between Lower and Upper Edge at that time were Five Acre Quarry (Upper Edge), Lower Edge Quarry and New Delight Quarry

(which was between the other two). There was by this time no longer any coal mine operating in Rastrick. Rastrick had never had large farms but Lands Farm, Ridge End Farm, Green Head Farm, Oaks Farm and Nunnery Farm at Boothroyd were long-standing and all still being worked in 1926. None of them was owner-occupied.

Several big houses in the top end were closely associated with the mills. Lands House, up New Hey Road, had been built for William Smith. He had moved out and subsequently died in 1922, and by 1926 the house had been left empty for some years. Across the road at Ridge House (now 98-100) lived Albert Edward and Mary Emma Smith, grieving parents of William Henry Smith, who had been killed while serving as a second lieutenant with the Royal Field Artillery in the recent Great War. Round the corner on



Lands House

Clough Lane was what had been another Smith house, Elder Lea, built for Albert Smith and which for some years now had been the home of Eleanor Helm, widow of Joseph William Helm, and Frank Arthur Jagger. Frank Arthur Jagger, a spinner born in Rastrick in late 1887, had married Gertrude Eleanor Helm in the spring of 1917 and one can assume that she was also living at Elder Lea.

Down New Hey Road, conveniently close to the Spout Mills, was Croft House (now numbered 32), the residence of the Helm family and by 1926 occupied by John and George Arthur Topham, inheritors of the business. Further down Crowtrees Lane (now 54-56) was Crowtrees House, which at one time had been a Clay residence and where Mrs Foster now lived. Members of the Clay family lived in Holly Bank House and Rastrick House in 1926. One more mansion which the 1926 residents would well remember had been demolished about fourteen years previously and that was the house, set in extensive grounds, known as Crowtrees or Crow Trees, on the same side of the road and up from the church. Boothroyd had been used during the war as a military hospital during the war and then became an orphanage.

The Black Horse pub at 77 New Hey Road had been closed in 1913 and the Upper Royal George, next door to St Matthew's Church closed at New Year 1926, but there was still plenty of choice for the thirsty workers. The Sun Inn, Round Hill, Clough House, The Greyhound, The Grove, and The Lower George were all in business, not to mention also the Constitutional Club and the Bowling Club. and, in Greenhead Lane, the Liberal Club. There were also The Rock, just over the border at Upper Edge, and the Royal Oak just past the border at Lower Edge.

Many families lived in the yards of workers' houses off New Hey Road, or "New Road" as it was generally known still a century after its construction. Coming down from the Sun Inn were New Road Fold, Walker Square, Denham Square, New Road Mount and Spout. On the opposite side were Fixby View Yard, Sayles Row, Regent Place, Providence Place, and New Road Square. These were all rented properties, the population often moving between them as family size increased or decreased.

Further up New Hey Road, at the crossroads with the much older Pinfold Lane (about where the motorway footbridge is now) was another row of small cottages, Ridge End, one of which had been the toll-keeper's. Although the turnpike system had been abolished for fifty years there would undoubtedly be older residents of 1926 who still remembered having to pay to go to Ainley Top. Similarly they might recall the toll house up Clough Lane on the boundary with Fixby.

Old cottages, which are still standing today, were to be found at the Oaks Green end of New Hey Road and Crowtrees Lane, at the Sun Inn end of what was then coming to be called Dewsbury Road (though it was still often referred to by its more appropriately descriptive name of Dewsbury and Elland Road) plus a row nearer Upper Edge (now converted into one house at number 110). Another couple of old cottages on Clough Lane have also now been converted into one house at number 120 whilst two more are on the corner with Slade Lane and the Lower Fold hamlet. Generally speaking, though, larger terraced houses had been built since the turn of the century. These can be found:-

- opposite the older cottages at the bottom of New Hey Road (now 3-25)
- between Spout and the cart road (now 34-60),
- on the south side of Slade Lane (now 2-52) and
- adjoining the old cottages up Clough Lane (now 122-128).



Number 9 tram outside the Sun Inn, Rastrick

Even newer was the pair of houses at Grantham, first inhabited only a couple of years before by Harry and Clara Walker with their son Stephen at Hill Crest and by Albert and Lily Walker with their children, Frank and May at Grantham House.

The first of the new houses were being built on the east side of the re-aligned Crowtrees Lane.

One new house, in a class of its own, was Mona Cottage (now 65 Clough Lane) which had been built in 1898 by Fred Armitage. Fred and his wife Rhoda were still living there along with their family in 1926, and they remained there for many years after that too.



For Top Enders, local shopping would mean not having to go as far as Top o' Town. The Oaks Green branch of the Co-op, at 28 New Hey Road, was the big shop, but there was also a range of smaller establishments such as: the butcher, Dodson Wood, at number 73, general dealer Mary Ann Dodson at 75, fried fish dealer Charles William Proctor at 77 (the former Black Horse), grocer Samuel Horsfall Aspinall and his wife Ann at 79-81, grocer Mary

Woodat 90-92, the sweet shop of Sarah Annie Beaumont at 26, not to mention various less official trading-from-home arrangements. Hairdressers Ernest and Ellen Robertshaw operated from 2, New Hey Road and bootmaker Louis Woffenden at 40, Slade Lane.

The Huddersfield Corporation trams trundling up and down Crowtrees Lane, New Hey Road and Clough Lane on their way between Huddersfield and Brighouse would have still been a novelty in 1926, having been finally introduced only three years earlier, after many years of discussion. Number 1 Clough Lane had lost a corner of its front garden to accommodate their turn by the Sun Inn and the major work had been to build a completely new wide straight stretch of Crowtrees Lane on land purchased from the Crowtrees estate. The railways had been returned to private ownership in 1923 and in Rastrick, it was part of the L.N.E.R. system. Behind 74, New Hey Road was a cluster of buildings known as Wood's Yard where Henry Wood, 59, and his son James, 26, cab proprietors and carting agents, based their business and stabled their horses.

As well as St Matthew's and the long-established New Road Sunday School, churches had been built toward the end of the nineteenth century at Upper Edge (originally non-denominational but now Baptist) and on Crowtrees Lane opposite Carr Green Lane (Wesleyan Methodist). The new Board School at Carr Green had almost completed its fourteenth year and many inhabitants would be former scholars of the Parish School at Top o' Town or of the New Road School.

Two cricket clubs were well established. Rastrick Cricket Club at Round Hill and, behind the Sun Inn, New Road Sunday School Cricket Club. Football and rugby teams were based at Carr Green. New Road Sunday School also had a tennis club, in fact, the Sunday School organised so many activities it could well be described as effectively the social centre of the Top End.

In summary, Rastrick was in a transitional period in April 1926. It was essentially similar to today's Rastrick but then, there were more pubs, more shops and more industry. A modern day visitor would remark on the many open spaces in 1926 Rastrick. Much of Crowtrees Lane, Slade Lane, Clough Lane, Dewsbury Road and the top end of New Hey Road were built on after 1926 but the visitor might also comment on the cramped conditions in the workers' housing and the limited provision of municipal utilities.

The Story of One Man's War – Paul Thompson



The picture shows John Walton who lived at 2, Anvil Street, Brighouse and how he looked in 1940. He was christened Jack and was born at the Toothill area of Rastrick in 1919, the second son of a well-respected Rastrick family. His mother, Emily Walton, an ardent Socialist, worked tirelessly for education in our local schools. John attended the Brighouse Victoria Central School and then became an apprentice at Dempster's Engineers in Elland. When war came in 1939, he was fit and ready to join the army. It was a simple process during the time leading up to the war, recruits were only required to provide identity documents such as a birth certificate and they were given a four-shilling postal

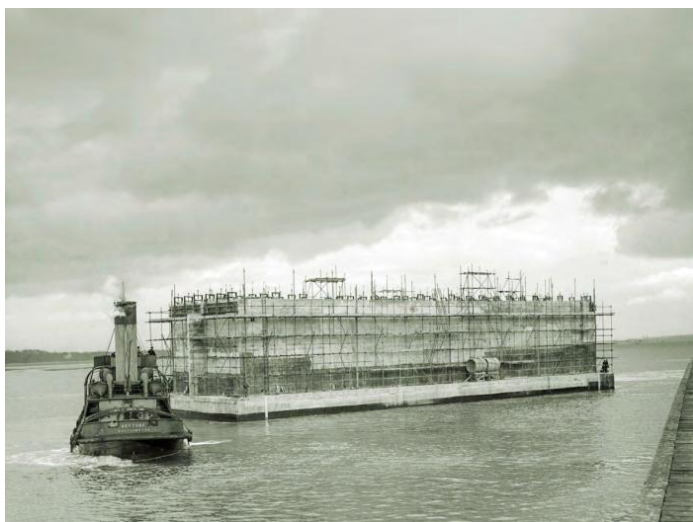
order. It wasn't the King's shilling then, it had gone up to an unbelievable four bob! Alas, one important factor stood in his way, he was an engineer. So instead of reporting to Ripon he had to continue his employment at Dempster's.

As 1941 wore on he got more fed up and volunteered for the army again. He pointed out that as an engineer he could perhaps put his experience to some use in the war effort. We heard so much about the right people in the wrong jobs at that time, not so with John Walton. He went straight into the Royal Engineers in December 1941. For him the door was open to great adventures, appalling risks, comradeship, and exploits such as he had never dreamed possible. No heroics, he wasn't that sort. Just plain facts, which left him in 1984, his retirement year, immensely proud of Britain, both as a soldier and an engineer. He went to Liss in Hampshire, Derby, Barry Island, Garelochhead in Scotland and even went to Cardiff University to study various aspects of engineering which were on the government list of official secrets.

Back at Garelochhead he joined the 930 Fort Construction and Repair Unit of the Royal Engineers. When the 1st Army landed in North Africa, his unit was there, standing off Algiers in the troopship Cynthia. They were at a service on board being conducted by the chaplain when German dive bombers attacked. He remembers they were singing "Abide with Me" at the time. A night below decks with a few minor incidents and his unit were thinking about breakfast and going ashore when an aerial torpedo suddenly struck and blew a hole in the side of the ship that measured 44 feet by 40 feet. The Cynthia was also hit on the other side with another hole measuring 40 feet by 10 feet. He recalled seeing the cruiser Ajax receive a direct hit whilst sailing in the Mediterranean, a ship that had been involved in heroic exploits against the German pocket battleship Graf Spee during the Battle of River Plate off Montevideo. John travelled on to Bizerte with the Engineers and then leapfrogged to Salerno and Naples. They bridged rivers, cleared ports, and generally helped to keep the wheels of the victorious Eighth Army rolling, before returning to Scotland in February 1944 for more training.

John's unit was moved to Sussex-by-the-Sea on the south coast of England in April and May but they knew that something was brewing and that it was something big too. One day they were paraded and two sections received their orders. They were to board two ships, each one loaded solid with high explosives, intended to clear the French beaches of steel underwater obstacles. These were designed to tear the bottom out of ships that tried to land. The two ships were duplicated in case one got stuck. Their destination was Arromanches, on the Normandy coast, about 80 miles due south from Selsey Bill. They beached at low tide when the obstacles were exposed. They quickly blew them to bits; it was their first crack at Hitler's Atlantic Wall but this was only the start.

The occupying Germans had built a massive wall across the street as part of their defences, and it was the job of 930 Port Construction to blow them down. They were in fact clearing the way for a Mulberry Harbour which will go down as one of the finest engineering feats in history. Not only did they blow both sea walls, but they also blasted a road through a cliff face at Arromanches. Massive caissons made from



A section of a Mulberry harbour being floated into position

concrete and reinforced steel, a unique miracle of engineering, were floated across the channel. They had done their preparation work well. The caissons comprised of many hollow watertight chambers which were open at the bottom. Water was kept out by air pressure which allowed them to float but once towed into position, valves were opened to release water into the chambers, and they were sunk onto the seabed to form a safe harbour.

The caissons were then filled with sand to give them maximum stability. A few miles west of Pont-en-Bessin, the U.S. engineers had filled their similar caissons with water. It was to prove disastrous because in a huge storm that followed, the American caissons rose and fell with the tide and many were destroyed. Mulberry proved to be vital to the success of the invasion as massive amounts of men, supplies, ammunition and tracked and wheeled vehicles travelled through the harbour over a period of several weeks.

In 1984, forty years after the event, John Walton reflected on the courage and determination he saw all round him: *"I know it will never happen again, but it is something I would want to do again as it was a marvellous experience. It is one thing I have always been proud of to have been involved in creating Mulberry. Never again did I underestimate Britain - I never at any time thought that we would lose the war, but Mulberry for guts, imagination, and sheer enterprise was something I wouldn't have missed for anything"*.

Mulberry did the job it was created for and the Allies progressed beyond Caen. The Royal Engineers backed



October 27th 1944 - Aerial view of Mulberry Harbour 'B' at Arromanches-les-Bains, Normandy

up the advance which moved right up to Antwerp. The city was being pounded with V12 rockets by a now desperate enemy and although the German forces launched a surprise offensive in the Battle of the Bulge, to break through Allied lines starting on the December 16th 1944 in the Ardennes Forest, nothing could stop the inevitable climax in May the following year when allied air power halted the last major German push in the West.

In February 1945, John came home on leave, his nerves shattered, sick at heart by the suffering and destruction he had seen. A V2 hit the Rex Cinema in Antwerp and John's unit was called to clear the rubble. One hundred and fifty people were killed, many of them British soldiers with their Belgian girlfriends, dying together with their arms round each other. John retired at the end of the 1984 from Thompson and Munroe Ltd, engineers, where he had been works manager for the last 20 years. He came out of the war with a wife, Joyce, whom he met in Nottingham. He has one son, Thomas, a teacher at Salendine Nook, Huddersfield. Once an engineer, always an engineer and such is the way of things, the bad days of war recede in the memory, only the good times remain and of these, bright and shining in his memory is Mulberry, that paved the way to victory.

What's In A Name – Fiona Gregory



Have you ever considered where some of the place names in Rastrick come from? In this next article, Fiona explains the background of some of these peculiar names.

Stack Garth

The name Stack Garth, the name of a cul-de-sac off Ogden Lane is derived from Old Norse roots. According to 'A Survey of English Place-Names,' the name was historically recorded as 'ye Staggarth' in 1580 and literally means 'Stack Yard', from Old Norse 'stakkr' which was a ('stack' or 'rick') + gardr (yard)

or enclosure). In this context, a 'stack' refers to a haystack of piled agricultural produce, as Rastrick was an agricultural area, reflecting the area's Norse-influenced agricultural landscape.

Carr Green

The name Carr Green in Rastrick almost certainly derives from Old Norse '*kjarr*' borrowed into Old English which originally meant a boggy, marshy scrub land, especially waterlogged terrain with brushwood like alder and willow.

In northern England's dialect '*carr*' is typically referring to low-lying wet woodland or fen – areas too waterlogged for farming, often featuring scrubby growth and alder trees.

In Rastrick, Carr Green would have signified a green open space situation in or beside wet, boggy ground. A green open space situated in or beside wet boggy ground – a 'green', a common open area located on or near a carr – marshy land. This fits the landscape of the Carr Green area and also the settlement history of low-lying Yorkshire settings.

Field Lane

Field Lane comes from its historic function as a rural track that ran through agricultural land before the area was developed into its current residential form. Early maps and local history show that what is now Field Lane estate originally passed through open fields and connected farmsteads and local larger houses such as Rastrick House to surrounding farmland. There are maps from the early 19th century which show the presence of field names and agrarian land divisions which strongly suggests that the lane was named simply because it traversed fields rather than for any later urban association.

The older route of Field Lane ran from what is now the modern estate up past Rastrick House and its lodge. Field Lane itself predates the housing estate which was built in the 1950s. The post-war council estate took its name from the estate and surrounding roads.

Slade Lane

Slade comes from the old English word '*slaed*' meaning a valley, hollow, dell or low-lying ground – often referring to a shallow valley or depression in the landscape. In Rastrick, Slade Lane is one of the ancient roads of the village. Historically, along with its continuation of Delf Hill, it formed a link between old main routes across the area, and it still does to this day, linking Clough Lane to New Hey Road. The name most likely described the topography which the lane passed through, which was a small valley or hollow in the local terrain. Slade Lane being the lane that ran along or through the slade. In older maps of Rastrick, Slade Lane is sometimes spelt Slaed or Slaid.

Jumble Dyke

The name Jumble Dyke is most likely a descriptive local name rather than a formal historical name. Jumble is a plain English word meaning mixed up, tangled, irregular or full of debris or rough ground. It likely

refers to land that is a ditch or dyke cluttered with stones or vegetation or flood debris. This would have been a practical descriptive name used by local people such as farmers or mill workers to identify that particular watercourse. Anybody who knows Jumble Dyke today, will note that it often floods at the bottom of the hill, as water flows downwards after a heavy storm, so little has changed!

A 'dyke' or 'dike' comes from the Norse word '*diki*' which was a raised section of track through marshy ground or a hollowed out track with embankments on the side.

New Dick

New Dick is the local name for what is the track that leads between the top of Toothill Bank and the Four Sons public house. It is officially known as Toothill Lane South nowadays. Similar to the above, the word 'Dick' derives from the words 'Dike' or 'Dyke' and refers to a new track (although quite ancient now) with raised sides, travelling above a marshland area (Carr Green below)

New Hey Road

New Hey Road gets its name from the Huddersfield and New Hey Turnpike of the early 1800's. The New Hey aspect of the name refers to its destination, Newhey, a village in Lancashire near Milnrow and Rochdale. Around 1806-1809 a turnpike road was authorised and built as a branch of the Huddersfield and New Hey Turnpike between Huddersfield and New Hey. One branch extended down through Rastrick towards Brighouse as it does to this day. It terminates at the junction where Crowtrees Lane begins. This route created a new straighter main road which bypassed older winding paths through Rastrick, and it was often known locally as New Road initially. This explains why the New Road Sunday school and the New Road Cricket team formed in 1885 were so named.

Toothill

Toothill derives from the Old English elements with 'tot' meaning a look-out, or a look-out place and 'hyll' obviously meaning a hill. So the name literally means a lookout hill, or a hill which is used as a vantage point. Toothill was referenced on local historical maps and was referenced as an area/far/estate in historic Rastrick and so the name was then applied to local roads such as Toothill Bank and Toothill Lane. The name dates back to the medieval period (Anglo Saxon era) and likely originates from Old English. The surname Toothill in the Rastrick area appears in medieval records. A family associated with the area was recorded as 'de Totehyll' in the late 13th century, with individuals such as Adam de Totehyll appearing in records of that era. This indicates that the placename was in use by at least the late 1200s / early 1300s. If you visit the area, you will still be able to enjoy the vista across Rastrick from its high vantage point, which demonstrates the name perfectly. Another take on the name is that the hill was used to alert local settlements of a potential attack from enemies at which point, a horn was blown to warn people. The horn was sounded or 'tooted', hence the name Toot Hill. There are several areas throughout the country with this name.

Crowtrees Lane

Crowtrees Lane predates much modern development in Rastrick and is not a modern estate name, but a name rooted in historic connectivity and natural features. It goes back to at least the early 19th century or possibly even earlier. It literally refers to the trees associated with crows along the lane and reflects the way that rural people named places based upon their notable natural features. It later lent its name to other local places such as Crowtrees Mill which was on the lane in the 19th century.

Crows or Rooks? Rooks are very social birds, usually seen in large flocks, and they nest together in colonies called rookeries. Crows are more solitary and are usually seen alone or in pairs. Rooks have pointed slender beaks and are slightly scruffy in appearance with shaggy feathers on their upper legs resembling baggy trousers. Crows have neat, smooth legs and chunkier beaks. So, should it be Crowtrees Lane or Rookery Lane? You decide!

Brook Grain Hill

At the bottom of Rosemary Lane, the road name changes to Brook Grain Hill. This ancient name comes from the word '*grein*', an old Norse word meaning a junction or a place where two watercourses meet. There are two streams or brooks that meet at this location, which travel from the higher ground above Rastrick at Fixby and Upper Edge respectively.

G. S. Whiteley & Co, Ogden Lane – Paul Thompson

At one time there were many blacksmiths or forges in towns all over the country to service the huge



John Riley (Centre) with colleagues of New Road Sunday School 1937

number of horses which were the main mode of transport but there were some specialist blacksmiths which did not shoe horses and the company G.S. Whiteley at the bottom of Ogden Lane, Rastrick which produced all types of chisels and hammers and all types of tools for the stone quarrying industry was one of them. The business was started in 1860 by Clifford Riley's father's uncle George Shaw Whiteley, and I can remember Clifford's father John Riley still being around when I started work in 1967 although he may have been retired by then. The blacksmith's yard was at the bottom of Ogden Lane and Clifford Riley lived for 29 years at Stackgarth. In that area

there were many interesting features and changes which have taken place over the years. At the top of the road was Rastrick Grammar school where Clifford attended. This has recently been converted to flats and houses built in the playground. There was a sweet shop down Ogden Lane called Ma Parrots and at break time pupils used to buy sweets which were set out in her backyard, and she had to reach up to pass the sweets to the boys. A little lower down at the end of Stackgarth was a small lockup known as 'Old Towser' where local drunks and miscreants were locked up for the night. There is an old gate post with a Round

Top in a small half door which can still be seen in the wall. From the bottom of Ogden Lane on the right-hand side after the junction public house was Quarry Road which led to extensive stone quarries up the valley, and this was one reason why G.S. Whiteleys continued as a business.

One of the jobs of an apprentice was to collect and deliver chisels by wheelbarrow to the end of Birds Royd Lane where blocks of stone were brought to the railway sidings from local quarries where they were worked on and then loaded straight on to rail trucks for despatch. The journey from Ogden Lane to the railway sidings was not an easy one as the roads in those days were made with granite setts and there was also a number of tramlines to negotiate, not easy with a wheelbarrow which had a solid wheel. There were several stone quarries in the Rastrick area and stone from this area was supplied for the foundations of Blackpool Tower and flagstones were supplied to Buckingham Palace.



The company also produced many forged items for local firms including Drury's soap works on River Street and items for sale at John Frances Browns in Brighouse, the hardware shop. They also manufactured wrought iron work and one item which was made by Clifford Riley was a new weathervane for St Matthews Church, Rastrick in 1953. This was to be a replica of the original which was believed to be over 100 years old and when completed was 26 feet (8 metres) high and weighed over 5 ½ cwt (280 kgs) There

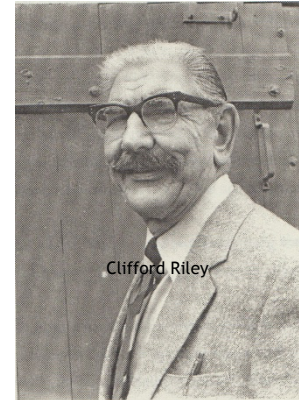
was an article in the Brighouse Echo describing this with a photograph assembling this prior to it being fitted to the church steeple.

The company purchased equipment which produced components using an oxy – acetylene flame which was guided by a sheet metal template which had a magnetic roller following the template. Our Company – Thompson & Munroe Ltd, developed a machine to manufacture wire coat hangers for the dry-cleaning shops and over thirty of these machines were supplied to Redfearn's Wire Products in Brighouse, originally on Atlas Mill Road and then to a new factory on Birds Royd Lane where they operated the largest coat hanger production plant in Europe. All these machines were made with a series of cams which were made by G. S. Whiteley in Rastrick. Other coat hanger machines were made by our company and exported to Australia, South Africa and even Haiti.

In 1971, Clifford Riley's nephew, John Snell, asked if there was any work he could do during the school holiday. Clifford set him on straight away as they were very busy at that time. He left school in 1973 and started full time work at the company. He went to Halifax Technical College and trained to weld and started to take more responsibility from Clifford, dealing with customers. In 1980, John was made a director of the firm and Clifford retired in 1980 leaving John to run the business. Tragically, on the 10th September 1995, John died at the age of 38 of coronary heart disease. Apparently, the atheroma had been forming for at least five to seven years, completely undetected. This coincided with a complaint from a resident of Stackgarth at the rear of the forge. As a single parent, the woman complained that the noise from the

machinery, especially the hammers, were impacting negatively upon her family life. Calderdale Council's Environmental Health Department became involved. Despite the woman having only recently moved into the area yet the forge had been there for over 130 years, the council came down on the side of the complainant and ordered noise suppressors to be fitted to some machinery. The cost was enormous and with the sad loss of John Snell, it was decided that the business should close. The works had to be closed and the buildings, which were quite unique, were demolished. Some years later, the area was developed by a builder and several town houses built on the plot and it is today known as The Forge.

There is a book called "A Village Blacksmith" written by Clifford Riley which covers the history of the company and is also about Clifford and his life and is a fascinating insight to this small blacksmith's firm in Rastrick.



Clifford Riley

Goodbye to place where memories were forged

RASTRICK has lost another part of its heritage with the demolition of one of the oldest properties in the community.

Forging and fabricating firm G.S. Whiteley and Co, of Ogden Lane, which shut down at Christmas, is being pulled down after nearly 130 years of business.

Contractors Walker May of Halifax began demolishing the building on Monday after Calderdale Council passed a Section 80 demolition notice.

Nearby resident Mrs Jenny Ellis, of Scholey Road, said it was a great shame that a build-

By Catherine Langford

ing which had been in Rastrick for centuries was going to vanish forever.

"It is another piece of Rastrick's heritage which is going, and once it has gone it will be gone forever," said Mrs Ellis. "The former Rastrick Common School has been pulled down along with the old Rosemary Dyeworks, and nothing happens to them. They are just left as derelict sites.

"My little boy used to love walking past the old forge and watching the smiths at work,

bending their iron on the hod," she added. "Such scenes are so rare today and we ought to preserve them all we can."

G.S. Whiteley's was founded by Mr Joseph Whiteley, who like his father and grandfather before him were blacksmiths at Southowram. At the age of 40 he transferred the business to Rastrick, set up as a toolsmith in premises which date back to 1700 or earlier, and took up residence in Toothill Bank.

The main work was to sharpen the tools for a quarry which was just being started near the bottom of Toothill Bank, where Rastrick

Bowling Club is now. When Joseph Whiteley died in 1884 the business passed to his eldest son, George Shaw Whiteley, who gave the firm its most recent name.

His nephew Mr John Riley, who used to live round the corner at Stackgarth, joined the firm in 1898 and took over in 1915 on the death of his uncle. His son Mr Clifford Riley, who lives at Clifton, later became a partner in the business along with the late Mr John Snell, who was managing director of the firm. The business closed after the death of Mr Snell and the machinery and equipment were sold.

Brighouse Echo 21st June 1996

PHOTO ARCHIVES & HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Discover More at www.MyRastrick.com

As we step into the lighter evenings and look forward to the warmth of Spring and Summer, it's a wonderful time to delve deeper into Rastrick's past. Our growing collection of photographs, maps, and local stories continues to offer new ways to experience the township's heritage—whether you're wandering familiar streets or exploring corners you've never noticed before.

If this edition has sparked your interest, there's a whole world of material waiting to be uncovered at www.MyRastrick.com. The site has become a living archive of our community, bringing together historic images, newspaper snippets, personal memories, and detailed research that help piece together the story of Rastrick across the centuries. You'll also find an extensive burial index for St Matthew's Church and the former Bridge End Chapel, an invaluable resource for anyone tracing family connections or mapping out earlier generations. With more than half a million visitors already exploring the site, it's clear that Rastrick's history resonates far beyond our own boundaries. If you haven't taken a look recently, now is the perfect moment to see what's new, you never know which name, building, or forgotten landmark might catch your eye.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monthly meetings held at Rastrick Library, 5-00pm – 6-30pm

Tuesday 14th April 2026

Tuesday 12th May 2026 – Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 9th June 2026

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. 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 – Carrying Forward Rastrick's Spirit of Generosity

As the evenings begin to brighten and the first signs of Spring take hold, it feels like the perfect moment to pause and appreciate how much our understanding of Rastrick continues to grow. Each new discovery, whether it's a photograph, a family story, or a long-forgotten detail tucked away in an archive, adds another thread to the tapestry of our township's history.

This quarter has reminded us how powerful collective effort can be. From ongoing research projects to the generous sharing of personal collections, our group continues to uncover stories that might otherwise have slipped quietly into the past. It's a privilege to help bring them back into view.

As we look ahead to the lighter nights and the promise of warmer days, I hope you'll find time to explore more of Rastrick's heritage in whatever way suits you best, through our meetings, your own research, or simply by noticing the echoes of history in the places you pass every day.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Your curiosity, support, and enthusiasm are what keep our local history alive and thriving.

Here's to a bright Spring, a memorable Summer, and many more stories still waiting to be found.

The Rastrick Local History Group